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**PETERSBURG HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE ALASKA GIRLS 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 Izabelle Ith of Petersburg High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Alaska Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Ith is the first Gatorade Alaska Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Petersburg 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 Ith as Alaska'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, Ith 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 5-foot-7 senior hurdler and jumper captured four individual state titles this spring, leading the Vikings to a fourth-place finish as a team at the Class 2A state meet. Ith won the 100-meter hurdles with a time of 14.92 seconds, the 300-meter hurdles in 46.15, the triple jump with a leap of 36 feet, 1.5 inches and the long jump by soaring 16-11.25. The 2017 Alaska School Activities Association Female Outstanding Competitor, Ith completed an undefeated season in all her events this spring.

A member of the National Honor Society, Ith is an accomplished dancer, a member of the concert band and has served as president of her school's student council. "Not only is Izabelle Ith an exceptional athlete, producing some of the fastest times and farthest marks in the history of Alaska high school women's track and field, she has also embodied the spirit of sportsmanship and projects an outstanding character on and off the track," said Jeremy Strong, head coach at Sitka High school. "She has set a standard for how champions should represent themselves, their team and community."

Ith has maintained a 4.03 GPA in the classroom. She will attend Williams College this fall, where she will compete in track and field.

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.

Ith joins recent Gatorade Alaska Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Tanner Ealum (2015-16, Anchorage Christian High School), Allie Ostrander (2014-15 & 2013-14, Kenai Central High School), Audrey Michaelson (2012-13, Colony High School), Morgan Dampier (2011-12 & 2010-11, Wasilla High School), Lierin Flanagan (2009-10, Kenai Central High School), Gabrielle Todd (2008-09, Bartlett High School), Leah Francis (2007-08, Juneau-Douglas High School), and Andrea Crook (2006-07, Bartlett High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Izabelle 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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