

**RIVERVIEW HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE FLORIDA GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 27, 2020) — In its 35th year of honoring the nation’s best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced **Alyssa Hendrix of Riverview High School** as its **2019-20 Gatorade Florida Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year**. Hendrix is the second Gatorade Florida Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Riverview 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 Hendrix as Florida’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, Hendrix 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-1 senior raced to the Class 4A individual state championship this past season with a time of 17:19.4. Hendrix also earned victories at the FSU Pre-State Invitational, the North Port Invitational and the District 4 championships, while placing fourth at the Great American Cross Country Festival. She finished 9th at the Foot Locker South Regional championships and was 15th at the national Foot Locker Cross Country Championships, earning All-American honors.

Hendrix has volunteered locally on behalf of Metropolitan Ministries, a homeless shelter and youth soccer programs. “Alyssa has been an inspiration to the running community,” said Riverview coach Mary Rivera. “She shows that when you put your mind to anything, you will succeed. I can’t wait to see what she accomplishes at North Carolina State.”

Hendrix has maintained a 3.95 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in cross country and track and field on scholarship at North Carolina State University 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 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.

Hendrix joins recent Gatorade Florida Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year TSION YARED (2018-19, Pine Crest School), Ana Wallace (2017-18, Chiles High School), Bailey Hertenstein (2016-17 & 2015-16, Riverview High School), and Rafaella Gibbons (2014-15, Winter Park High School), among the state’s list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade’s cause marketing platform “Play it Forward,” Hendrix 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.