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**NATIONAL CATHEDRAL SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 29, 2018) — In its 33rd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Page Lester of National Cathedral School as its 2017-18 Gatorade District of Columbia Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year. Lester was the first Gatorade District of Columbia Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from National Cathedral School when she won the honor her junior year (2016-17).

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, 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 senior raced to first place at the D.C. State Athletic Association Championships this past season with a time of 18:05. The District's returning Gatorade Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year, Lester also finished fifth at the Foot Locker Northeast Regional championships and took 14th at the national Foot Locker Cross Country Championships, earning All-American honors. She also broke the tape at the Independent School League championship, the Bullis Invitational and the DCXC Invitational in 2017.

The sports editor of her school newspaper, Lester has volunteered on behalf of A Wider Circle, which assists families in poverty. "It's true that no runner in the area surpassed Page this season, and no runner in school history has run faster," said National Cathedral coach Jim Ehrenhaft. "Still, Page has always taken as much pride, if not more, in her teammates' accomplishments."

Lester has maintained a 3.66 GPA in the classroom. She will attend Princeton University this fall, where she will compete in cross country and track and field.

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 Lester stands with 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) 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 the conversation on Twitter #GatoradePOY. 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 <http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com/>.

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