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**ST. MICHAEL-ALBERTVILLE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MINNESOTA 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 Anna Keefer of St. Michael-Albertville High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Minnesota Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Keefer is the first Gatorade Minnesota Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from St. Michael-Albertville 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 Keefer as Minnesota'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, Keefer 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-2 senior sprinter and jumper captured three individual state titles this spring, leading the Knights to the Class AA state championship as a team. Keefer won the 100-meter dash with a time of 11.73 seconds, the 200-meter dash in 24.13 and the long jump with a leap of 18 feet, 10.5 inches. She set a state record in the long jump at the Section 8AAA True Team Meet, soaring 20-1.25, which ranked as the nation's No. 15 wind-legal performance among prep competitors in 2017 at the time of her selection.

Keefer has volunteered locally as a peer leader, a youth coach in track and field and gymnastics, and has launched her own photography business. "Anna Keefer is an exceptional person who is also a very strong athlete," said St. Michael-Albertville High head coach Jason Massmann. "Her work ethic is second to none. She pairs a lot of natural ability with an incredible desire for continuous improvement."

Keefer has maintained a 3.63 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete on an athletic scholarship at the University of North Carolina 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.

Keefer joins recent Gatorade Minnesota Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Jedah Caldwell (2015-16, Chanhassen High School), Ruby Stauber (2014-15, Wayzata High School), Shaina Burns (2013-14, Lakeville South High School), Maggie Ewen (2012-13 & 2011-12, St. Francis High School), Analisa Huschle (2010-11 & 2008-09, Bagley High School), Jessica January (2009-10, Richfield High School), Kylie Peterson (2007-08, Apple Valley High School), and Megan Geyen (2006-07, Watertown-Mayer High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Anna 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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