

**MOUNT DE SALES ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MARYLAND 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 **Juliette Whittaker** of **Mount de Sales Academy** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Maryland Girls Track & Field Player of the Year**. Whittaker is the second Gatorade Maryland Girls Track & Field Player of the Year to be chosen from Mount de Sales Academy.

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 Whittaker as Maryland'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, Whittaker 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-8 senior won the 800-meter run at the Trials of Miles Track Night NYC meet with a time of 1:59.80, which ranked as the nation's No. 1 performance among prep competitors in 2022 and the No. 2 clocking in U.S. prep girls history. The state's returning Gatorade Player of the Year in girls track and field, Whittaker also won the mile at the Brooks PR Invitational in 4:36.23, which ranked No. 3 nationally this season as well as No. 7 in prep history. In addition, she broke the tape in the 800, 1600 and 3200 at the Interscholastic Athletic Association of Maryland championships.

The president of her class, Whittaker has volunteered locally at a soup kitchen and as a peer tutor. "Juliette's performances on the track really speak for themselves," said Mount de Sales coach Steve Weber. "What sets her apart is how inspiring she is to younger runners. Eleven and 12-year-old girls approach her for autographs and pictures. She's shown what can be done and they want to run like her."

Whittaker has maintained a weighted 4.46 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete on an athletic scholarship at Stanford 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.

Two-time winner Whittaker joins recent Gatorade Maryland Girls Track & Field Players of the Year Isabella Whittaker (2019-20, Mount de Sales Academy), Taylor Wright (2018-19, Northwest High School), and Masai Russell (2017-18, Bullis 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, Whittaker 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. Whittaker 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.