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**Contact: Lauren Rollins (312-729-3607)**

**MCGILL-TOOLEN CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE ALABAMA GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 10, 2013) — In its 28<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Carmen Carlos of McGill-Toolen Catholic High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade Alabama Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year. Carlos is the first Gatorade Alabama Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from McGill-Toolen Catholic 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 Carlos as Alabama'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, Carlos 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 state's three-time returning Gatorade Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year, Carlos raced to a fourth consecutive Class 6A individual state championship this past season with a time of 17:20.34, leading the Yellow Jackets to third place as a team. Also the four-time Mobile Press-Register Runner of the Year, the 5-foot-9 senior captured fifth place at the Foot Locker South Regional championships in 17:12 and finished 12th at the Foot Locker Nationals in 17:52.4. She was unbeaten against Alabama competition in 2012.

Also a track standout and an accomplished artist, Carlos has maintained a 4.27 weighted GPA in the classroom. A member of the National Honor Society and a student ambassador at her school, she has volunteered locally on behalf of the Easter Seals, Servants of the Poor, Little Sisters of the Poor and National Down Syndrome Society. Carlos has also donated her time in association with her church community and the McGill-Toolen Catholic campus ministry.

"Carmen is a runner, and to truly know what that means, you must also be a runner," said McGill-Toolen Catholic High head coach Drew Bentley. "She never picks and chooses when she tries. Her only possible effort is 100 percent in all endeavors. She excels in the classroom as well as in her community. She is a most excellent ambassador for our sport, and she represents all that is good about high school athletics."

Carlos has verbally committed to an athletic scholarship at Vanderbilt University beginning 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.

Carlos joins Gatorade Alabama Girls Cross Country Runners of the Year Madeline Morgan (2008-09 & 2007-08, Mountain Brook) 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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