

**MARIANAPOLIS PREPARATORY SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE CONNECTICUT GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 28, 2019) — In its 34th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Sydney Masciarelli of Marianapolis Preparatory School as its 2018-19 Gatorade Connecticut Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year. Masciarelli is the first Gatorade Connecticut Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Marianapolis Preparatory 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 Masciarelli as Connecticut'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, Masciarelli 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-10 sophomore raced to a national title at the Foot Locker Cross Country Championships this past season, breaking the tape in 17:00.3. Masciarelli also won the Foot Locker Northeast Regional championships in 17:12.6 and took first at the New England Prep School Division 4 championships in 17:51. She earned additional wins at the Canterbury Invitational and the Wayland Cross Country Festival in 2018.

Also a basketball standout, Masciarelli has volunteered locally on behalf of a food pantry, youth basketball camps and the U.S. Marine Corps Toys for Tots Foundation. "Sydney is a quietly confident and extremely humble athlete who has an unmatched natural ability for running," said Marianapolis coach Emily Gaudet. "She never makes a big deal about her achievements and is always looking to improve."

Masciarelli has maintained a 3.51 GPA in the classroom. She will begin her junior 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.

Masciarelli joins Gatorade Connecticut Girls Cross Country Runners of the Year Morgan McCormick (2017-18 & 2016-17, Wilton High School), and Hannah DeBalsi (2015-16, 2014-15 & 2013-14, Staples 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," Masciarelli 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, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/Gatorade.