

**MARET SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 24, 2022) — In its 37th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Marisa Poe** of **Maret School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade District of Columbia Girls Cross Country Player of the Year**. Poe is the first Gatorade District of Columbia Girls Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Maret 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 Poe as District of Columbia'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, Poe 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-7 senior raced to the D.C. Interscholastic Athletic Association championship this past season with a time of 18:59.7. Poe also won the Landon Invitational and the Georgetown Prep Classic, while placing second at the Independent School League championships.

President of her school's senior class, Poe has served as editor of the school newspaper and as an admissions tour guide. "Marisa is an example of excellence for the whole team," said Maret School coach David Raisler. "She looks forward to the most challenging workouts and thrives on pushing herself to achieve at a higher level."

Poe has maintained a 3.96 GPA in the classroom. She remains undecided upon a collegiate destination.

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.

Poe joins recent Gatorade District of Columbia Girls Cross Country Players of the Year Lili Grant (2020-21, Georgetown Visitation Preparatory School), Meredith Gotzman (2019-20, St. John's College High School), Claire Wigglesworth (2018-19, Woodrow Wilson High School), and Page Lester (2017-18, National Cathedral 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, Poe 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. Poe 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 or follow us on social media on Facebook at facebook.com/GatoradePOY, Instagram at instagram.com/Gatorade and Twitter at twitter.com/Gatorade.

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