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**CHRISTIAN ACADEMY OF KNOXVILLE STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE TENNESSEE GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 23, 2017) — In its 32nd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Rebecca Story of Christian Academy of Knoxville as its 2016-17 Gatorade Tennessee Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year. Story is the first Gatorade Tennessee Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Christian Academy of Knoxville.

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 Story as Tennessee'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/February, Story joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Lukas Verzbicas (2010-11, 2009-10 Carl Sandburg, Orland Park, Ill.), Megan Goethals (2009-10, Rochester, Rochester Hills, Mich.), Jordan Hasay (2008-09, Mission College Prep., San Luis Obispo, Calif.) and Chris Derrick (2007-08, Neuqua Valley, Naperville, Ill.).

The 2015-16 Gatorade State Track & Field Athlete of the Year, the 5-foot-5 junior took bronze at the national Foot Locker Cross Country Championships this past season, earning All-American honors. Story also won the Class A-AA state meet with a time of 17:49.7, breaking the tape 1:12.9 ahead of her next-closest competitor and leading the Warriors to a third-place finish as a team. Undefeated against in-state competition, she represented first-place Team USA at the Great Edinburgh International XCcountry competition in Scotland earlier this month, where she took 24th.

A member of the Duke University TIP Talented and Gifted Program, Story is a member of the CAK student senate and Spanish Club. She has volunteered locally on behalf of multiple community-service initiatives through her church youth group. "Rebecca continues to raise the bar and delivers with her consistency and growth," said Tony Cosey, head coach of Christian Academy of Knoxville. "I am very fortunate to be able to coach and develop such a great talent."

Story has maintained a weighted 4.27 GPA in the classroom. She 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 Player of the Year Selection Committee, 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.

Story joins Gatorade Tennessee Girls Cross Country Runners of the Year Taylor Cuneo (2015-16 & 2014-15, Central Magnet School), Bailee Dean (2013-14, Cane Ridge High School), Barbara Lee Ball (2012-13, Lipscomb Academy), Haley Ward (2011-12, McMinn County High School), Joanna Thompson (2010-11, Knoxville Catholic High School), Megan Ferowich (2009-10, Knoxville Catholic High School), and Kathy Kroeger (2008-09 & 2007-08, Independence High School) as athletes who have won the cross country award since its inception in 2007.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Story will be able to select a national or local youth sports organization to receive a grant as part of the Gatorade Play It Forward program. Every Gatorade Player of the Year state winner receives a \$1,000 grant to donate and will have the opportunity to enter for an additional \$10,000 spotlight grant by writing a brief essay explaining why their selected organization deserves additional support. 12 spotlight grants - one for each sport - will be announced throughout the year.

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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