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**GEORGETOWN VISITATION PREPARATORY SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 10, 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 Emily Kaplan of Georgetown Visitation Preparatory School as its 2012-13 Gatorade District of Columbia Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year. Kaplan is the third Gatorade District of Columbia Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Georgetown Visitation Preparatory 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 Kaplan as District of Columbia'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, Kaplan 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-4 sophomore raced to first place at the Independent School League Championships this past season with a time of 18:51, leading the Cubs to second place as a team. Kaplan also finished second at the Glory Days Invitational, fourth at the William & Mary Invitational, fifth at the Maymont Invitational and eighth at the Octoberfest Invitational.

Kaplan has maintained a 4.19 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered on behalf of a local assisted living facility.

"She ran outdoor track last year and you could tell she was an extremely gifted runner," said Georgetown Visitation head coach Kevin Hughes. "It took some time for her to understand that cross country was a little different than track, but eventually she got it. She's an extremely hard worker who pushes herself to the limits to succeed. She has a very bright future."

Kaplan will begin her junior 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.

Kaplan joins Gatorade District of Columbia Girls Cross Country Runners of the Year Polly Terzian (2011-12, National Cathedral School), Grace Carr (2010-11, Georgetown Visitation Preparatory School), Marisa Repka (2009-10, Sidwell Friends School), Moira Ryan (2008-09, Georgetown Visitation Preparatory School), and Juashaunna Kelly (2007-08, Roosevelt) 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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