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**LAKE BRADDOCK HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE VIRGINIA 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 Kate Murphy of Lake Braddock High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Virginia Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year. Murphy is the second Gatorade Virginia Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Lake Braddock 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 Murphy as Virginia'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, Murphy 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 5-foot-6 senior won her second-straight Group 6A state meet title this past season with a meet-record time of 17:08, breaking the tape 42 seconds ahead of her next-closest competitor and leading the Bruins to a first-place finish as a team. A semifinalist in the 1,500-meter run at the U.S. Olympic Trials last summer, Murphy won the Nike Cross Nationals Southeast Regional championships and then placed 33rd at the NXN Final, lifting Lake Braddock to a runner-up finish as a team. She was the 2016 Washington Post All-Met Cross Country Runner of the Year.

Murphy has volunteered locally with Eddie's Club, a recreational program for children with disabilities, and as a youth running coach. She has also donated her time on behalf of multiple community-service initiatives through her church youth group. "Kate was challenged in multiple meets, by exceptional runners, and she made victories look effortless," said Adam Daniels, head coach of Patriot High. "What makes her so good is her consistency. You know each race you are going to get your best from her."

Murphy has maintained a 3.61 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to run cross country on scholarship at the University of Oregon 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.

Murphy joins Gatorade Virginia Girls Cross Country Runners of the Year Weini Kelati (2015-16, Heritage High School), Libby Davidson (2014-15, E.C. Glass High School), Caroline Alcorta (2013-14, West Springfield High School), Sophie Chase (2012-13 & 2011-12, Lake Braddock High School), Annie LeHardy (2010-11, Hidden Valley High School), Kathleen Stevens (2009-10, Blacksburg High School), Megan Marsico (2008-09, Glenvar High School), and Kathleen Lautzenheiser (2007-08, Midlothian High School) as athletes who have won the cross country award since its inception in 2007.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Murphy 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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