

**Contact: John Manzo (312-729-3656)**

**PIONEER HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE MICHIGAN GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 23, 2017) — In its 32<sup>nd</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Anne Forsyth of Pioneer High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Michigan Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year. Forsyth is the first Gatorade Michigan Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Pioneer 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 Forsyth as Michigan'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, Forsyth 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 junior raced to fifth place at the national Foot Locker Cross Country Championships this past season, crossing the line in 17:46.05 to capture All-American honors. Forsyth won the Foot Locker Midwest Regional championships with a time of 17:17.3, took 3rd at the Nike Cross Nationals Midwest Regional championships and earned All-American status again with a 14th-place finish at the NXN Final. She won the Portage Invitational and placed second at the Division 1 state meet in 17:35.

Also a talented musician, Forsyth has volunteered on behalf of the American Red Cross and has participated in a service trip to a Native American reservation in South Dakota. "Anne really blossomed this season," said Pioneer coach Nancy Boudreau. "She worked very hard—with both running workouts and strength and conditioning workouts—and she ran with much more confidence and drive."

Forsyth has maintained a 3.90 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.

Forsyth joins Gatorade Michigan Girls Cross Country Runners of the Year Madison Troy (2015-16, Grandville High School), Audrey Belf (2014-15, Seaholm High School), Kirsten Olling (2013-14, Breckenridge High School), Julia Bos (2012-13, Grand Rapids Christian High School), Erin Finn (2011-12, West Bloomfield High School), Gabrielle Anzalone (2010-11, Grand Blanc High School), Megan Goethals (2009-10 & 2008-09, Rochester High School), and Katie Haines (2007-08, Rockford High School) as athletes who have won the cross country award since its inception in 2007.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Forsyth 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](http://www.gatorade.com/poy).

###