

**ISSAQUAH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE WASHINGTON 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 **Julia David-Smith of Issaquah High School** as its **2019-20 Gatorade Washington Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year**. David-Smith is the first Gatorade Washington Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Issaquah 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 David-Smith as Washington'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, David-Smith 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-6 junior raced in the Class 4A individual state championship this past season with a time of 17:26.2. David-Smith also won the Bellevue Invitational, the Curtis Invitational and the Kingco championships. She took seventh at the Nike Cross Nationals Northwest Regional championships and finished 18th nationally at the Nike Cross Nationals Finals, earning All-American honors.

David-Smith has volunteered locally on behalf of a food and clothing bank for the needy, a pet adoption center and a youth basketball team. "Julia enthusiastically embraces challenges and learns from every one of her races," said Issaquah coach Gwen Robertson. "She's an athlete who will give it her best effort every time the gun goes off."

David-Smith has maintained a 3.25 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.

David-Smith joins recent Gatorade Washington Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year Ella Borsheim (2018-19, Bellarmine Preparatory School), Katie Thronson (2017-18, Lewis and Clark High School), Jordan Oakes (2016-17 & 2015-16, Holy Names Academy), and Lindsey Bradley (2014-15, Richland High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," David-Smith 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).