FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Kelsey Rhoney (312-729- 3685)

MATH & SCIENCE ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE MINNESOTA 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 Tierney Wolfgram of Math & Science Academy as its 2017-18 Gatorade Minnesota Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year. Wolfgram is the first Gatorade Minnesota Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Math & Science 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 Wolfgram as Minnesota'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, Wolfgram 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-8 freshman earned All-American status by crossing the line in seventh at the national Foot Locker Cross Country Championships with a time of 17:51.9. Wolfgram also set a state 5K record at the Nike Cross Nationals Heartland Regional championships, finishing first in 16:48.67, before finishing 27th at NXN Final. She captured the Class A state meet title in 17:31.6, breaking the tape 48.1 seconds ahead of her next-closest competitor.

A member of the school band and the robotics club, Wolfgram has volunteered locally as a youth soccer referee. "Tierney is a fierce competitor who races with an all-in mentality," said Brendan Ruter, head coach of Math & Science Academy. "She attacks each race from the gun and never lets up."

Wolfgram has maintained a 3.57 GPA in the classroom. She will begin her sophomore 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.

Wolfgram joins Gatorade Minnesota Girls Cross Country Runners of the Year Lauren Peterson (2016-17, Farmington High School), Bethany Hasz (2013-14, Jefferson High School & 2015-16, Alexandria Area High School), Megan Hasz (2014-15, Alexandria Area High School), Maria Hauger (2012-13, 2011-12, 2010-11 & 2009-10, Shakopee High School), Cassy Opitz (2008-09, Eden Prairie High School), and Laura Hughes (2007-08, Mankato West High School) as athletes who have won the cross country award since its inception in 2007.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Wolfgram 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/.

###