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**FORT ZUMWALT SOUTH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE MISSOURI 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 Alicia Burnett of Fort Zumwalt South High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Missouri Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Burnett is the first Gatorade Missouri Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Fort Zumwalt South 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 Burnett as Missouri'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, Burnett 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 freshman sprinter captured three individual state titles this spring, leading the Bulldogs to a sixth-place finish at the Class 4 state meet. Burnett won the 100-meter dash with a time of 11.55 seconds, the 200-meter dash in 24.59 and broke the tape in the 400-meter dash in 55.70. She also claimed the 100 dash title at the Brook PR Invitational earlier this month with a time of 11.92.

Burnett has volunteered locally at a senior living center and as a youth track and field coach. "Alicia Burnett has an incredible a stat line in terms of her performance range," said Thomas Stueve, head coach at Raytown High. "It is rare for sprinters to be highly talented in all three sprint events and for her to run all of those times as a freshman is something I've never seen before. She appears to be a very special talent, a great competitor and excited to be a part of the sport of track and field."

Burnett has maintained a 3.28 GPA in the classroom. She will begin her sophomore year of high school 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.

Burnett joins recent Gatorade Missouri Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Sophia Rivera (2015-16, Brentwood High School), Hannah Long (2014-15 & 2012-13, Eureka High School), Taylor Werner (2013-14, St. Genevieve High School), Tianna Valentine (2011-12, Hazelwood East High School), Colleen Quigley (2010-11, Nerinx Hall High School), Tiffani McReynolds (2009-10, The Pembroke Hill School), Emily Sisson (2008-09, Parkway Central High School), and Alishea Usery (2007-08 & 2006-07, McCluer South-Berkeley High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Alicia 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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