

Contact: Lauren Rollins (312-729-3607)

**WINTERS MILL HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE MARYLAND GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 12, 2012) — In its 27th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN HS, today announced Hannah Oneda of Winters Mill High School as its 2011-12 Gatorade Maryland Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year. Oneda is the first Gatorade Maryland Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Winters Mill 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 racecourse, distinguishes Oneda as Maryland'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, Oneda 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.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.) and Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.).

The 5-foot-5 senior raced to the Class 2A individual state championship this past season with a time of 18:28, leading the Falcons to fourth place as a team. The 2011 Baltimore Sun Cross Country Runner of the Year, Oneda earned sixth place at the Foot Locker Northeast Regional championships, crossing the line in 18:26.6, and qualified for the Foot Locker Cross Country Championships where she finished 33rd with a time of 18:21.

Oneda has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. A member of the National Honor Society, she has volunteered locally as a peer tutor and was chosen to attend the HOBY Youth Leadership seminar in 2010.

"Hannah Oneda is a very modest young lady and she handles her success with more class than any runner I have ever met at this level," said Oakland Mills head coach Vicki Lang. "She dominated the running community in Maryland and then really took her success to the next level at Foot Locker."

Oneda 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 HS 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.

Oneda joins Gatorade Maryland Girls Cross Country Runners of the Year Maura Linde (2010-11, Century High School), Jessie Rubin (2009-10, Thomas S. Wootton), Anna Bosse (2008-09, Walter Johnson), and Louise Hannallah (2007-08, Winston Churchill) 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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