

**MARIANAPOLIS PREPARATORY SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE CONNECTICUT GIRLS TRACK & FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (July 2, 2021) — In its 36<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Sydney Masciarelli of Marianapolis Preparatory School** as its **2020-21 Gatorade Connecticut Girls Track & Field Player of the Year**. Masciarelli is the first Gatorade Connecticut Girls Track & Field Player of the Year to be chosen from Marianapolis Preparatory 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 Masciarelli as Connecticut's best high school girls track & field athlete. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Track & Field Player of the Year award to be announced in July, Masciarelli 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-10 senior shattered the national record in the 2000-meter steeplechase this past season with a time of 6:25.35 at the New York State Showcase. Connecticut's Gatorade Player of the Year in girls track and field in 2019, Masciarelli also clocked the nation's No. 1 performance among 2021 prep competitors in both the 3000-meter run, with a time of 9:24.09, and the two-mile, in 10:04.54.

Also a basketball standout, Masciarelli has volunteered locally on behalf of a food pantry, youth basketball camps and the U.S. Marine Corps Toys for Tots Foundation. "Breaking a national record in the steeplechase in her (event) debut may have shocked many people, but not the people close to Sydney," said Aisling Cuffe, Gatorade's National Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year in 2010-11. "When she wants something as badly as she wanted to knock her first steeplechase out of the park, it happens. The sky's the limit for whatever Sydney puts her mind to."

Masciarelli has maintained a 3.43 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to run on scholarship at the University of North Carolina 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 works 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 Masciarelli joins recent Gatorade Connecticut Girls Track & Field Players of the Year Tess Stapleton (2019-20, Fairfield Ludlowe High School), Alexis Holmes (2017-18, Cheshire Academy), and Brittany Jones (2016-17, Bloomfield High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Through Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Masciarelli has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of their choosing. Masciarelli is also eligible to submit a 30-second video explaining why the organization they chose is deserving of one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants, which will be announced throughout the year. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners' grants have totaled more than \$2.7 million across 1,117 organizations.

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

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