

**ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE LOUISIANA GIRLS TRACK & FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 25, 2020) — In its 35<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced Heather Abadie of St. Michael the Archangel High School as its 2019-20 Gatorade Louisiana Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Abadie is the first Gatorade Louisiana Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from St. Michael the Archangel 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 field, distinguishes Abadie as Louisiana'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, Abadie joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, 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-8 junior won the 2020 LHSAA State Championship pole vault event with a personal-best clearance of 13 feet, 1.5 inches, which ranked as the nation's No. 10 vault among prep indoor competitors this year. She also took second at the National Pole Vault Summit, soaring 12-8, the first of four straight clearances of that height or higher to close out 2020. At the 2019 outdoor state meet, Abadie won the pole vault title with a clearance of 12-6, which ranked as the nation's No. 78 performance among prep vaulters in 2019. She has vaulted 12 feet or higher 11 times in her prep career and took first in the event at the 2019 AAU National Club Championship.

Abadie has volunteered locally on a regular basis at both a nursing home and a soup kitchen, and has also participated in community service initiatives to help the homeless. "Mondo Duplantis, Gatorade's 2016-17 NAOY in boys track, redefined the pole vault from his hometown in western Louisiana, but Abadie is starting to make a name for herself in Baton Rouge," said Erik Boal, a DyeStat editor. "Each of her final four vaults of the indoor season was higher than the last. It will be exciting to see what she has to offer as a senior."

Abadie has maintained a weighted 3.64 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.

Abadie joins recent Gatorade Louisiana Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Logan Lewis (2018-19, Baton Rouge Magnet High School), Leah Scott (2017-18, Dutchtown High School), Kyah Loyd (2016-17, C.E. Byrd High School), Janie O'Connor (2015-16, Zachary High School), Hannah Jackson (2014-15, Sulphur High School), and Mikiah Brisco (2013-14 & 2012-2013, Baton Rouge Magnet High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

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](http://www.Gatorade.com/POY), on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY](http://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) or follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/Gatorade](http://www.twitter.com/Gatorade).

###