

**ST. JOHN'S PREPARATORY SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MASSACHUSETTS BOYS TRACK & FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 29, 2023) — In its 38th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Nathan Lopez** of **St. John's Preparatory School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade Massachusetts Boys Track & Field Player of the Year**. Lopez is the first Gatorade Massachusetts Boys Track & Field Player of the Year to be chosen from St. John's Preparatory 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 Lopez as Massachusetts' best high school boys track & field athlete. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Track & Field Player of the Year award to be announced in July, Lopez joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Nico Young (2019-20, Newbury Park High School, Calif.), Michael Norman (2015-16 & 2014-15, Vista Murrieta High School, Calif.), Grant Fisher (2014-15 & 2013-14, Grand Blanc High School, Mich.) and Robert Griffin III (2006-07, Copperas Cove High School, Texas).

The 6-foot-1, 160-pound senior broke a 48-year-old meet record in the two-mile run at the MIAA Meet of Champions with a time of 8:59.29, taking down former Boston Marathon and three-time New York City Marathon winner Alberto Salazar's meet record. Three weeks later, Lopez shattered his own record to win silver at New Balance Nationals Outdoor, clocking an 8:44.54 to better his previous mark by nearly 15 seconds. His medal-winning time at nationals ranked as the nation's No.7 two-mile performance among prep boys in 2023.

Lopez has volunteered locally on behalf of the Boston Oasis Coalition, a non-profit organization providing empowerment and support to the unhoused. He also launched a shoe drive in association with the Got Sneakers Organization, which has upcycled 341 pairs of shoes to reduce landfill footprint. In addition, he has donated his time as a student-organizer for middle school track meets and by serving as a student ambassador at school open house events for prospective students. "Nathan's dramatic improvement—slicing 15 seconds off his PR in a national championship race that was the last of his prep career—capped a stellar stretch for the senior," said Rich Gonzalez, editor of PrepCalTrack.com. "His breakthrough in the 2-mile race stamped the exclamation point on his high school legacy as he graduated as the fastest prep in state history in the event."

Lopez has maintained a weighted 4.07 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete on an athletic scholarship at the University of Michigan 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.

Lopez joins recent Gatorade Massachusetts Boys Track & Field Players of the Year James Donahue (2021-22 & 2020-21, Belmont Hill School), Alex Fleury (2019-20, Phillips Academy), and Ryan Oosting (2018-19, Arlington High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Being a Gatorade Player of the Year means paying it forward for the next generation. Through Gatorade's Play it Forward initiative, every Player of the Year receives a grant to give to one of Gatorade's social impact partners, supporting Gatorade's ambition to fuel the future of sport. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners' grants have totaled more than \$3.5 million across more than 1,300 organizations.

For nearly 40 years, Gatorade has honored high school athletes at the top of their game as teammates, supporting their communities and achieving academic success. From CEOs and coaches to star athletes and community leaders, Gatorade Player of the Year winners showcase the power of sport.

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.