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Contact: Lauren Rollins (312-729-3607)

**SIDWELL FRIENDS SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA BOYS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 20, 2011) — In its 26th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced John McGowan of Sidwell Friends School as its 2010-11 Gatorade District of Columbia Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. McGowan is the first Gatorade District of Columbia Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Sidwell Friends 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 racecourse, distinguishes McGowan as District of Columbia'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 January, McGowan 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-9 senior finished 16th at the national Foot Locker Cross Country Championships this past season, with a time of 15:37. The District's returning Gatorade Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year, McGowan won the 2010 Maryland/D.C. Private School championship in a course-record time of 15:19. He also captured titles at the Lake Forest Invitational, the Mercersburg Invitational, the Georgetown Prep Classic, the Mid-Atlantic Athletic Conference Championships and the Manhattan Invitational (Varsity D race).

McGowan has maintained an A average in the classroom. He has volunteered locally on behalf of Habitat for Humanity and Meals on Wheels, and has served as both a peer tutor and a nursery school aide.

"John doesn't back down from anybody," said Sidwell Friends head coach Bill Wooden. "He works hard, he's consistent and he always gives his best effort."

McGowan will attend Yale University this fall, where he will compete in cross country and track and field.

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 McGowan joins Gatorade District of Columbia Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Tom Harrison (2009-10, St. Albans School), and Nick Bax (2007-08, St. Albans School) 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.

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