

**BELMONT HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MASSACHUSETTS GIRLS TRACK & FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (July 2, 2021) — In its 36th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Ellie Shea of Belmont High School** as its **2020-21 Gatorade Massachusetts Girls Track & Field Player of the Year**. Shea is the first Gatorade Massachusetts Girls Track & Field Player of the Year to be chosen from Belmont 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 Shea as Massachusetts' 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, Shea 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-3 freshman set a state record in the 2-mile with a time of 10:10.49 at the USATF New England Mini Meet on June 5, which ranked as the nation's No. 3 mark among prep competitors in the event in 2021. A Middlesex League Outdoor Track All-Star, her third-place finish in the mile of 4:45.42 at the Boston Boost Games ranked No. 13 nationally. She was the Massachusetts Middle School state champion in the 800-meter run and 1,500-meter run as a seventh-grader in 2019.

Shea has volunteered locally at a food pantry, and she has donated her time to a non-profit farm in Maine, where her extended family spends time during the summer. "Ellie is a phenomenal athlete," said Rebecca Trachsel, head coach of Lexington High. "I haven't seen a runner of her caliber in our Middlesex League in quite some time. She's incredibly driven and you can see it in her expression as she races. She's there to fight."

Shea has maintained a 3.99 GPA 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. 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.

Shea joins recent Gatorade Massachusetts Girls Track & Field Players of the Year Makayla Paige (2019-20 & 2018-19, Tewksbury Memorial High School), Samantha Friberg (2017-18, Acton-Boxborough Regional High School), and Clare Martin (2016-17, Newton South High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Through Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Shea has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of their choosing. Shea 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, on Facebook at facebook.com/GatoradePOY or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/Gatorade.

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