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**ALBUQUERQUE ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE NEW MEXICO 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 Jordan Lesansee of Albuquerque Academy as its 2016-17 Gatorade New Mexico Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Lesansee is the second Gatorade New Mexico Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Albuquerque 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 Lesansee as New Mexico'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, Lesansee 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-10, 140-pound senior won the Class 5A state meet this past season with a time of 15:29.15, breaking the tape 25.7 seconds ahead of his next-closest competitor and leading the Chargers to a first-place finish as a team. Lesansee placed sixth at the Nike Cross Nationals Southwest Regional championships and finished 45th at the NXN Final. He set a course record at the Albuquerque Academy Invitational in 15:10.09, the fastest prep 5K time of the year in New Mexico.

Lesansee serves as a coordinator with Native Health Initiative, a community-outreach group. Through NHI, he ran an event called Running is Medicine which consisted of a 5K fun run and a health career fair for children. "Jordan was very good this year, exceptionally good," said Rob Hipwood, head coach of Los Alamos High. "Jordan dominated the state meet, showing patience early and then just hammering the field in the second half of the race."

Lesansee has maintained an A-minus average in the classroom. He remains undecided upon a collegiate destination.

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.

Lesansee joins Gatorade New Mexico Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Andrew Bosquez (2015-16, Hobbs High School), Niles Thomas (2014-15, Miyamura High School), Colin Hemez (2013-14, Los Alamos High School), Luis Martinez (2012-13 & 2011-12, Sue Cleveland High School), Neil Longenbaugh (2010-11, Albuquerque Academy), Kyle Pittman (2009-10, Los Alamos High School), Bryce Palmer (2008-09, Eldorado High School), and Ben Johnson (2007-08, Albuquerque Academy) as athletes who have won the cross country award since its inception in 2007.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Lesansee 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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