

Contact: Adam Woullard (312-729-3627)

**ST. ALBANS SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA BOYS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 17, 2013) — In its 28th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Tai Dinger of St. Albans School as its 2012-13 Gatorade District of Columbia Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Dinger is the third Gatorade District of Columbia Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from St. Albans 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 Dinger 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, Dinger 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 junior finished 11th at the Nike Cross Nationals Southeast Regional championships this past season, with a time of 15:35.8. Dinger tied for first at the Interstate Athletic Conference championships and finished second at the Maryland/D.C. Private School championships. He also earned a victory at the Mercersburg Invitational.

Dinger has maintained an A-minus average in the classroom. Also a talented singer and an Eagle Scout with the Boy Scouts of America, he has volunteered as a peer tutor.

"Tai combines an outstanding work ethic with fearlessness in competition," said St. Albans coach Jim Ehrenhaft. "He extracts the most from every workout and competition, and leads by example."

Dinger will begin his senior year of high school 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. The selection process is administered by the Gatorade high school sports leadership team in partnership with [USA TODAY High School Sports](#), 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.

Dinger joins Gatorade District of Columbia Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Mike Crozier (2011-12, Gonzaga College High School), John McGowan (2010-11 & 2008-09, Sidwell Friends School), 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 www.gatorade.com/poy.

###