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**HOLY NAMES ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE WASHINGTON 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 Jordan Oakes of Holy Names Academy as its 2016-17 Gatorade Washington Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year. Oakes is the first Gatorade Washington Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Holy Names Academy.

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 Oakes as Washington'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, Oakes 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-8 senior raced to the Class 3A individual state championship this past season with a time of 17:44, leading the Cougars to the state title as a team. The state's returning Gatorade Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year, Oakes also broke the tape at the Nike Border Clash, the Nike Portland Invitational and the Nike Hole in the Wall Invitational. She took fifth at the Foot Locker West Regional championships and was 31st at the national Foot Locker Cross Country Championships.

Oakes has volunteered locally on behalf of the Woodland Park Zoo, the U.S. Youth Soccer TOPSoccer program serving young athletes with disabilities and Jack and Jill of America, an African-American youth-empowerment organization. "Over the last four seasons, Jordan has matured into a focused and ferocious racer," said Holy Names coach Erin McCormick. "She leads with her heart in everything she does, which has made her an exceptional athlete, teammate, competitor and person."

Oakes has maintained a weighted 4.29 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in cross country and track and field on scholarship at Stanford University 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.

Two-time winner Oakes joins Gatorade Washington Girls Cross Country Runners of the Year Lindsey Bradley (2014-15, Richland High School), Alexa Efraimson (2013-14, Camas High School), Amy-Eloise Neale (2012-13, 2010-11 & 2009-10, Glacier Peak High School), Katie Knight (2011-12, North Central High School), Alyssa Andrews (2008-09, Gig Harbor High School), and Andrea Nelson (2007-08, Shadle Park High School) as athletes who have won the cross country award since its inception in 2007.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Oakes 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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