

**MCDONOGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MARYLAND GIRLS TRACK & FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 25, 2024) — In its 39th year of honoring the nation’s most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Elise Cooper** of **McDonogh School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Maryland Girls Track & Field Player of the Year**. Cooper is the first Gatorade Maryland Girls Track & Field Player of the Year to be chosen from McDonogh School.

The award, which celebrates the nation’s top high school athletes for excellence on the field, in the classroom and in the community, distinguishes Cooper as Maryland’s best high school girls track & field athlete. From CEOs and coaches to star athletes, Gatorade Player of the Year winners showcase the power of sport, touting an all-star group of alumni that includes Sanya Richards-Ross (2001-02, St. Thomas Aquinas High School, Fla), Sydney McLaughlin (2016-17, 2015-16 & 2014-15, Union Catholic High School, N.J.) and Angelina Napoleon (2022-23, Allegany-Limestone Central School, N.Y.).

The 5-foot-11 ½ junior sprinter won Interscholastic Athletic Association of Maryland state titles in the 100- and 200-meter dash, leading the Eagles to the Varsity A state championship this past season. Cooper also won a national title in the 200 at the Nike Outdoor Nationals this spring, breaking the tape in 23.02 seconds. At the time of her selection, her time ranked as the nation’s No. 6 clocking by a prep girl in that event in 2024.

Cooper has volunteered locally with the McDonogh’s Roots Farm garden, the produce from which is donated to the Maryland Food Bank’s Farm to Food Bank program. She has also donated her artwork to be sold to support the Maryland Women’s Heritage Center, and she has made greeting cards, birthday kits and snack packs for the Baltimore Hunger Project. “Elise demonstrates a deep commitment to her craft and consistently strives to achieve her personal best in every competition,” said Rafiu Bakare, head coach at Archbishop Carroll High School. “She possesses a remarkable ability to elevate her performance to new heights on a consistent basis.”

Cooper has maintained a 3.67 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.

Cooper joins recent Gatorade Maryland Girls Track & Field Players of the Year Myla Greene (2022-23, Bullis School), Juliette Whittaker (2021-22 & 2020-21, Mount de Sales Academy) and Isabella Whittaker (2019-20, Mount de Sales Academy), among the state’s list of former award winners.

As part of Gatorade’s commitment to breaking down barriers in sport, every Player of the Year also receives a grant to donate to a social impact partner. To date, the Gatorade Player of the Year program has provided more than \$4.9 million in grants to winners across more than 1,900 organizations.

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 X(Twitter) at x.com/Gatorade.