

**MOUNT DE SALES ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE MARYLAND 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 **Juliette Whittaker of Mount de Sales Academy** as its **2020-21 Gatorade Maryland Girls Track & Field Player of the Year**. Whittaker is the second Gatorade Maryland Girls Track & Field Player of the Year to be chosen from Mount de Sales Academy.

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 Whittaker as Maryland'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, Whittaker 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 qualified for the semifinals of the 800-meter run at the US Olympic Trials, clocking a time of 2:01.21 in the first round. The sister of the 2019-20 Gatorade Maryland Girls Track & Field Player of the Year Isabella Whittaker, she broke a state record with her personal-best time of 2:01.15 in the 800, which ranked as the nation's No. 2 performance among 2021 prep competitors and No. 7 in U.S. girls prep history. She also ranks No. 1 nationally in the 1500 with a time of 4:19.79.

The president of the Mount de Sales junior class, Whittaker has volunteered locally at a soup kitchen and as a peer tutor. "Juliette has exemplified such poise, courage, dignity and patience with all these achievements," said Mount de Sales coach Steve Weber. "Her love of running propels her through all the hard work."

Whittaker has maintained a weighted 4.40 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 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.

Whittaker joins recent Gatorade Maryland Girls Track & Field Players of the Year Isabella Whittaker (2019-20, Mount de Sales Academy), Taylor Wright (2018-19, Northwest High School), and Masai Russell (2017-18, Bullis School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Through Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Whittaker has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of their choosing. Whittaker 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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