

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

CHICAGO (July 8, 2021) — In its 36th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **James Donahue of Belmont Hill School** as its **2020-21 Gatorade Massachusetts Boys Track & Field Player of the Year**. Donahue is the first Gatorade Massachusetts Boys Track & Field Player of the Year to be chosen from Belmont Hill 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 Donahue as Massachusetts' best high school boys track & field athlete. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Track & Field Player of the Year award to be announced in July, Donahue 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-11, 150-pound junior finished third in the mile run with a time of 4:09.50 at the RunningLane Track Championships this past season. At the time of his selection, that personal-best time ranked No. 34 nationally among prep competitors in his event in 2021. Donahue also ranked No. 11 nationally in the 1,500-meter run, No. 35 in the 3,000-meter run and No. 56 in the 800-meter run.

Donahue has volunteered locally on behalf of Belmont Hill's Thanksgiving Turkey Drive, which provides meals to underprivileged families in the Boston area. "James Donahue was a true force in the [Independent School League], dominating every race that he ran by leaps and bounds," said Kate Blake, head coach of Noble & Greenough School. "He is fast becoming one of the distance greats of all time in the league."

Donahue has maintained a 3.56 GPA in the classroom. He will begin his 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.

Donahue joins recent Gatorade Massachusetts Boys Track & Field Players of the Year Alex Fleury (2019-20, Phillips Academy), Ryan Oosting (2018-19, Arlington High School), Sam Welsh (2017-18, Concord Academy), and Erick Duffy (2016-17, North Andover High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

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