

**WEST VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE ALASKA BOYS CROSS COUNTRY PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (January 31, 2022) — In its 37<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Daniel Abramowicz** of **West Valley High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Alaska Boys Cross Country Player of the Year**. Abramowicz is the first Gatorade Alaska Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from West Valley 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 Abramowicz as Alaska's best high school boys cross country player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Cross Country Player of the Year award to be announced in February, Abramowicz 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 6-foot-1, 150-pound senior raced to the Division 1 individual state championship this past season with a time of 16:12, leading the Wolfpack to the state title as a team. Abramowicz also won the Region 4 championship, the George Plumley Invitational and the Kodiak Invitational. He also broke the tape at the Div. 3-5 Team Sweepstakes race at California's prestigious Mt. SAC Invitational.

Abramowicz has served as a peer tutor and has volunteered locally on behalf of both the Golden Heart Rotary Club and Bethel Church. "Daniel didn't start out being the best when he was in middle school," said West Valley High School coach Hannibal Grubis, "But now he's the top runner in the state and most likely our school's valedictorian. He's successful because he's talented, hard-working and very clear-headed. I've been more impressed by him every year I've had the opportunity to work with him."

Abramowicz has maintained a 4.35 GPA in the classroom. He 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.

Abramowicz joins recent Gatorade Alaska Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Tristian Merchant (2020-21 & 2019-20, Anchorage Christian School), Daniel Bausch (2018-19, Chugiak High School), and Jacob Moos (2017-18, Galena City Schools), 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, Abramowicz 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. Abramowicz 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).

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