

## **SMYRNA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE DELAWARE FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (December 5, 2025) — In its 41<sup>st</sup> year celebrating the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Phoenix Henriquez of Smyrna High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade Delaware Football Player of the Year.

Gatorade Player of the Year is the top honor in high school sports, celebrating the nation's best high school athletes for their excellence in sport, academics and community. The award recognizes Henriquez as Delaware's best high school football player, and he joins an elite legacy that spans professional athletes and coaches to CEOs, such as Peyton Manning (1993-94, Isidore Newman School, LA), Nick Singleton (2021-22, Governor Mifflin High School, PA) and Keelon Russell (2024-25, Duncanville High School, TX).

The 6-foot-2, 190-pound senior wide receiver led the Eagles (7-5) to the Class 3A state semifinals this past season. Henriquez caught 83 passes for 1,069 yards and 15 touchdowns, averaging 12.9 yards per reception. The 3A District 2 Offensive Player of the Year, he also rushed 14 times for 114 yards and five touchdowns and broke off a 90-yard kickoff return for a touchdown.

A member of the Smyrna High School STEM Club, Henriquez has volunteered locally teaching STEM lessons to elementary school students in the district. He has also donated his time to various community service initiatives through the Smyrna High School Student Athlete Leadership Team, including the annual Christmas toy drive and gift-wrapping event. "Phoenix is a quiet, all-business type of guy within the realm of sports; he leads through hard work and consistency in positive body language," said Smyrna High School head coach Mike Judy. "He's been a model athlete within our community."

Henriquez has maintained a B average in the classroom. At the time of his selection, he had made a verbal commitment to receive athletic aid to play football at Syracuse University next fall.

The [Gatorade Player of the Year](#) program annually recognizes one state winner from each of the 50 states and Washington D.C., in 12 different sports: football, girls volleyball, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball, baseball, softball, boys and girls soccer, and boys and girls track & field. In total, 610 high school athletes are honored each year. From the pool of state winners, one national winner is selected in each of the 12 sports. 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 winners in each sport.

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 \$6.4 million in grants to winners across more than 2,200 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](https://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://x.com/Gatorade).

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