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**BRENTWOOD HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE MISSOURI 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 **Sophia Rivera of Brentwood High School** as its **2015-16 Gatorade Missouri Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year**. Rivera is the first Gatorade Missouri Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Brentwood 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 Rivera as Missouri'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, Rivera 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 6-foot senior thrower hurled the javelin 180 feet, four inches at the Brentwood Invitational this spring, winning the event and producing the nation's No. 1 performance among prep competitors in 2016. The effort marked the fifth-best mark in U.S. prep history at the time of her selection. A 2015 IAAF World Youth Championship National Team member, Rivera captured a pair of individual titles at the 2016 state meet, winning the discus with a throw of 138 feet, one inch and the javelin with a mark of 134-6. She earned fourth-place at the Arcadia Invitational, hurling the discus 143 feet, 10 inches. Her career-best effort in the shot put is 53-5.75 — only seven U.S. Preps have thrown further. Her career-best in the discus is 154-9. She will compete in the javelin at the U.S. Olympic Trials in Portland, Ore. later this summer.

Rivera has maintained a 4.04 weighted in the classroom. A member of the National Honor Society and the president of her graduating class, she has volunteered locally on behalf of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, the Special Olympics and the American Red Cross.

"Sophia Rivera's work ethic, in my opinion, exceeds her tremendous natural abilities," said Brentwood High head coach Scott Long. "Having the opportunity to work with her has been an absolute pleasure. She is a rare combination of size, strength, speed, coordination and the willingness to work tirelessly on her techniques. Above all else, her dedication to everything she does is the reason for her success."

Rivera has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in track and field on scholarship at the University of Wisconsin 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.

Rivera joins recent Gatorade Missouri Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Hannah Long (2014-15 & 2012-13, Eureka High School), Taylor Werner (2013-14, Ste. Genevieve High School), Tianna Valentine (2011-12, Hazelwood East High School), Colleen Quigley (2010-11, Nerinx Hall), Tiffani McReynolds (2009-10, The Pembroke Hill School), Emily Sisson (2008-09, Parkway Central High School), and Alishea Usery (2007-08 & 2006-07, McCluer South-Berkeley 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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