

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact: Lauren Rollins (312-729-3607)**

**ST. PIUS X HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® NEW MEXICO BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (February 23, 2011) — In its 26<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Nathanael Pacheco of St. Pius X High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade New Mexico Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Pacheco is the fourth Gatorade New Mexico Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from St. Pius X 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 field, distinguishes Pacheco as New Mexico's best high school boys soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in May, Pacheco joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Alexi Lalas (1987-88, Cranbrook HS, Mich.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Kevin Garnett (1992-93, Maudlin HS, S.C.), Tony Meola (1986-87, Kearney HS, N.J.) and Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.).

The 5-foot-9, 165-pound senior forward recorded 31 goals and 21 assists this past season, leading the Sartans (16-5-1) to the Class 4A state semifinals. A two-time First Team All-State selection, Pacheco was the 2010 District 5-AAAA Player of the Year. As a sophomore in 2008, Pacheco scored six of St. Pius' eight postseason goals en route to a state title. Pacheco, who missed his entire junior year with a knee injury, concluded his prep soccer career with 75 goals and 39 assists.

Pacheco has maintained a 3.16 GPA in the classroom. He has volunteered locally at a homeless shelter and food bank in addition to donating his time as a youth soccer coach and instructor.

"Nathanael Pacheco is turning into a goal-scorer," said Gabe Nossier, Pacheco's club coach with the FC Gladiators. "It's nice to see him develop. He came back from an ACL tear and he came back stronger. People were worried he wouldn't be as fast, but he's quicker and faster. Every team needs a great goal-scorer, and he's turning into one."

Pacheco has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on scholarship at Gonzaga University in Washington 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 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.

Pacheco joins recent Gatorade New Mexico Boys Soccer Players of the Year Darren McAfee (2009-10, Albuquerque Academy), Pat Pacheco (2008-09, Taos), and Victor Rodriguez (2007-08, Las Cruces) 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](http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com).

###