

BRENTWOOD ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE TENNESSEE GIRLS TRACK & FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (July 2, 2021) — In its 36<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Mensi Stiff of Brentwood Academy as its 2020-21 Gatorade Tennessee Girls Track & Field Player of the Year. Stiff is the first Gatorade Tennessee Girls Track & Field Player of the Year to be chosen from Brentwood 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 field, distinguishes Stiff as Tennessee's best high school girls track & field athlete. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Track & Field Player of the Year award to be announced in July, Stiff joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Lolo Jones (1997-98, Roosevelt High School, Iowa), Allyson Felix (2002-03, Los Angeles Baptist High School, Calif.), Robert Griffin III (2006-07, Copperas Cove High School, Texas), Grant Fisher (2013-14 & 2014-15, Grand Blanc High School, Mich.) and Candace Hill (2014-15, Rockdale County High School, Ga.).

The 5-foot-10 sophomore swept the shot put and discus events at the Division II-AA state meet this past season, setting a state record by launching the shot 48 feet, 11.5 inches. At the time of her selection, that winning shot distance ranked No. 13 nationally among 2021 prep competitors in the event. Stiff also set a Division II state record in the discus at the Division II-AA Middle Region Championships with a throw of 153-8 which ranked No. 30 nationally.

Stiff rescues abused horses and nurses them back to health. A published poet, she is a member of the Brentwood Academy Student Ambassador Program. She has volunteered locally at the Pinson Hospital Hospitality House in Nashville and as a Vacation Bible School teacher. "Mensi competes with poise and fire and visible expectations of her throws, regardless of the competition," said Fran Hoogestraat, throws coach of Franklin Road Academy. "She has this serious, unstoppable approach to how she handles herself. The kind of heart she shows in competition stands on its own merit."

Stiff has maintained a 3.72 GPA in the classroom. She 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 Player of the Year Selection Committee, which works with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Stiff joins recent Gatorade Tennessee Girls Track & Field Players of the Year Jenna Hutchins (2019-20 & 2018-19, Science Hill High School), Rebecca Story (2017-18, Christian Academy of Knoxville), and Kethlin Campbell (2016-17, Shelbyville Central High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Through Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Stiff has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of their choosing. Stiff is also eligible to submit a 30-second video explaining why the organization they chose is deserving of one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants, which will be announced throughout the year. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners' grants have totaled more than \$2.7 million across 1,117 organizations.

Since the program's inception in 1985, Gatorade Player of the Year award recipients have won hundreds of professional and college championships, and many have also turned into pillars in their communities, becoming coaches, business owners and educators.

To learn more about the Gatorade Player of the Year program, check out past winners or to nominate student-athletes, visit [playeroftheyear.gatorade.com](http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com), on Facebook at [facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://facebook.com/GatoradePOY) or follow us on Twitter at [twitter.com/Gatorade](https://twitter.com/Gatorade).

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