

**MENTOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE OHIO 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 **Paige Floriea of Mentor High School** as its **2020-21 Gatorade Ohio Girls Track & Field Player of the Year**. Floriea is the first Gatorade Ohio Girls Track & Field Player of the Year to be chosen from Mentor 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 Floriea as Ohio'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, Floriea 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 senior won four individual events at the Division 1 state meet this past season, leading the Cardinals to the state championship as a team. Floriea broke the tape in the 100-meter dash with a time of 11.93 seconds, took the 200 in 24.17, captured the 400 in 54.25 and soared 19 feet, 10.25 inches to win the long jump. Her season-best leap of 20-4.75 in the long jump ranked as the nation's No. 5 performance among 2021 prep girls competitors.

Floriea has served as a mentor for youth track athletes and has volunteered locally in a special needs classroom. "Paige is the hardest-working and most competitive athlete that I have ever coached," said Mentor coach Bob Berwald. "She will not only be looked at as the best athlete to ever attend Mentor High, but she will also be known as a great leader and overall great person."

Floriea has maintained a 3.77 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in track and field 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.

Floriea joins recent Gatorade Ohio Girls Track & Field Players of the Year Taylor Ewert (2019-20, Beaver Creek High School), Olivia Howell (2018-19, Solon High School), Abby Steiner (2017-18, Dublin Coffman High School), and Molly Leppelmeier (2016-17, McComb High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

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