

Contact: Lauren Rollins (312-729-3607)

**SHAWNEE MISSION WEST HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE KANSAS 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 Alli Cash of Shawnee Mission West High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade Kansas Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year. Cash is the first Gatorade Kansas Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Shawnee Mission West 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 Cash as Kansas'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, Cash 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 returning Gatorade Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year, Cash raced to a second consecutive Class 6A individual state championship this past season with a time of 14:02.80, leading the Vikings to third place as a team. Also the two-time Bob Timmons Award winner as the state meet's top performer, the 5-foot-8 senior Cash placed sixth at the Nike Cross Nationals Heartland Regional championships in 18:15.33. She concluded the season unbeaten against Kansas competition.

Cash has maintained a 4.57 weighted GPA in the classroom. A member of the National Honor Society and her school's dance team, she has volunteered locally on behalf of a soup kitchen as well as her school's Cadet Teaching peer-mentoring program and the Johnson County Christmas Bureau food and clothing drive.

"In the simplest terms: 30 to 60 seconds," said Shawnee Mission West head coach Jeff Onnen. "Nobody in the state of Kansas came any closer than that in any race she ran this fall. She was simply at a completely different level than anyone else in Kansas this year and will probably go down as one of, if not the most dominant female distance runner to ever come out of Kansas."

Cash 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 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.

Cash joins Gatorade Kansas Girls Cross Country Runners of the Year Molly Milbourn (2010-11, El Dorado High School), Avery Clifton (2009-10 & 2008-09, Washburn Rural), and Laura Roxberg (2007-08, Blue Valley Northwest) 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.

###