

**WEST VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE ALASKA GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 28, 2019) — In its 34<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Kendall Kramer of West Valley High School as its 2018-19 Gatorade Alaska Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year. Kramer is the first Gatorade Alaska Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from West Valley 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 Kramer as Alaska'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 February, Kramer joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Lukas Verzbicas (2010-11, 2009-10 Carl Sandburg High School, Orland Park, Ill.), Megan Goethals (2009-10, Rochester High School, Rochester Hills, Mich.), Jordan Hasay (2008-09, Mission College Preparatory Catholic High School, San Luis Obispo, Calif.) and Chris Derrick (2007-08, Neuqua Valley High School, Naperville, Ill.).

The 5-foot-3 junior raced to the Division 1 individual state championship this past season with a time of 17:51.1, leading the Wolfpack to third place as a team. Kramer also won the Region VI championship, the Palmer Invitational and the Interior Invitational, while placing second at the Nike Hole in the Wall Invitational.

Also a Nordic skiing standout, Kramer has volunteered locally on behalf of the Golden Heart Rotary Club. "Kendall has become one of the strongest high school runners to come out of Alaska," said West Valley coach Daniel Callahan. "She has a strong drive to achieve at the highest level, and as a result she continues to improve by huge margins—even though she's been running at a high level right from her freshman year."

Kramer has maintained a 4.0 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.

Two-time winner Kramer joins Gatorade Alaska Girls Cross Country Runners of the Year Sadie Tuckwood (2016-17, Juneau-Douglas High School), Briahna Gerlach (2015-16, Glennallen High School), and Allie Ostrander (2014-15 & 2013-14, Kenai Central High School) as athletes who have won the cross country award since its inception in 2007.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Kramer has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of her choosing. She is also eligible to submit an essay to win one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants for the organization of choice, which will be announced throughout the year.

Since the program's inception in 1985, Gatorade Player of the Year award recipients have won hundreds of professional and college championships, and many have also turned into pillars in their communities, becoming coaches, business owners and educators.

To learn more about the Gatorade Player of the Year program, check out past winners or to nominate student-athletes, visit [www.Gatorade.com/POY](http://www.Gatorade.com/POY), on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY](http://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) or follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/Gatorade](http://www.twitter.com/Gatorade).