

**H.H. DOW HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MICHIGAN GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 16, 2025) — In its 40th year of honoring the nation's most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Victoria Garces** of **H.H. Dow High School** is the **2024-25 Gatorade Michigan Girls Cross Country Player of the Year**. Garces is the first Gatorade Michigan **Girls Cross Country** Player of the Year to be chosen from H.H. Dow High School.

Gatorade Player of the Year is the top honor in high school sports, celebrating the nation's best high school athletes for their success on the field, in the classroom and in the community. The award distinguishes Garces as Michigan's best high school girls cross country athlete, and she joins an impressive group of alumni that spans CEOs, coaches and star athletes such as Jordan Hasay (2008-09, Mission College Preparatory Catholic High School, Ca.), Katelyn Tuohy (2017-18, 2018-19 & 2019-20, North Rockland High School, N.Y.) and Addison Ritzenhein (2023-24, Niwot High School, Co.).

The 5-foot-4 senior took second at both the NXN Nationals Final and the Foot Locker Cross Country Championships this past season to earn dual All-American honors. Garces also won both the NXN and Footlocker Midwest Regional championships, which came on the heels of her breaking the tape in the Division 1 MHSAA LP Finals with a personal-best time of 16:37.10. She won eight of her 10 races last fall and ranked No. 3 nationally in both the Dyestat 100 and the MileSplit 50.

A member of her school's Spanish Club, Garces had volunteered locally on behalf of the Bridge Food Center, Midland's elderly community and as part of multiple community service initiatives in association with the National Honor Society. She has also donated her time as a youth soccer referee and as part of her school's Go Green Environmental Club. "Victoria Garces put together one of the top two or three 2024 seasons in the country this past year, finishing second at both national championships to earn dual First Team All-American status," said Rich Gonzalez of PrepCalTrack. "She won eight of her 10 races and clocked Michigan's fastest 5K by a prep girl last fall."

Garces has maintained a weighted 4.47 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a written letter of athletic aid to run 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 across 12 different high school sports - 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.

Garces joins recent Gatorade Michigan Girls Cross Country Players of the Year Rachel Forsyth (2023-24, Pioneer High School), Helen Sachs (2022-23, West Ottawa High School), Arianne Olson (2021-22, West Ottawa High School) and Abby VanderKooi (2020-21, Western Michigan Christian 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, the Gatorade Player of the Year program has provided more than \$5.6 million in grants to winners across more than 2,000 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 Instagram at [instagram.com/Gatorade](https://www.instagram.com/Gatorade), Facebook at [facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) and X(Twitter) at [x.com/Gatorade](https://twitter.com/Gatorade).

###