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**ST. JOHNSBURY ACADEMY STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE VERMONT 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 Katherine Cowan of St. Johnsbury Academy as its 2015-16 Gatorade Vermont Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Cowan is the second Gatorade Vermont Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from St. Johnsbury Academy.

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 Cowan as Vermont'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, Cowan 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-1 sophomore captured three individual state championships at the Division I state meet this past season, leading the Hilltoppers to a state championship as a team. Cowan won the 100-meter high hurdles, the 300-meter low hurdles and the 200-meter dash, and she also took bronze in the high jump. A 12-time state champion, she scored a state-record 5,156 points at the Vermont Decathlon Championships.

Cowan has maintained a B-plus average in the classroom. She has volunteered locally as a mentor to a youth hurdler and with the Special Olympics. She has also donated her time to area beautification projects.

"Katherine Cowan has been a dominant force this year in Vermont," said Nate Bradbury, head coach of South Burlington High. "She has had a phenomenal spring following an impressive winter."

Cowan will begin her junior 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.

Cowan joins recent Gatorade Vermont Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Kayla Gilding (2014-15, South Burlington High School), Autumn Eastman (2013-14 & 2012-13, Champlain Valley Union High School), Mollie Gribbin (2011-12 & 2010-11, South Burlington High School), Hannah Rowe (2009-10 & 2008-09, St. Johnsbury Academy), Sarah Sherman (2007-08, Essex High School), and Lydia Bickford (2006-07, Peoples Academy) 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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