

MOUNT SI HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE WASHINGTON BOYS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (February 11, 2019) — In its 34th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced **Joe Waskom of Mount Si High School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade Washington Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year**. Waskom is the first Gatorade Washington Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Mount Si 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 Waskom as Washington'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, Waskom joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Lukas Verzbicas (2010-11, 2009-10 Carl Sandburg High School, 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 6-foot, 145-pound senior raced to the Class 4A individual state championship this past season with a time of 15:16.2. Waskom took fourth at the Nike Cross Nationals Northwest Regional championships and finished 33rd nationally at the NXN Final. He crossed the line third at the Nike BorderClash, where he was the state's top finisher, and also placed third at the Nike Portland XC Invitational.

Waskom has volunteered locally on behalf of a food bank and the Special Olympics. "No one else I've ever coached has the combination of talent, work ethic and overall awesome human nature that Joe Waskom has," said Mount Si coach Sean Sundwall. "He's worked hard every single practice for four years, and more importantly, he's been the catalyst for getting the same out of many of his teammates."

Waskom has maintained a 3.83 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in cross country and track and field on scholarship at the University of Washington 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.

Waskom joins Gatorade Washington Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year James Mwaura (2017-18, Lincoln High School), Tibeđu Proctor (2016-17, The Northwest School), Justin Janke (2015-16, North Central High School), Tanner Anderson (2014-15, North Central High School), and Kai Wilmot (2013-14, North Central 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," Waskom 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, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/Gatorade.