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GREER MIDDLE COLLEGE CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED GATORADE SOUTH CAROLINA BOYS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (January 15, 2015) — In its 30th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Micah Williams of Greer Middle College Charter High School as its 2014-15 Gatorade South Carolina Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Williams is the first Gatorade South Carolina Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Greer Middle College Charter 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 Williams as South Carolina's best high school boys cross country runner. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year award to be announced in January, Williams 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.), Kevin Garnett (1992-93, Maudlin HS, S.C.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.) and Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.).

The 6-foot-1, 155-pound senior raced to the Class A individual state championship with a time of 15:35.69 this past season, leading the Blazers to the state title as a team. A four-time Class A All-State selection, Williams finished eighth at the USA Track & Field Junior Olympics Cross Country Championships in 15:47.91. He crossed the line in 37th place at the Foot Locker South Regional championships in 15:36, concluding a season during which he clocked the state's fastest time by a prep boy in 16 races.

Williams has maintained a 5.13 weighted GPA in the classroom and ranks No. 1 in his graduating class. A member of his church's youth group, the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and the National Honor Society, he has served as president of both Greer Middle College's student body and the state's National Beta Club chapter. In addition to donating his time as a youth basketball instructor and referee, Williams has volunteered more than 200 hours to local charitable organizations, including Greer Soup Kitchen, Greer Relief and Resources Agency, Grace Place and Pendleton Place for Children and Families. He has also participated in leadership summits and service-mission trips inside the U.S. and abroad.

"From the time I met him as a coach, you knew had the chance to be special," said Chuck Cunningham, assistant basketball coach at rival Riverside High. "That gift you sensed from him wasn't because he was the most gifted athlete on the playing field; it was because of his burning desire to be great and refusing to get out-worked. I could go on and on about his accomplishments as an athlete, but what sets Williams apart is his character. Along with his drive to be the best, he has the ability to motivate his teammates and get them to perform at a championship level."

Williams has verbally committed to an athletic scholarship at Clemson 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.

Williams joins Gatorade South Carolina Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Brent Demarest (2013-14 & 2012-13, Porter-Gaud School), Roland Hakes (2011-12 & 2010-11, Dutch Fork High School), Aaron Ramirez (2009-10 & 2008-09, Woodmont), and Luke Lovelace (2007-08, Chapin) 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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