

**THE LAWRENCEVILLE SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE NEW JERSEY 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 **Charlotte Bednar of The Lawrenceville School** as its **2019-20 Gatorade New Jersey Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year**. Bednar is the first Gatorade New Jersey Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from The Lawrenceville 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 Bednar as New Jersey'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, Bednar 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-2 sophomore broke the tape at the Nike Cross Nationals Northeast Regional championships this past season, clocking a winning time of 18:00. Bednar placed eighth at the Nike Cross Nationals Finals, earning All-American honors. She also won the New Jersey Prep championships, the Shore Coaches Invitational, the Six Flags Wild Safari Invitational and the Mid-Atlantic Prep League championships.

A talented pianist, Bednar has volunteered locally on behalf of a soup kitchen, clothing drives for the needy and Ronald McDonald House Charities. "Charlotte is a phenomenal talent who is still just figuring out how to train and race," said Lawrenceville coach Katie Chaput. "She loves to compete, loves to run and doesn't let up when she's challenged in a race. She improved in almost every race this season compared to last season."

Bednar has maintained a B average 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 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.

Bednar joins recent Gatorade New Jersey Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year Abby Loveys (2018-19, Randolph High School), Monica Hebner (2017-18, Northern Highlands Regional High School), Alyssa Aldridge (2016-17 & 2015-16, Mainland Regional High School), and Eve Glasergreen (2014-15, North Hunterdon High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

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