

PACERS HOMESCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE VIRGINIA 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 **Allie Zealand** of **Pacers Homeschool** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Virginia Girls Track & Field Player of the Year**. Zealand is the first Gatorade Virginia Girls Track & Field Player of the Year to be chosen from Pacers Homeschool.

The award, which celebrates the nation’s top high school athletes for excellence on the field, in the classroom and in the community, distinguishes Zealand as Virginia’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-3 senior distance talent set a state record in the mile at the HOKA Festival of Miles this past season. Zealand’s time of 4:30.38 ranked No. 2 nationally among girls high school competitors this spring and No. 2 in prep history. A two-time Virginia Gatorade Cross Country Player of the Year, she won the 2-mile at the Brooks PR Invitational with a U.S. No. 1 prep time of 9:41.76 and she earned All-American honors by taking second in the mile at New Balance Nationals Outdoor. She also ranked No. 4 nationally in the 1500-meter run (4:17.78) and No. 29 in the 800-meter run (2:07.06) in 2024.

Zealand has volunteered locally as a youth track coach and she’s donated her time to multiple community service initiatives through her church youth group. “The daughter of her future collegiate coach (at Liberty University), who was herself an NCAA champion, Zealand’s own success during a golden era of prep distance running has been predicated upon her discipline along a path less-traveled,” said Rich Gonzalez, editor for PrepCalTrack.com. “She flourished in a college-like setting, balancing a limited competitive schedule with quality training cycles while avoiding injury. Riding a rhythmic yet powerful gait, she often appeared to toy with race fields until it was ‘go’ time.”

Zealand has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a national letter of intent to compete on an athletic scholarship at Liberty University 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.

Zealand joins recent Gatorade Virginia Girls Track & Field Players of the Year Madison Whyte (2022-23 & 2021-22, Heritage High School), Lena Gooden (2020-21, Osbourn Park High School) and Aaliyah Pyatt (2019-20, Massaponax High School), 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.