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**MOUNT MANSFIELD UNION HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE VERMONT 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 Zane Russom of Mount Mansfield Union High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Vermont Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Russom is the third Gatorade Vermont Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Mount Mansfield Union 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 Russom as Vermont'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, Russom 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-9, 153-pound senior won the javelin at the Division I state meet, leading the Cougars to a second-place finish as a team. Russom's winning throw of 186 feet, 1 inch ranked No. 86 in the nation among prep competitors in 2018 at the time of his selection. He improved his top javelin effort by more than 30 feet from junior to senior year.

An avid photographer, Russom has volunteered locally as a peer math tutor and as a youth track coach. He has also donated his time to multiple community service initiatives through his school's Leo Club. "He only threw the javelin this year, but he did so very well," said Caleb Wiley, head coach of Burr & Burton Academy. "His throw at the state championships is a remarkable toss."

Russom has maintained a 3.70 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a national letter of intent to compete on an athletic scholarship at the University of Vermont 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.

Russom joins recent Gatorade Vermont Boys Track & Field Athletes of the Year Tyler Marshall (2016-17 & 2015-16, Champlain Valley Union High School), Alec Eschholz (2014-15, 2013-14 & 2012-13, Mount Mansfield Union High School), Jacob Ellis (2011-12, Brattleboro Union High School), Mike DiMambro (2010-11 & 2009-10, Essex High School), Adron Pitmon (2008-09, Mt. Mansfield Union), Ken Bunnell (2007-08, St. Johnsbury Academy), and Bryant Williams (2006-07, Essex) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Russom 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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