

## ROSEVILLE AREA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE MINNESOTA BOYS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR

**CHICAGO** (February 11, 2019) — In its 34<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced **Acer Iverson of Roseville Area High School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade Minnesota Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year**. Iverson is the first Gatorade Minnesota Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Roseville Area 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 Iverson as Minnesota's best high school boys cross country runner. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year award to be announced in February, Iverson joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Lukas Verzbicas (2010-11, 2009-10 Carl Sandburg, Orland Park High School, Ill.), Donn Cabral (2007-08, Glastonbury High School, Glastonbury, Conn.) and Chris Derrick (2007-08, Neuqua Valley High School, Naperville, Ill.).

The state's returning Gatorade Runner of the Year, the 5-foot-8, 120-pound senior finished fourth at the Nike Cross Nationals Heartland Regional championships this past season with a time of 15:16.7, then crossed the line 44th at the NXN Final. Iverson won the Class AA state meet in 15:14.8 and took second at the Roy Griak Invitational in Iowa.

Iverson is a member of the Roseville High Human Rights club, Inclusion and Engagement Commission and student council. Also a member of the school's jazz band and trombone choir, he has volunteered locally as a teacher's aide at his church. "Acer was the dominant runner in the state this year," said Ross Fleming, head coach of Mounds View High School. "He is consistent. He races hard when he is alone at the front; he doesn't need to be pushed by the competition."

Iverson has maintained a 3.94 GPA in the classroom. He has made a verbal commitment to attend Harvard University, where he will run for the cross country and track teams, beginning 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. From the 12 national winners, one male and one female athlete are each named Gatorade High School Athlete of the Year. In all, 607 athletes are honored each year.

Two-time winner Iverson joins Gatorade Minnesota Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Alex Miley (2016-17, Maple Grove Senior High School), Jaret Carpenter (2015-16, Wayzata High School), and Connor Olson (2014-15 & 2013-14, Wayzata High School) as athletes who have won the cross country award since its inception in 2007.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Iverson has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of his choosing. He is also eligible to submit an essay to win one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants for the organization of choice, which will be announced throughout the year.

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](http://www.Gatorade.com/POY), on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) or follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/Gatorade](https://www.twitter.com/Gatorade).

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