

**HIGHLAND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE ARIZONA BOYS TRACK & FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 29, 2020) — In its 35th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced Leo Daschbach of Highland High School as its 2019-20 Gatorade Arizona Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Daschbach is the second Gatorade Arizona Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Highland 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 Daschbach 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 July, Daschbach 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 state's returning Gatorade Boys Track and Field Athlete of the Year, the 5-foot-10, 145-pound senior became the 11th high school runner to break the 4-minute mile this spring. Daschbach topped an elite field at the Quarantine Clasico in May with a time of 3:59.54, which ranked as the nation's No. 9 clocking in history among prep competitors. Also, a two-time Gatorade Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year, Daschbach is a three-time AZCentral.com Athlete of the Year honoree. He won four state titles at the 2019 Outdoor Division 1 state meet and holds state records in the mile, the 1,500-meter run and as a member of Highland's 4x800-meter relay foursome.

Daschbach participated in the Arizona Athletic Association Student Leadership Conference earlier this year. He has volunteered locally on behalf of youth soccer programs and as a peer math tutor. "Leo's performance in breaking the 4-minute barrier is simply a snapshot of what he would have done had we had a normal track season," said Chris Hanson, head coach of Desert Vista High. "I'm certainly glad we at least were witness to that, but am honestly disappointed that we missed out on so much more."

Daschbach has maintained a weighted 4.31 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a national letter of intent to compete on an athletic scholarship at the University of Washington.

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.

Two-time winner Daschbach joins recent Gatorade Arizona Boys Track & Field Athletes of the Year Tyson Jones (2017-18, Desert Edge High School), Turner Washington (2016-17, Canyon del Oro High School), Connor Stevens (2015-16, Hamilton High School), Carlos Villarreal (2014-15, Rio Rico High School), and Robert Grant (2013-14, Brophy College Preparatory) 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, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/Gatorade.

###