

**STILLWATER AREA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MINNESOTA 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 **Analee Weaver of Stillwater Area High School** as its **2019-20 Gatorade Minnesota Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year**. Weaver is the first Gatorade Minnesota Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Stillwater Area 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 Weaver 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 February, Weaver 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 junior won the Class AA state meet this past season with a time of 17:46.1, breaking the tape 6.7 seconds ahead of her next-closest competitor and leading the Ponies to a fifth-place finish as a team. Weaver earned All-American honors by finishing 14th at the national Foot Locker Cross Country Championships and she also qualified for the Nike Cross Nationals Final, placing 29th.

A member of the Stillwater Nordic Ski team during the winter, Weaver is the treasurer of the Stillwater High student body. She has volunteered locally with a program serving foster children, and she has donated her time as a child care aide at her church. "Analee Weaver had an outstanding season," said Patti Percival, head coach of White Bear Lake High. "She dominated most of the races she competed in this season. Analee has been a very good runner the past few seasons but really took it to an elite level this season."

Weaver 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 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.

Weaver joins recent Gatorade Minnesota Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year Emily Covert (2018-19, Washburn High School), Tierney Wolfgram (2017-18, Math & Science Academy), Lauren Peterson (2016-17, Farmington High School), Bethany Hasz (2015-16, Alexandria Area High School) and Megan Hasz (2014-15, Alexandria Area High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Weaver 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.