

**SOUTH SHORE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE NEW YORK BOYS TRACK & FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 29, 2020) — In its 35th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced Brandon Smith of South Shore High School as its 2019-20 Gatorade New York Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Smith is the second Gatorade New York Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from South Shore High 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 Smith as New York's best high school boys track & field athlete. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year award to be announced in July, Smith 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 (2013-14 & 2014-15, Grand Blanc High School, Mich.) and Candace Hill (2014-15, Rockdale County High School, Ga.).

The 5-foot-10, 145-pound senior won the 55-meter dash with a state-record time of 6.27 seconds at the indoor state meet this past winter, which ranked as the nation's No. 4 prep performance during the 2020 indoor season. Smith also won the 55 hurdles in 7.37 seconds, while his City Championship clocking of 7.35 ranked No. 10 in the country. A two-time City Championship MVP, he also won the 2019 PSAL city title outdoors in the 110 hurdles.

Smith has served as a math tutor at his school and has volunteered locally on behalf of a homeless shelter and the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge. "Brandon is the most relaxed, detail-oriented athlete I have ever coached," said South Shore coach Paul Schneider. "He pays attention to every aspect of an event in order to get better, and he never allows the moment to get too big for him."

Smith has maintained a B-plus average in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in track and field on scholarship at Butler Community College (Kan.).

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 work with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Smith joins recent Gatorade New York Boys Track & Field Athletes of the Year Kenneth Wei (2018-19, Mount Sinai High School), Jeremiah Willis (2017-18, Cicero-North Syracuse High School), Daniel Claxton (2016-17, Smithtown High School East), Rayvon Grey (2015-16, Beacon High School), Rai Benjamin (2014-15, Mount Vernon High School), and Benjamin Bonhurst (2013-14, Smithtown High School West) among the state's list of former award winners.

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 www.Gatorade.com/POY, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/Gatorade.

###