

Contact: Adam Woullard (312-729-3627)

**LA CUEVA HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE NEW MEXICO BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (February 19, 2013) — In its 28th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Luke Lawrence of La Cueva High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade New Mexico Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Lawrence is the first Gatorade New Mexico Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from La Cueva 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 Lawrence 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, Lawrence joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Alexi Lalas (1987-88, Cranbrook HS, Mich.), Heather O'Reilly (2001-02, East Brunswick HS, N.J.) and Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.).

The 6-foot-1 senior forward led the Bears to a 17-4 record and the Class 5A state championship this past season. Lawrence scored 28 goals and passed for 18 assists, including a goal in La Cueva's 2-1 win over Eldorado for the state title. The Class 5A State Player of the Year and an All-American selection by the National Soccer Coaches Association of America, he concluded his prep soccer career with 56 goals and 31 assists.

Lawrence has maintained a 3.36 GPA in the classroom. He has volunteered locally at a homeless shelter and as part of fundraising campaigns to benefit cancer and ALS research.

"Luke Lawrence is a very good all-around player," said Brian Weems, head coach of Sandia High. "He can win balls in the air and finish. He scored some big goals for La Cueva."

Lawrence has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on an athletic scholarship at Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colo., 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 high school sports leadership team in partnership with [USA TODAY High School Sports](#), 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.

Lawrence joins recent Gatorade New Mexico Boys Soccer Players of the Year Brad Carabajal (2011-12, Eldorado High School), Nathanael Pacheco (2010-11, St. Pius X High School), Darren McAfee, (2009-10, Albuquerque Academy), Pat Pacheco (2008-09 Taos), Victor Rodriguez (2007-08, Las Cruces), and Seth C'de Baca (2006-2007, Sandia Preparatory) 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 www.gatorade.com/poy.

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