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**DESERT EDGE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE ARIZONA BOYS 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 Tyson Jones of Desert Edge High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Arizona Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Jones is the first Gatorade Arizona Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Desert Edge 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 Jones as Arizona's best high school boys track & field athlete. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year award to be announced in June, Jones 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-5, 290-pound senior won the national championship in the shot put with a throw of 70 feet, 1.5 inches at June's New Balance Nationals Outdoor. Jones' top shot effort of 71-8.75 this season broke a 60-year-old state record and ranked No. 1 in the nation among prep competitors in 2018 at the time of his selection. Jones' personal-best throw of 195-6 in the discus ranked No. 9 in the nation. A three-time state champion in the shot put and a two-time state winner in the discus, he claimed both titles at this spring's Division II state meet.

Jones has volunteered locally as a youth track and football coach. "What makes Tyson special as an athlete is more than just his physical gifts," said Jose Lucero, head coach of Desert Edge High. "He is an extremely hard-worker. He has spent countless hours honing his craft."

Jones has maintained a 3.16 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a national letter of intent to compete on an athletic scholarship at Virginia Tech 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.

Jones joins recent Gatorade Arizona Boys Track & Field Athletes of the Year Turner Washington (2016-17, Canyon del Oro High School), Connor Stevens (2015-16, Rio Rico High School), Carlos Villarreal (2014-15, Rio Rico High School), Robert Grant (2013-14, Brophy College Preparatory), Bernie Montoya (2012-13, Cibola High School), Devon Allen (2011-12, Brophy College Preparatory), Billy Orman (2010-11, Tuba City High School), Brian Shrader (2009-10, Sinagua SH), Bryce Lamb (2008-09, Chandler), Allante Battle (2007-08, Desert Vista), and Cylend Simmons (2006-07, Westwood) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Jones 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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