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**VOLCANO VISTA HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® NEW MEXICO SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 6, 2012) — In its 27th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPNHS, today announced Katera Eltsosie of Volcano Vista High School as its 2011-12 Gatorade New Mexico Softball Player of the Year. Eltsosie is the first Gatorade Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Volcano Vista 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 Eltsosie as New Mexico's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award announced in June, Eltsosie joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Alicia Hollowell (2000-01, Fairfield HS, Calif.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.), Angela Tincher (2002-03, James River HS, Va.) and Kenzie Fowler (2006-07, Canyon del Oro HS, Ariz.).

The 5-foot-5 senior right-handed pitcher/third baseman led the Hawks (30-1) to the Class 5A state championship this past season. Eltsosie posted a 16-0 record with a 1.51 ERA in the circle, and batted .496 with 12 home runs and 55 RBI at the plate. She was named the District Player of the Year and the Albuquerque Journal Player of the Year.

Eltsosie has maintained a 3.54 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally on behalf of the Special Olympics and fundraising to benefit a homeless shelter.

"As a pitcher, Eltsosie puts phenomenal spin on her ball," said Paul Kohman, head coach at rival Rio Rancho High. "She's also the best hitter on that team. She's a total, total player."

Eltsosie has signed a National Letter of Intent to play softball on scholarship at Lubbock Christian 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 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 ESPNHS 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.

Eltsosie joins recent Gatorade New Mexico Softball Players of the Year Karysta Donisthorpe (2009-10 & 2010-11, Piedra Vista High School), and Melissa Martinez (2007-08 & 2008-09, Cibola) 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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