

## LINN-MAR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE IOWA GIRLS TRACK & FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR

**CHICAGO** (June 24, 2025) — In its 40<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Abby Mecklenburg** of Linn-Mar High School is the **2024-25 Gatorade Iowa Girls Track & Field Player of the Year**.

Gatorade Player of the Year is the top honor in high school sports, celebrating the nation's best high school athletes for their success on the field, in the classroom and in the community. The award distinguishes Mecklenburg as Iowa's best high school girls track & field athlete, and she joins an impressive group of alumni that spans CEOs, coaches and star athletes such as Sanya Richards (2001-02, St. Thomas Aquinas High School, Fl.), Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone (2014-15, 2015-16 & 2016-17, Union Catholic High School, N.J.) and Angelina Napoleon (2022-23, Allegany-Limestone Central School, N.Y.).

The 5-foot-8 junior sprinter/jumper set a state record in the long jump at the Hempstead Invitational this past season with a leap of 20 feet, 8.5 inches. Mecklenburg's top wind-legal leap of 20-5.5 at the Mississippi Valley Conference Divisional meet ranked No. 7 nationally among girls prep competitors this spring. She also won the long jump and took second in the 200-meter dash at the Class 4A state meet. She is the first Iowan to clear 20 feet in the long jump in girls track and she did it at six different meets, including at Nike Outdoor Nationals where she earned All-American status by placing third with a top leap of 20-1.

Mecklenburg has volunteered locally with S.O.D.A (Students Okay without Drugs or Alcohol) and T.R.Y. (Teens Reaching Youth). She has also donated her time as a youth softball coach. "I only saw Abby a handful of times this year, and she has always been a joy to watch," said Tashina Steggall, head coach of Liberty High School. "Multiple jumps over 20 feet as a junior in high school is pretty spectacular. And she looks effortless doing it."

Mecklenburg has maintained a 3.82 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 across 12 different high school sports – 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.

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 \$5.6 million in grants to winners across more than 2,000 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](https://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com) or follow us on social media on Instagram at [instagram.com/Gatorade](https://instagram.com/Gatorade), Facebook at [facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://facebook.com/GatoradePOY) and X(Twitter) at [x.com/Gatorade](https://x.com/Gatorade).

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