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**NATIONAL CATHEDRAL SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA 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 Page Lester of National Cathedral School as its 2016-17 Gatorade District of Columbia Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year. Lester is the second Gatorade District of Columbia Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from National Cathedral 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 Lester as District of Columbia'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, Lester 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-7 junior raced to first place individually at the D.C. State Athletic Association Championships this past season with a time of 18:12. Lester also won the Maryland/D.C. Private School championship, the Independent School League championship and the Georgetown Prep Classic. She finished fifth at the Foot Locker Northeast Regional championships and 32nd nationally at the Foot Locker Cross Country Championships.

Also a talented singer, Lester has volunteered locally as a tutor with the Latino Student Fund. "She was the only National Cathedral runner to break 19 minutes in the 5K, and now she's the only one to break 18 minutes," said National Cathedral coach Jim Ehrenhaft. "Her effort is always outstanding, and her fearlessness in competition inspires her teammates. She's a joy to work with."

Lester has maintained a 3.53 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.

Lester joins Gatorade District of Columbia Girls Cross Country Runners of the Year Taylor Knibb (2015-16 & 2014-15, Sidwell Friends School), Megan Wilson (2013-14, Sidwell Friends School), Emily Kaplan (2012-13, Georgetown Visitation Preparatory School), Polly Terzian (2011-12, National Cathedral School), Grace Carr (2010-11, Georgetown Visitation Preparatory School), Marisa Repka (2009-10, Sidwell Friends School), Moira Ryan (2008-09, Georgetown Visitation Preparatory School), and Juashaunna Kelly (2007-08, Roosevelt High School) as athletes who have won the cross country award since its inception in 2007.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Lester 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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