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**KAISER HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE HAWAII GIRLS TRACK & FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 22, 2017) — In its 32nd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Kristen O'Handley of Kaiser High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Hawaii Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. O'Handley is the fourth Gatorade Hawaii Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Kaiser 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 O'Handley as Hawaii'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, O'Handley 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-10 senior won four individual events at the state championship meet this past season, leading the Cougars to a second-place finish as a team. O'Handley captured the 100-meter dash in a meet-record 12.01 seconds, won the 200-meter dash in 25.69, broke the tape in the 400-meter dash in 57.61 and cleared five feet, two inches to claim the high jump.

Co-founder and vice president of her school's Agriculture Club, O'Handley has volunteered locally on behalf of wetland restoration efforts and youth track programs. "Kristen can be successful at any event on the track," said Kaiser coach Kevin Kruzona. "She works very hard, she has great family support and she's just a wonderful student-athlete."

O'Handley has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in track and field on scholarship at Portland 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 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.

O'Handley joins recent Gatorade Hawaii Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Emma Taylor (2015-16, Hawaii Preparatory Academy), Kathleen Funcheon (2014-15, Moanalua High School), Alyssa Bettendorf (2013-14, Seabury Hall High School), Zoe Sims (2012-13, Hawaii Preparatory Academy), Charlinda Ioane (2011-12, Kapolei High School), Kailea Tracy-Visintainer (2010-11, Seabury Hall High School), Ashley Satterwhite (2009-10, Punahou School), Bailey Massenburg (2008-09, King Kekaulike High School), Zhane Santiago (2007-08, Kahuku High School), and Samantha Cabrerros (2006-07, Punahou School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Kristen 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.

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