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**CLINTON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MISSISSIPPI 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 Demi Washington of Clinton High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Mississippi Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Washington is the second Gatorade Mississippi Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Clinton 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 Washington as Mississippi'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, Washington 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-4 senior won a pair of individual titles at the Class 6A meet this past season, leading the Arrows to their fifth straight team title. Washington broke the tape in the 100-meter dash with a time of 11.56 seconds and set a state record in the 200 dash with a personal-best clocking of 23.87. Those ranked as the nation's No. 16 and No. 37 performances, respectively, among prep competitors in 2017 at the time of her selection. Her personal-best time of 11.21 in the 100 dash at the North State sectionals was the U.S. No. 1 all-conditions time by a prep. Washington also took second in the long jump at states with a personal-best leap of 17 feet, 11 inches, and she finished fourth in the 100 dash at this month's adidas Boost Boston Games. She concluded her high school track career as a four-time champion in the 100 dash and a three-time champion in the 200 dash.

A member of the youth ministry within her church community, Washington has volunteered for the Salvation Army. She has also donated her time to the Fellowship of Christian Athletes in addition to serving as youth counselor with the Vicksburg Housing summer program. "Demi's drive for excellence is immeasurable," said Clinton head coach Johnathan Perkins. "One look at her high school career confirms that. She's a seven-time state champion."

Washington has maintained an 86.1 average in the classroom and has signed a national letter of intent to compete on an athletic scholarship at the University of Alabama beginning 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.

Two-time winner Washington joins recent Gatorade Mississippi Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Monica Mosley (2015-16 & 2014-15, Clinton High School), Demi Washington (2013-14, Clinton High School), Zaria Tillman (2012-13, Hattiesburg High School), Erika Sisk (2011-12, Oxford High School), Taryn Hartfield (2010-11, Hattiesburg High School), Cory McGee (2009-10, 2008-09 & 2007-08, Pass Christian High School), and Bianca Knight (2006-07, Ridgeland High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Demi 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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