

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

**CHICAGO** (January 27, 2020) — In its 35<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 **2019-20 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 field, 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 senior raced to the Division 1 individual state championship this past season with a time of 17:38.3, leading the Wolfpack to second place as a team. The state's returning Gatorade Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year, Kramer also won the Region VI championship, the Palmer Invitational, the Kodiak Invitational and the Mt. SAC Invitational.

Also a Nordic skiing standout, Kramer has volunteered locally on behalf of the Golden Heart Rotary Club and the Interior Youth Winter Carnival. "The progression of Kendall's performance in cross country over her high school years is extraordinary," said West Valley coach Daniel Callahan. "She's a dedicated two-sport athlete who trains at a high level all year round."

Kramer has maintained a 4.08 GPA in the classroom. She 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 and field, and awards one National Player of the Year in each sport. From the 12 national winners, one male and one female athlete are each named Gatorade High School Athlete of the Year. In all, 607 athletes are honored each year.

Three-time winner Kramer joins Gatorade Alaska Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year Sadie Tuckwood (2016-17, Juneau-Douglas High School), Briahna Gerlach (2015-16, Glennallen High School) and Allie Ostrander (2014-15, Kenai Central High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

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).