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

CHICAGO (June 21, 2018) — In its 33rd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Nyagoa Bayak of Westbrook High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Maine Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Bayak is the first Gatorade Maine Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Westbrook 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 Bayak as Maine'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, Bayak 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 6-foot-1 junior won the high jump at the Class A state meet this past season with a state-record clearance of five feet, 11 inches. Bayak also soared 37-4 to take second in the triple jump. She won the high jump (5-11) at the New England Championships and finished second in that event at the New Balance Nationals Outdoor. Her state-record high jump mark ranked as the nation's No. 7 performance among prep competitors in 2018 at the time of her selection.

A Student Academic Mentor in her school, Bayak has served on the Maine Youth Court in addition to volunteering locally on behalf of an elementary school literacy outreach initiative and a Unified Basketball youth athlete empowerment program. "Nyagoa is a hard-working, ambitious and super-competitive athlete," said Westbrook coach Angie Lally. "She sets goals for herself and then does the work to reach those goals."

Bayak has maintained a 3.25 GPA in the classroom. She will begin her senior 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.

Bayak joins recent Gatorade Maine Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Emma Gallant (2016-17, Cheverus High School), Adelaide Cooke (2015-16, Falmouth High School), Kate Hall (2014-15, Lake Region High School), Kate Hall (2013-14 & 2012-13, Lake Region High School), Bethanie Brown (2011-12, Waterville High School), Abbey Leonardi (2010-11 2009-10 & 2008-09, Kennebunk High School), Becky O'Brien (2007-08, Greely High School), and Chelsey Tewell (2006-07, York High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Bayak 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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