

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact: Matt Schiffman (312-729-3672)**

**EUREKA HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE MISSOURI GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 8, 2015) — In its 30<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 Hannah Long of Eureka High School as its 2014-15 Gatorade Missouri Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year. Long is the first Gatorade Missouri Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Eureka 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 Long as Missouri'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, Long 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-7 senior captured 19th place at the national Foot Locker Cross Country Championships with a time of 18:20 this past season. The state's 2012-13 Gatorade Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year, Long placed sixth at the Foot Locker Midwest Regional championships in 17:37. Also the four-time All-Metro Runner of the Year as named by the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, she won a third consecutive Class 4 individual state championship, clocking a 17:38.29 to finish unbeaten against in-state prep competition in 2014.

Long has maintained a 4.15 weighted GPA in the classroom and serves as a member of her school's student council. A member of the National Honor Society, she has volunteered as part of a canned food drive as well as holiday gift-giving campaigns in addition to donating her time to the Special Needs Soccer Association. An avid gardener, Long has grown vegetables and landscaped to benefit both Rockwood School District's Got Your Backpack Program and the historic Stovall's Grove establishment.

"Hannah is one of a kind," said Eureka head coach Kally Fischer. "She has accomplished more than most of us in our lifetime, and she has only just begun. She has such courage that is deeper than I think she could imagine when training and in racing situations. It has been a privilege and honor to watch the past four years unfold."

Long has signed a National Letter of Intent to run on an athletic scholarship at Stanford 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.

Long joins Gatorade Missouri Girls Cross Country Runners of the Year Taylor Werner (2013-14 & 2012-13, Ste. Genevieve High School), Samantha Nightingale (2011-12, Blue Springs South High School), Colleen Quigley (2010-11, Nerinx Hall), Emily Sisson (2009-10 & 2008-09, Parkway Central), and Diane Robison (2007-08, Parkway Central) 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](http://www.gatorade.com/poy).

###