

**WESTWOOD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE SOUTH CAROLINA 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 **Brianna Rodriguez** of **Westwood High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade South Carolina Girls Track & Field Player of the Year**. Rodriguez is the first Gatorade South Carolina Girls Track & Field Player of the Year to be chosen from Westwood 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 Rodriguez as South Carolina'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, Rodriguez 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 junior won four events at the Class AAAA state meet this past season, leading the Redhawks to a third-place finish as a team. Rodriguez broke the tape in the 200-meter run, the 100-meter high hurdles and the 400-meter intermediate hurdles, also running the anchor leg of Westwood's winning 4x400-meter relay team. The Class AAAA State Track Athlete of the Year, Rodriguez's gold medal state-meet 400 hurdles time of 1:00.81 ranked No. 7 nationally among prep competitors in 2022 at the time of her selection.

Rodriguez has volunteered locally as a youth track coach, and she has donated her time to multiple community service initiatives through her church. "Brianna Rodriguez is a very talented track athlete who works real hard at her craft," said Coral Johnson, head coach of AC Flora High School. "She gets better each year and she had a great season overall for Westwood."

Rodriguez has maintained a 3.33 GPA in the classroom. She will begin her 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 leverages experts including coaches, scouts, media and others as sources to help evaluate and determine the state winners in each sport.

Rodriguez joins recent Gatorade South Carolina Girls Track & Field Players of the Year Jayla Jamison (2021-20, 2019-20, & 2018-19, Airport High School), and Imagine Patterson (2017-18, Summerville 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, Rodriguez 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. Rodriguez 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.