

**MIRA COSTA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE CALIFORNIA GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (January 24, 2022) — In its 37<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Dalia Frias** of **Mira Costa High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade California Girls Cross Country Player of the Year**. Frias is the first Gatorade California Girls Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Mira Costa 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 Frias as California's best high school girls cross country player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Cross Country Player of the Year award to be announced in February, Frias joins an elite alumni association of 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 senior raced to the Division 2 individual state championship this past season with a time of 16:52, leading the Mustangs to the state title as a team. Frias also won the Woodbridge Classic, the Mt. SAC Invitational and the Southern Section Championships. She placed fifth at the national Garmin RunningLane Cross Country Championships, earning All-American honors in the process.

Frias has volunteered locally on behalf of an assisted-living center and beach clean-up initiatives. "What sets Dalia apart from other runners is her talent combined with her incredible work ethic," said Mira Costa High School coach Renee Williams-Smith. "She has developed the ability to enjoy the training and racing at the highest level, while bringing everyone along for the ride with her."

Frias has maintained a 4.09 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to run on scholarship at Duke 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 & field, and awards one National Player of the Year in each sport. The selection process is administered by the Gatorade Player of the Year Selection Committee, which leverages experts including coaches, scouts, media and others as sources to help evaluate and determine the state winners in each sport.

Frias joins recent Gatorade California Girls Cross Country Players of the Year Riley Chamberlain (2020-21, Del Oro High School), Charlie Dorostkar (2019-20, Canyon Crest Academy), Kristin Fahy (2018-19, La Costa Canyon High School), and Claudia Lane (2017-18, Malibu High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Gatorade has a long-standing history of serving athlete communities and understands how sports instill valuable lifelong skills on and off the field. Through Gatorade's "Play it Forward" platform, Frias has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national organization of their choosing that helps young athletes realize the benefits of playing sports. Frias is also eligible to submit a short video explaining why the organization they chose is deserving of one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants, which will be announced throughout the year. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners' grants have totaled more than \$3.5 million across more than 1,300 organizations.

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 [playeroftheyear.gatorade.com](http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com) or follow us on social media on Facebook at [facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://facebook.com/GatoradePOY), Instagram at [instagram.com/Gatorade](https://instagram.com/Gatorade) and Twitter at [twitter.com/Gatorade](https://twitter.com/Gatorade).