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**EAST ORANGE CAMPUS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE NEW JERSEY BOYS TRACK & FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 22, 2017) — In its 32<sup>nd</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Cory Poole of East Orange Campus High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade New Jersey Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Poole is the first Gatorade New Jersey Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from East Orange Campus 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 Poole as New Jersey's best high school boys track & field athlete. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year award to be announced in June, Poole joins an elite alumni association of state track & field award-winners, 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 6-foot-2, 155-pound senior won the 110-meter high hurdles with a time of 14.03 seconds and the 400-meter intermediate hurdles in a meet-record 50.72 at state Meet of Champions this past season. The state's returning Gatorade Boys Track and Field Athlete of the Year, Poole also swept both hurdle events at the Group 4 championship meet and took silver in the 400 hurdles at this month's New Balance Nationals Outdoor. He broke the tape in the 300 hurdles at the Arcadia Invitational, and his state-record time of 50.71 in the 400 hurdles at the Penn Relays Carnival this spring ranked as the nation's No. 2 performance among prep competitors in 2017 at the time of his selection.

Poole has volunteered locally on behalf of community cleanup efforts, the East Orange Recreation Center and the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure. "Cory is a leader on all levels, on and off the track," said East Orange coach Lance Wigfall. "He's a very humble, yet competitive, athlete who believes he can achieve anything that he puts his mind to."

Poole has maintained a B average in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete on an athletic scholarship at the University of Florida 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 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.

Poole joins recent Gatorade New Jersey Boys Track & Field Athletes of the Year Cory Poole (2015-16, East Orange Campus High School), Taylor McLaughlin (2014-15, Union Catholic High School), Curtis Thompson (2013-14, Florence Township Memorial High School), Braheme Days Jr. (2012-13, Bridgeton High School), Sam Mattis (2011-12, East Brunswick High School), Nick Vena (2010-11, 2009-10, 2008-09 & 2007-08, Morristown High School), and Craig Forys (2006-07, Colts Neck High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Cory will be able to select a national or local youth sports organization to receive a grant as part of the Gatorade Play It Forward program. Every Gatorade Player of the Year state winner receives a \$1,000 grant to donate and will have the opportunity to enter for an additional \$10,000 spotlight grant by writing a brief essay explaining why their selected organization deserves additional support. 12 spotlight grants - one for each sport - will be announced throughout the year.

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](http://www.gatorade.com/poy).

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