

**WAUKEE NORTHWEST HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE IOWA GIRLS TRACK & FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 30, 2022) — In its 37th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Mackenzie Carney** of **Waukee Northwest High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Iowa Girls Track & Field Player of the Year**. Carney is the first Gatorade Iowa Girls Track & Field Player of the Year to be chosen from Waukee Northwest 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 Carney as Iowa'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, Carney 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 (2014-15 & 2013-14, Grand Blanc High School, Mich.) and Candace Hill (2014-15, Rockdale County High School, Ga.).

The 5-foot-6 senior set a state record in the 100-meter high hurdles at the Class 4A state meet with a time of 14.10 seconds this past season, leading the Wolves to the team title. Carney also won the 400-meter intermediate hurdles and ran the anchor leg on the Wolves' 4x100-meter shuttle relay that finished second. Her performance on the third leg of the team's 4x400-meter relay quartet at the state meet helped that foursome take third. Carney broke the tape in the 400 hurdles at the Drake Relays, where she became the first Iowan to twice be named the Relay's Most Outstanding Performer. Her winning time of 1:02.87 ranked No. 31 nationally among prep girls competitors in 2022 at the time of her selection.

A member of the Waukee Northwest High Leadership Council, Carney has volunteered locally at Gigi's Playhouse in Des Moines, supporting families affected by Down's Syndrome. She has also donated her time as a youth track coach. "What makes Mackenzie unique is her level of confidence," said Erica Douglas, head coach of Ames High School and Carney's former coach at Waukee Northwest High School. "She is all determination, and in all the years I've known her, I've rarely seen her rattled. Mackenzie is a technician and that commitment and drive propelled her to such beautiful moments."

Carney has maintained a 3.74 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete on an athletic scholarship at Iowa State 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 leverages experts including coaches, scouts, media and others as sources to help evaluate and determine the state winners in each sport.

Carney joins recent Gatorade Iowa Girls Track & Field Players of the Year Ashlyn Keeney (2020-21 & 2018-19, Liberty High School), Mackenzie Michael (2019-20, Cedar Falls High School), and Sydney Milani (2017-18, Southeast Polk High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Gatorade has a long-standing history of serving athlete communities and understands how sports instill valuable lifelong skills on and off the field. Through Gatorade's "Play it Forward" platform, Carney has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national organization of their choosing that helps young athletes realize the benefits of playing sports. Carney is also eligible to submit a short 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 \$3.5 million across more than 1,300 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 or follow us on social media on Facebook at facebook.com/GatoradePOY, Instagram at instagram.com/Gatorade and Twitter at twitter.com/Gatorade.

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