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**PADUA ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE DELAWARE GIRLS TRACK & FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 21, 2018) — In its 33<sup>rd</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Lydia Olivere of Padua Academy as its 2017-18 Gatorade Delaware Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Olivere is the first Gatorade Delaware Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Padua Academy.

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 Olivere as Delaware'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, Olivere 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-5 senior won three individual events at the Division 1 state meet this past season, leading the Pandas to the state championship as a team. A four-time Gatorade Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year, Olivere won the 800-meter run in 2:13.10, while capturing the 1600 in 4:55.10 and the 3200 in 11:03.81. She also won the 1600 at the state Meet of Champions in 4:51.83.

Olivere has volunteered locally on behalf of youth track meets and the Mary Campbell Center for people with disabilities. "Lydia has a humble and relaxed style combined with sheer determination and a tenacious work ethic," said Padua Academy coach Marnie Giunta. "She is truly one of a kind, and she's destined for bigger things in the next chapter of her career at Villanova."

Olivere has maintained a 3.96 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in cross country and track and field on scholarship at Villanova 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.

Olivere joins recent Gatorade Delaware Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Daija Lampkin (2016-17 & 2015-16, Middletown High School), Ashley Bailey (2014-15, Middletown High School), Maiya Dendy (2013-14 & 2012-13, Padua Academy), Haley Pierce (2011-12 & 2010-11, The Tatnall School), Celina Emerson (2009-10, Delcastle Technical High School), Juliet Bottorff (2008-09, The Tatnall School), Brianna Kennedy (2007-08, Caravel Academy), and Nikko Brady (2006-07, Charter School of Wilmington) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Olivere 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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