

**BRENTWOOD ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE TENNESSEE 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 **Mensi Stiff** of **Brentwood Academy** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Tennessee Girls Track & Field Player of the Year**. Stiff is the first Gatorade Tennessee Girls Track & Field Player of the Year to be chosen from Brentwood 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 Stiff as Tennessee'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, Stiff 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 state's returning Gatorade Girls Track & Field Player of the Year, the 5-foot-10 junior won the shot put at the Nike Outdoor Nationals this season. At the time of her selection, Stiff's winning throw of 51 feet, 8.25 inches on her final attempt of the competition set a state record and ranked No. 2 nationally among girls prep competitors in 2022. Stiff also set a state record at Nike nationals in the discus with an effort of 162-10 that earned her second place with a mark that ranked No. 8 in the country. She is a six-time state champion, winning the shot put and discus events twice outdoors and once during the indoor season.

Stiff has donated her time rescuing abused horses and nurses them back to health. A published poet, she is a member of the Brentwood Academy Student Ambassador Program, and she has volunteered locally at the Pinson Hospital Hospitality House in Nashville in addition to serving as a vacation bible school teacher. "Mensi has become the most dominant female high school thrower in the history of our state and she's a national champion," said Steve Wade, assistant coach of Brentwood Academy. "It's not just because of her God-given abilities, but also because of the unparalleled sacrifices she has made to train harder than anyone I've ever coached."

Stiff has maintained a 3.75 GPA in the classroom. She has made a verbal commitment to compete on an athletic scholarship at the University of Mississippi beginning in the fall of 2023.

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 Stiff joins recent Gatorade Tennessee Girls Track & Field Players of the Year Jenna Hutchins (2019-20 & 2018-19, Science Hill High School), and Rebecca Story (2017-18, Christian Academy of Knoxville), 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, Stiff 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. Stiff 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.