

**MOUNT ARARAT HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MAINE BOYS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (February 10, 2020) — In its 35th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced Lisandro Berry-Gaviria of Mount Ararat High School as its 2019-20 Gatorade Maine Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Berry-Gaviria is the first Gatorade Maine Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Mount Ararat 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 Berry-Gaviria as Maine'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, Berry-Gaviria 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, Ill.), Megan Goethals (2009-10, Rochester High School, Rochester Hills, Mich.), Jordan Hasay (2008-09, Mission College Preparatory Catholic High School, San Luis Obispo, Calif.) and Chris Derrick (2007-08, Neuqua Valley High School, Naperville, Ill.).

The state's returning Gatorade Runner of the Year, the 5-foot-9, 135-pound senior won the Class A state meet for a second-straight season this past fall with a time of 15:51.76, breaking the tape 10.27 seconds ahead of his next-closest competitor and leading the Eagles to a first-place finish as a team. Berry-Gaviria also took third at the Nike Cross National Northeast Regional championships for a second year in a row, and he finished 34th at NXN Final.

An avid photographer and guitar player, Berry-Gaviria has volunteered locally as a youth running coach. "Lisandro was a cut above the field this year," said Roger Huber, head coach of Bangor High. "I'm pretty sure he has a good sense for how good he is, but we don't know it because he told us, we know it because he showed us. He was never flashy or boisterous, always classy and understated."

Berry-Gaviria has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom and ranks No. 1 in his class. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to run on scholarship at the University of Notre Dame 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 and 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 Berry-Gaviria joins Gatorade Maine Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year Luke Laverdiere (2017-18 & 2016-17, Yarmouth High School), Paul Casavant (2015-16, Hampden Academy) and Aaron Willingham (2014-15, Mt. Blue High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Berry-Gaviria 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.