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**WARRENSBURG-LATHAM HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE ILLINOIS GIRLS TRACK & FIELD ATHLETE OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 23, 2016) — In its 31st year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Kathleen Young of Warrensburg-Latham High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Illinois Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Young is the first Gatorade Illinois Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Warrensburg-Latham High School.

The award, which recognizes not only outstanding athletic excellence, but also high standards of academic achievement and exemplary character demonstrated on and off the track, distinguishes Young as Illinois's best high school girls track & field athlete. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year award to be announced in June, Young joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Allyson Felix (2001-02, Los Angeles Baptist, Calif.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.), Lolo Jones (1997-98, Roosevelt HS, Ia.) and Bianca Knight (2006-07, Ridgeland HS, Miss.).

The 5-foot-10 junior won both the shot put and discus at the Class 1A state meet this past season, leading the Cardinals to a third-place finish as a team. Young hurled the shot put a meet-record 51 feet, and launched the discus 155-0. Her season-best effort of 51-11.5 in the shot put ranked as the nation's No. 4 performance among prep competitors in 2016 at the time of her selection. She also won the shot put at both the Stanford Invitational and the Iron Wood Throwers Classic.

Young has maintained a 4.97 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally on behalf of the Special Olympics and youth track programs.

"She is by far the hardest-working athlete I have ever coached," said Warrensburg-Latham coach Tammi Davis. "She sets realistic and meaningful goals, and once those are reached, she sets another one to go after."

Young will begin her senior year of high school this fall.

The [Gatorade Player of the Year](#) program annually recognizes one winner in the District of Columbia and each of the 50 states that sanction high school football, girls volleyball, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball, boys and girls soccer, baseball, softball, and boys and girls track & field, and awards one National Player of the Year in each sport. The selection process is administered by the Gatorade high school sports leadership team in partnership with [USA TODAY High School Sports](#), which work with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Young joins recent Gatorade Illinois Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Brittny Ellis (2014-15, Warren Township High School), Parker English (2013-14, Evanston Township High School), Emmonnie Henderson (2012-13, Edwardsville High School), Aaliyah Brown (2011-12, Lincoln-Way East High School), Jena Hemann (2010-11, Central Community High School), Kelsey Card (2009-10, Carlinville High School), Daniella Bunch (2008-09 & 2007-08, Mahomet-Seymour High School), and Egle Staisiunaite (2006-07, Downers Grove South High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

To keep up to date on the latest happenings, become a fan of Gatorade Player of the Year on Facebook and follow us on Twitter. For more on the Gatorade Player of the Year program, including nomination information, a complete list of past winners and the announcement of the Gatorade National Player of the Year, visit www.gatorade.com/poy.

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