

**SCHUYLKILL VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE PENNSYLVANIA 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 **Ashlyn Giles of Schuylkill Valley High School** as its **2020-21 Gatorade Pennsylvania Girls Track & Field Player of the Year**. Giles is the first Gatorade Pennsylvania Girls Track & Field Player of the Year to be chosen from Schuylkill Valley 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 Giles as Pennsylvania'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, Giles 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-9 senior won both the discus and shot put at the Class AA state meet this past season, leading the Panthers to the state championship as a team. Giles launched the discus a meet record 165 feet, 4 inches, and hurled the shot 49-2.25. Her personal-best effort of 169-2 in the discus set a state record and ranked as the nation's No. 4 performance among 2021 prep girls competitors. Her career-best throw of 52-11 in the shot put ranked No. 2 nationally this season, and was the No. 14 effort in U.S. girls prep history.

Giles has volunteered locally on behalf of the Special Olympics and youth track camps. "I've coached track and field for 28 years and I have never coached someone as driven to achieve and succeed as Ashlyn Giles has been during her high school career," said Schuylkill Valley throws coach Crystal Cammauf. "She is never satisfied with her performance. She threw the discus 169 feet this year and her comment afterwards was 'why couldn't it be 170?'"

Giles has maintained a 3.79 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in track and field on scholarship at Wake Forest University 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.

Giles joins recent Gatorade Pennsylvania Girls Track & Field Players of the Year Marlee Starliper (2019-20, Northern High School), Skylar Ciccolini (2018-19, Mifflin County High School), Payden Montana (2017-18, Berwick Area Senior High School), and Madison Wiltout (2016-17, Connellsville Area Senior High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

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