

**BELLOWS FREE ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE VERMONT GIRLS TRACK & FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (June 30, 2022) — In its 37<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Loghan Hughes** of **Bellows Free Academy** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Vermont Girls Track & Field Player of the Year**. Hughes is the first Gatorade Vermont Girls Track & Field Player of the Year to be chosen from Bellows Free 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 Hughes as Vermont'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, Hughes 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-5 senior won the 1,500-meter and 3,000-meter runs at the Division 1 state meet this past season, leading the Comets to a ninth-place finish as a team. Hughes' winning time of 4:35.55 in the 1,500 ranked No. 31 in the nation among prep competitors in 2022 at the time of her selection. Her victory in the 2-mile run in the Rising Stars division at New Balance Nationals Outdoor (10:55.21) ranked No. 60 in the country.

A two-time All-American lacrosse player, Hughes is a member of the Hope Happens Here Club, which spreads mental health awareness around the school and throughout the surrounding community. She has volunteered locally at the Franklin County Humane Society and as part of multiple community service initiatives through her school's Rotary International Interact Club. "Loghan had an incredible season especially when you look at her improvement from last year," said Bill Eschholz, head coach of Mount Mansfield Union High. "Loghan would lead her races from start to finish. She went out, took control and controlled the tempo and pace of each race."

Hughes has maintained a 3.90 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete on an athletic scholarship at the University of Connecticut 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.

Hughes joins recent Gatorade Vermont Girls Track & Field Players of the Year Jada Diamond (2020-21, Mount Mansfield Union High School), Rebecca Crosier (2019-20, Mount Anthony Union High School), Ella Whitman (2018-19, Champlain Valley Union High School), and Molly McCreedy (2017-18, U-32 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, Hughes 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. Hughes 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](http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com) or follow us on social media on Facebook at [facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://facebook.com/GatoradePOY), Instagram at [instagram.com/Gatorade](https://instagram.com/Gatorade) and Twitter at [twitter.com/Gatorade](https://twitter.com/Gatorade).