

**WILLIAM FLOYD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE NEW YORK GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 22, 2024) — In its 39th year of honoring the nation’s most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Zariel Macchia** of **William Floyd High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade New York Girls Cross Country Player of the Year**. Macchia is the first Gatorade New York Girls Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from William Floyd High School.

The award, which celebrates the nation’s top high school athletes for excellence on the field, in the classroom and in the community, distinguishes Macchia as New York’s best high school girls cross country player. From CEOs and coaches to star athletes, Gatorade Player of the Year winners showcase the power of sport, touting an all-star group of alumni that includes Irene Riggs (2022-23, 2021-22 & 2020-21, Morgantown High School, Morgantown, W. Va.), Katelyn Tuohy (2019-20, 2018-19 & 2017-18, North Rockland High School, Thiels, N.Y.) and Jordan Hasay (2008-09, Mission College Preparatory Catholic High School, San Luis Obispo, Calif.)

The 5-foot-9 junior raced to victory at the NY Federation Championships this past season, breaking the tape in 17:59.4 to win by nearly 25 seconds. Macchia followed up by winning the Foot Locker Northeast Regional championship, setting the stage for a 10th-place finish at Foot Locker nationals to earn Second Team All-American honors as the state’s top runner at the event. She took second at the Class A state championships, a loss she avenged at Foot Locker. She also clocked a personal-best 17:01 to win the Girls Race of Champions at the Nike XC Town Twilight Invitational.

Macchia helped establish an ecological and environmental center for her community and has volunteered locally as part of multiple Science Bowl events geared toward low-income and students of color. “From her triumph at the Foot Locker Northeast Regional to her Top 10 finish at Nationals, Zariel Macchia was a model of excellence in 2023,” said Rich Gonzalez of PrepCalTrack. “She stamped that designation home by winning the Federation meet by a commanding margin.”

Macchia has maintained a 4.3 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 & 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.

Macchia joins recent Gatorade New York Girls Cross Country Players of the Year Karrie Baloga (2022-23 & 2021-22, Cornwall Central High School), Brooke Rauber (2020-21, Tully High School) and Katelyn Tuohy (2019-20, 2018-19 & 2017-18, North Rockland High School), among the state’s list of former award winners.

As part of Gatorade’s commitment to breaking down barriers in sport, every Player of the Year also receives a grant to donate to a social impact partner. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners’ grants have totaled more than \$4.9 million across more than 1,600 organizations.

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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