

LIBERTY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE IOWA GIRLS TRACK & FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (June 20, 2019) — In its 34th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced **Ashlyn Keeney of Liberty High School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade Iowa Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year**. Keeney is the first Gatorade Iowa Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Liberty 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 Keeney as Iowa'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, Keeney 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-1 freshman won the 1,500-meter run and the 3,000-meter run at the Class 4A state meet this past season, leading the Lightning to a fourth-place finish as a team. Keeney also finished second in the 800-meter run and was a part of Liberty's second-place distance medley relay team. Her personal-best time of 9:39.64 in the 3,000 ranked No. 8 in the nation among prep competitors at the time of her selection. Her fastest 1,500 clocking of 4:32.98 ranked No. 13 in the nation.

A member of the Liberty High marching band, Keeney has volunteered locally as a youth track coach. "I was very impressed with Ashlyn Keeney this spring," said Keith Borness, head coach of Valley High School. "I feel she learned a lot from fall to spring about herself and what she is capable of."

Keeney has maintained an A average in the classroom. She will begin her sophomore 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. From the 12 national winners, one male and one female athlete are each named Gatorade High School Athlete of the Year. In all, 607 athletes are honored each year.

Keeney joins recent Gatorade Iowa Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Sydney Milani (2017-18, Southeast Polk High School), Joy Ripplinger (2016-17, Assumption High School), Kiana Phelps (2015-16, Kingsley-Pierson High School), Stephanie Jenks (2014-15, Linn-Mar High School) and Jalyann Roberts-Lewis (2013-14, Roosevelt High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Keeney also has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of her choosing. She is also eligible to submit an essay to win one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants for the organization of choice, which will be announced throughout the year.

Since the program's inception in 1985, Gatorade Player of the Year award recipients have won hundreds of professional and college championships, and many have also turned into pillars in their communities, becoming coaches, business owners and educators.

To learn more about the Gatorade Player of the Year program, check out past winners or to nominate student-athletes, visit www.Gatorade.com/POY, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/Gatorade.

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