

**SIERRA VISTA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE NEVADA 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 **Ajanae Cressey of Sierra Vista High School** as its **2020-21 Gatorade Nevada Girls Track & Field Player of the Year**. Cressey is the first Gatorade Nevada Girls Track & Field Player of the Year to be chosen from Sierra Vista 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 Cressey as Nevada'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, Cressey 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 swept the 100- and 300-meter hurdles events and also won the triple jump at the Class 5A Southern Regional Championships this past season, leading the Mountain Lions to a seventh-place finish as a team. Cressey missed out on a fourth gold by two inches in the high jump. She ranked No. 1 in the state this spring in the 300 hurdles and triple jump.

Cressey is a member of the Black Student Union at Sierra Vista and has volunteered locally as a youth volleyball coach. "AJ has been a leader on the team this year," said Ryan Quinn, head coach of Sierra Vista High. "She sets a positive example and has helped to maintain the culture we have created within our program."

Cressey has maintained a weighted 3.25 GPA in the classroom. She remains undecided upon a collegiate destination.

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.

Cressey joins recent Gatorade Nevada Girls Track & Field Players of the Year Ashley Moore (2019-20 & 2018-19, Centennial High School), Gizelle Reid (2017-18, Rancho High School), and Talie Bonds (2016-17, Centennial High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

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