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**VINITA HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE OKLAHOMA 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 Carsyn Spurgeon of Vinita High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Oklahoma Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Spurgeon is the first Gatorade Oklahoma Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Vinita 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 Spurgeon as Oklahoma'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, Spurgeon 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 senior leapt a meet-record 20 feet, 2.5 inches to win the long jump and took first in the 400-meter dash in 55.66 seconds at the Class 4A state meet this past season, leading the Hornets to third place as a team. The state's returning Gatorade Girls Track and Field Athlete of the Year, Spurgeon also anchored the winning 4x200 relay quartet. Spurgeon won the long jump at the state Meet of Champions and her season-best effort of 20-5.25 ranked as the nation's No. 5 performance among prep competitors in 2016 at the time of her selection.

Spurgeon has maintained a 3.98 GPA in the classroom. A Sunday school teacher in her church, she has volunteered locally on behalf of blood donation drives, youth basketball camps and the Salvation Army.

"She had some problems with her hip and quad during the first half of the season," said Vinita coach Scott Reed. "But she was able to do some amazing things with only three or four weeks of training. She's the most gifted track athlete that I've witnessed and she's had an unbelievable career."

Spurgeon has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in track and field on scholarship at Iowa State University 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.

Two-time winner Spurgeon joins Gatorade Oklahoma Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Baylor Reese (2013-14, Fairview High School), Regan Ward (2012-13, Beggs High School), Madison Reynolds (2011-12, Douglass High School), Hannah Helker (2010-11, Edmond North High School), Danielle Nowell (2009-10, Plainview High School), Carissa Levingston (2008-09 & 2007-08, Midwest City High School), and Kylie Spurgeon (2006-07, Owasso 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.