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**GADSDEN HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® NEW MEXICO VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (December 14, 2010) — In its third decade of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Nathalie Castellanos of Gadsden High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade New Mexico Volleyball Player of the Year. Castellanos is the first Gatorade New Mexico Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Gadsden 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 court, distinguishes Castellanos as New Mexico's best high school volleyball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Volleyball Player of the Year award announced in December, Castellanos joins an elite alumni association of past state volleyball award winners, including USA Volleyball Olympians Kim Glass (2001-02, Horseshoe HS, Penn.), Kim Willoughby (1998-99, 1999-00, Assumption HS, La.) and Ogonna Nnamani (1999-00, University HS, Ill).

The 5-foot-10 junior outside hitter led the Panthers to a 23-1 record and the Class 5A state championship this past season. Castellanos recorded 610 kills, 209 digs, 77 blocks and 47 service aces while posting a kill percentage of .459. The 2010 Class 5A State Player of the Year, she recorded a career-high 36 kills in Gadsden's 3-2 victory over Rio Rancho in the state semifinals and followed that with 27 kills and eight blocks in the title match win over Cleveland High. Castellanos has already recorded 1,367 kills in her three-year varsity career.

Castellanos has maintained a 4.11 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally as a peer tutor, a youth volleyball and basketball coach and as part of a fundraising campaign to benefit cancer research.

"Nathalie Castellanos won the state championship for Gadsden," said Ben Wallis, head coach of rival Cleveland High. "She beat us single-handedly. She just took it to another level. Her volleyball IQ is way up there—she gets it. She was driving our kids nuts."

Castellanos has verbally committed to play volleyball on scholarship at New Mexico State University beginning in the fall of 2012.

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 ESPN RISE and the Gatorade high school sports leadership team, 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.

Castellanos joins recent Gatorade New Mexico Volleyball Players of the Year Halie Harton (2009-10, Goddard), Kristin Valencia (2008-09, Moriarty) and Kayla Hammond (2007-08, Rio Rancho) among the state's list of former award winners.

To keep up to date on the latest happenings, become a fan of Gatorade Player of the Year on Facebook and follow us on Twitter. 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 playeroftheyear.gatorade.com.

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