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**BEL AIR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MARYLAND BOYS 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 Kieran McDermott of Bel Air High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Maryland Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year. McDermott is the first Gatorade Maryland Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Bel Air 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 McDermott as Maryland'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, McDermott 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-2, 162-pound senior won the 800-meter run with a state-record time of 1:50.90 and captured the 1600 in 4:17.10 at the Class 3A state meet this past season. McDermott also anchored the winning 4x800 relay quartet and took third in the 800 at this month's New Balance Nationals Outdoor in 1:49.80, which ranked as the nation's No. 6 performance among prep competitors in 2018 at the time of his selection.

McDermott has volunteered locally on behalf of charity road races and youth track programs. "I've been coaching track and field for 18 years and Kieran is the most talented and accomplished athlete I've had the pleasure of coaching to date," said Bel Air coach Sharon Pickett. "He's learned to embrace competition and has become perhaps one of the best middle distance athletes in Maryland history."

McDermott has maintained a 3.87 GPA in the classroom. He will attend Princeton University this fall, where he will compete in track and field.

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.

McDermott joins recent Gatorade Maryland Boys Track & Field Athletes of the Year Kollin Smith (2016-17, Frederick Douglass High School), Shyheim Wright (2015-16, Bowie High School), Maxwell Willis (2014-15, Bowie High School), Robert Carter (2013-14, Long Reach High School), Julian Woods (2012-13, Century High School), Dondre Echols (2011-12, Potomac High School), Ronald Darby (2010-11, Potomac High School), Marquis Woodyard (2009-10 & 2008-09, Governor Thomas Johnson High School), Jon Hill (2007-08, Walkersville High School), and Matthew Centrowitz (2006-07, Broadneck High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, McDermott 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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