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**THE CLASSICAL ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE COLORADO BOYS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 30, 2017) — In its 32<sup>nd</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Tanner Norman of The Classical Academy as its 2016-17 Gatorade Colorado Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Norman is the first Gatorade Colorado Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from The Classical 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 Norman as Colorado's best high school boys cross country runner. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year award to be announced in January, Norman 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.), Donn Cabral (2007-08, Glastonbury High School, Glastonbury, Conn.) and Chris Derrick (2007-08, Neuqua Valley, Naperville, Ill.).

The 5-foot-11, 140-pound senior raced to the Class 3A individual state championship this past season with a time of 15:44.7, leading the Titans to second place as a team. Norman finished seventh at the Nike Cross Nationals Southwest Regional championships and placed eighth nationally at the NXN Final in 15:46.3, earning All-American honors in the process. Norman also won the Region 2 championships, the TCA Titan Thunder Invitational and the Centaurus Invitational.

Norman has volunteered locally on behalf of food-donation drives and youth sports programs. "Tanner has been an exceptional leader and competitor throughout high school, but particularly these last two years," said The Classical Academy coach Alan Versaw. "He's been beyond exemplary in setting an example of training hard, doing exactly what he's asked to do, putting in strength conditioning work on his own, and being ready—without fail—on race day."

Norman has maintained a 3.81 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in cross country and track and field on scholarship at Iowa State 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.

Norman joins Gatorade Colorado Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Paul Roberts (2015-16, Lyons High School), Eric Hamer (2014-15, Palmer Ridge High School), Zach Alhamra (2013-14, Pine Creek High School), Ashi Geberkidane (2012-13, Denver East High School), Ty Williams (2011-12, Telluride High School), Spencer Wenck (2010-11, Palmer Ridge High School), Scott Fauble (2009-10, Wheat Ridge High School), Evan Appel (2008-09, Dakota Ridge High School), and Kevin Williams (2007-08, D'Evelyn High School) as athletes who have won the cross country award since its inception in 2007.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Norman 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).

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