

**Contact: Kelsey Rhoney (312-729- 3685)**

**CIBOLA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE® NEW MEXICO GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 19, 2018) — In its 33<sup>rd</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Amaya Brown of Cibola High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade New Mexico Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Brown became the third Gatorade New Mexico Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Cibola High School when she won the 2016-17 award.

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 Brown as New Mexico's best high school girls basketball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Basketball Player of the Year award announced in March, Brown joins an elite alumni association of past state girls basketball award-winners, including Maya Moore (2005-06 Collins Hill HS, Ga.), Rashanda McCants (2004-05, Asheville HS, N.C.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Diana Taurasi (1998-99 & 1999-00, Don Antonio Lugo HS, Calif.), Shyra Ely (1999-00, Ben Davis HS, Ind.) and Lisa Leslie (1988-89, Morningside HS, Calif.).

The 5-foot-11 senior guard led the Cougars to a 26-3 record and the Class 6A state championship game this past season. The state's Gatorade Girls Basketball Player of the Year as a sophomore, Brown averaged 19.9 points, 12.1 rebounds, 4.0 steals and 2.9 assists per game in her final high school campaign. She is a three-time All-State honoree and three-time District Player of the Year.

Brown has volunteered locally on behalf of her school's Unified Sports program. "Amaya Brown might be the best guard to ever come through New Mexico," said Susan Kubala, head coach at Cleveland High. "She plays on a whole different level and elevates others around her."

Brown has maintained a 3.36 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on scholarship at Florida State University beginning 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 work with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Two-time winner Brown joins Gatorade New Mexico Girls Basketball Players of the Year Jaedyn De La Cerda (2016-17, Roswell High School), Danni Williams (2014-15, 2013-14 & 2012-13, Clovis High School), Gina Okoye (2011-12, Eldorado High School), Justina Prairie Chief (2010-11, Gallup High School), Kya DeGarmo (2009-10, Eldorado High School), Megan Muniz (2008-09, Rio Rancho High School), Brenna Freeze (2007-08, La Cueva High School), and Madison Spence (2006-07, Mayfield High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Amaya will be able to select a national or local youth sports organization to receive a grant as part of the Gatorade Play It Forward program. Every Gatorade Player of the Year state winner receives a \$1,000 grant to donate and will have the opportunity to enter for an additional \$10,000 spotlight grant by writing a brief essay explaining why their selected organization deserves additional support. 12 spotlight grants - one for each sport - will be announced throughout the year.

To keep up to date on the latest happenings, become a fan of Gatorade Player of the Year on Facebook and follow the conversation on Twitter #GatoradePOY. For more on the Gatorade Player of the Year program, including nomination information, a complete list of past winners and the announcement of the Gatorade National Player of the Year, visit <http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com/>.

###