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**RIO RANCHO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE NEW MEXICO FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (December 12, 2016) — In its 32<sup>nd</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Josh Foley of Rio Rancho High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade New Mexico Football Player of the Year. Foley is the third Gatorade New Mexico Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Rio Rancho 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 Foley as New Mexico's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award to be announced in December, Collins joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Anquan Boldin (1998-99, Pahokee HS, Fla.), Greg Olsen (2002-03, Wayne Hills HS, N.J.), Matthew Stafford (2005-06 Highland Park HS, Texas), Harrison Smith (2006-07 Knoxville Catholic High School, Tenn.), Latavius Murray (2007-08, Onondaga HS, N.Y.), Brock Osweiler (2008-09, Flathead High School, Mont.) and Leonard Fournette (2012-13, 2014-15, St. Augustine HS, La.)

The 5-foot-11, 190-pound senior running back and defensive back led the Rams to a 13-0 record and the Class 6A state championship this past season. Foley rushed for 2,074 yards on 199 carries, an average of 10.4 per rush, and he scored 40 total touchdowns, 32 on the ground. Foley also caught 27 passes for 484 yards and six scores, and returned both an interception and a fumble for TDs, earning District 1-6A Player of the Year honors. He was a 2015 First Team All-State selection despite breaking his ankle late in the regular season as a junior.

Foley has maintained a 3.06 GPA in the classroom. He has volunteered locally as part of multiple fundraising campaigns to benefit breast cancer research as well as on behalf of area beautification projects. He has also donated his time as a youth football coach.

"Josh Foley was a difference-maker," said Heath Ridenour, head coach of Cleveland High. "He is a slot receiver. A running back. A corner. A return man. He makes you change what you do just to try to slow him down."

Foley remains undecided upon a collegiate destination.

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 Player of the Year Selection Committee, 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.

Foley joins recent Gatorade New Mexico Football Players of the Year Gabe Ortega (2015-16, Sue Cleveland High School), Zach Gentry (2014-15, Eldorado High School), Bo Coleman (2013-14, Valley High School), Kamal Cass (2012-13, Clovis High School), Cole Gautsche (2011-12, Cleveland High School), Ryan Trujillo (2010-11, Manzano High School), and Ronnie Daniels (2009-10, La Cueva High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Foley will be able to select a national or local youth sports organization to receive a grant as part of the Gatorade Play It Forward program. Every Gatorade Player of the Year state winner receives a \$1,000 grant to donate and will have the opportunity to enter for an additional \$10,000 spotlight grant by writing a brief essay explaining why their selected organization deserves additional support. 12 spotlight grants - one for each sport - will be announced throughout the year.

To keep up to date on the latest happenings, become a fan of Gatorade Player of the Year on Facebook and follow the conversation on Twitter #GatoradePOY. 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](http://www.gatorade.com/poy).