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**ALBUQUERQUE ACADEMY STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE NEW MEXICO GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 13, 2011) — In its 26<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Julia Foster of Albuquerque Academy as its 2010-11 Gatorade New Mexico Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year. Foster is the second Gatorade New Mexico Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Albuquerque Academy.

The award, which recognizes not only outstanding athletic excellence, but also high standards of academic achievement and exemplary character demonstrated on and off the racecourse, distinguishes Foster as New Mexico's best high school girls cross country runner. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year award to be announced in January, Foster joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Ryan Hall (1999-00, 2000-01, Big Bear HS, Calif.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Kevin Garnett (1992-93, Maudlin HS, S.C.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.) and Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.).

The 5-foot-8 senior raced to her second consecutive Class 4A individual state championship this past season with a time of 18:35.80, leading the Chargers to second place as a team. The state's returning Gatorade Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year, Foster won the Nike Cross Nationals Southwest Regional championships in 17:39.26, and also captured the Liberty Bell Invitational, the Lobo Invitational, the Albuquerque Academy Invitational and the Los Alamos Invitational. She finished 34<sup>th</sup> at the 2010 national Foot Locker Cross Country Championships.

Foster has maintained a 4.24 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered at a local food bank and has worked with disadvantaged youth at an area elementary school.

"Julia has been a leader and a hard worker and a role model for the rest of the team," said Albuquerque Academy head coach Claudia Bergsohn. "It's great that her career culminated in such an awesome way."

Foster remains undecided upon a collegiate destination.

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 ESPN RISE and the Gatorade high school sports leadership team, 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.

Two-time winner Foster joins Gatorade New Mexico Girls Cross Country Runners of the Year Clara Milne (2008-09, Albuquerque Academy), and Rachel Velarde (2007-08, Eldorado) as athletes who have won the cross country award since its inception in 2007.

To keep up to date on the latest happenings, become a fan of Gatorade Player of the Year on Facebook and follow us on Twitter. For more on the Gatorade Player of the Year program, including nomination information, a complete list of past winners, and the announcement of the Gatorade National Player of the Year, visit [playeroftheyear.gatorade.com](http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com).

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