

Contact: John Manzo (312-729-3656)

**ANNAPOLIS HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE MARYLAND 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 Maria Coffin of Annapolis High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Maryland Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Coffin is the second Gatorade Maryland Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Annapolis 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 Coffin as Maryland'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, Coffin 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 state's reigning Gatorade Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year, the 5-foot-4 junior won two individual state championships at the Class 4A state meet this past season. A First Team All-Met honoree by The Washington Post, Coffin swept the 1,600-meter run with a time of 4:56.93 and the 3,200-meter run in 10:45.90. Her 1,600-meter time of 4:56.91 and 3,200-meter clocking of 10:36.64 at the Anne Arundel County Championships both ranked as the state's fastest time among prep competitors in 2016.

Coffin has maintained a 4.39 weighted GPA in the classroom and represents one of the state's top academic candidates in meeting the Gatorade award's broad criteria. A member of her school concert choir, she has volunteered locally on behalf of her church youth group and as a youth track & field coach.

"I have coached at Severna Park for 28 years, and I have seen just about all the great girl distance runners that we have had in our county," said Edward Purpura. "In my opinion, Maria belongs in their company, but what I appreciate most about her is that she has had to work very hard to attain her greatness."

Coffin 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.

Coffin joins recent Gatorade Maryland Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Jackie McNulty (2014-15, Oakdale High School), Javonne Antoine (2013-14, Elizabeth Seton High School), Ellie Gonzalez (2012-13, The Catholic High School of Baltimore), Mobolaji Adekun (2011-12, DuVal High School), Olivia Ekpone (2010-11, 2009-10 & 2007-08, Northwest High School), Lorraine Graham (2008-09, Charles Herbert Flowers High School), and Tasha Stanley (2006-07 & 2005-06, Eleanor Roosevelt) 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.