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**LA CUEVA HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® NEW MEXICO SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 6, 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 Jasmine Casados of La Cueva High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade New Mexico Softball Player of the Year. Casados is the first Gatorade New Mexico Softball 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 Casados 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, Casados 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-3 senior shortstop led the Bears (16-9) to the Class 5A state tournament this past season. Casados posted a .500 batting average with 16 home runs, 43 runs scored and 48 RBI. The Albuquerque Journal Player of the Year and a three-time All-Metro selection, she concluded her prep career with a state-record 47 home runs.

Casados has maintained a 3.67 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally on behalf of Big Brothers Big Sisters of America.

"Casados is a fantastic player," said Mark Ryan, head coach at Eldorado High. "She's very dangerous with the bat, she's a great fielder and she's a very good base runner too. She's got a very good, very quick swing and the ball jumps off her bat."

Casados has signed a National Letter of Intent to play softball on scholarship at the University of New Mexico 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.

Casados joins recent Gatorade New Mexico Softball Players of the Year Katera Eltsosie (2011-12, Volcano Vista High School), Karysta Donisthorpe (2010-11 & 2009-10, Piedra Vista High School), Karysta, Melissa Martinez (2008-09 & 2007-08, Cibola), , and Karisa Medrano (2006 - 07, St. Pius X) 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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