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**THE CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL OF BALTIMORE STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE MARYLAND GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 8, 2014) — In its 29th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Ellie Gonzalez of The Catholic High School of Baltimore as its 2013-14 Gatorade Maryland Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year. Gonzalez is the first Gatorade Maryland Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from The Catholic High School of Baltimore.

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 Gonzalez 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, Gonzalez 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 captured second place at the 2013 Nike Cross Nationals Southeast Regional championships, crossing the line in 17:47 and earning a berth in the 2013 Nike Cross Nationals Final, where she placed 12th in 17:52.1. The returning Gatorade Maryland Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year, Gonzalez won the Interscholastic Athletic Association of Maryland C Conference individual title, breaking the tape in an all-conference leading time of 18:26.

Gonzalez has maintained a 4.36 GPA in the classroom. A member of the National Honor Society and her school's Theology Club, she has volunteered locally as a teaching assistant and as a youth swimming coach.

"Ellie Gonzalez is definitely a very high-quality runner," said Kevin McCoy, head coach at Centennial High. "She has been able to run at a very high level for a few years now and her performances at the Nike Cross Nationals regionals and NXN finals were probably some of the best Maryland has ever seen."

Gonzalez will attend Dartmouth University this fall, where she will compete in cross country and track and field.

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.

Gonzalez joins Gatorade Maryland Girls Cross Country Runners of the Year Caroline Beakes (2012-13, Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School), Hannah Oneda (2011-12, Winters Mill High School), 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 www.gatorade.com/poy.

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