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

CHICAGO (January 14, 2016) — In its 31<sup>st</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Maria Coffin of Annapolis High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Maryland Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year. Coffin is the first Gatorade Maryland Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Annapolis 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 Coffin 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, Coffin 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 junior raced to the Class 4A individual state championship this past season with a time of 18:25.2. A 2015 Washington Post Fall First Team All-Met selection, Coffin took third place at the Foot Locker Northeast Regional championships, crossing the line in 17:42.7. She also qualified for the national Foot Locker Cross Country Championships where she finished 27<sup>th</sup> in 18:22.6.

Coffin has maintained a 4.39 weighted GPA in the classroom. A member of her school concert choir, she has volunteered locally on behalf of her church youth group and as a youth track & field coach.

"Maria Coffin has an unwavering focus and dedication to the sport of running," said Annapolis High head coach Paula Carrigan. "Her passion is evident and she is always curious and wants to learn as much as she can to improve and become a stronger runner. With her workouts and racing, she is willing to find her new edge, explore it and push those limits to the maximum."

Coffin will begin her senior 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.

Coffin joins Gatorade Maryland Girls Cross Country Runners of the Year Nora McUmber (2014-15, Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School), Ellie Gonzalez (2013-14, The Catholic High School of Baltimore), 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 High School), Anna Bosse (2008-09, Walter Johnson High School), and Louise Hannallah (2007-08, Winston Churchill High School) 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).

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