

**FARMINGTON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE NEW MEXICO BOYS TRACK & FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 29, 2022) — In its 37th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Kayden Gonzalez** of **Farmington High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade New Mexico Boys Track & Field Player of the Year**. Gonzalez is the first Gatorade New Mexico Boys Track & Field Player of the Year to be chosen from Farmington 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 Gonzalez as New Mexico's best high school boys track & field athlete. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Track & Field Player of the Year award to be announced in July, Gonzalez joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Lolo Jones (1997-98, Roosevelt High School, Iowa), Allyson Felix (2002-03, Los Angeles Baptist High School, Calif.), Robert Griffin III (2006-07, Copperas Cove High School, Texas), Grant Fisher (2014-15 & 2013-14, Grand Blanc High School, Mich.) and Candace Hill (2014-15, Rockdale County High School, Ga.).

The 5-foot-10, 160-pound senior exploded for 19 individual points and ran a leg on a 4x-100 relay quartet that finished fourth at the Class 5A state meet this past season, leading the Scorpions to third place as a team. Gonzalez won the triple jump with a personal-best leap of 47 feet, 0.25 inches, took second in the long jump with a 22-2.25 effort, finished third in the pole vault with a clearance of 12-6 and placed fourth in the 300-meter hurdles with a time of 40.77 seconds. A two-time state champion in the triple jump, his leap in the event at the state meet ranked tied for the nation's No. 57 distance among prep competitors in 2022.

Gonzalez has volunteered mentoring special needs students at the Sycamore Community Center and has donated his time coaching middle school track athletes with their jumps technique. "Kayden is a class act student-athlete and teammate," said Farmington head coach Jeff Dalton. "He always has a positive attitude."

Gonzalez has maintained a weighted 3.34 GPA in the classroom. He will attend school and participate in track and field at Pima Community College 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 Player of the Year Selection Committee, which leverages experts including coaches, scouts, media and others as sources to help evaluate and determine the state winners in each sport.

Gonzalez joins recent Gatorade New Mexico Boys Track & Field Players of the Year Luke Wysong (2020-21, Cleveland High School), Teagun Glenn (2019-20, Albuquerque Academy), Jonah Vigil (2018-19, Taos High School), and Jericho Cleveland (2017-18, Volcano Vista High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Gatorade has a long-standing history of serving athlete communities and understands how sports instill valuable lifelong skills on and off the field. Through Gatorade's "Play it Forward" platform, Gonzalez has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national organization of their choosing that helps young athletes realize the benefits of playing sports. Gonzalez is also eligible to submit a short video explaining why the organization they chose is deserving of one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants, which will be announced throughout the year. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners' grants have totaled more than \$3.5 million across more than 1,300 organizations.

Since the program's inception in 1985, Gatorade Player of the Year award recipients have won hundreds of professional and college championships, and many have also turned into pillars in their communities, becoming coaches, business owners and educators.

To learn more about the Gatorade Player of the Year program, check out past winners or to nominate student-athletes, visit playeroftheyear.gatorade.com or follow us on social media on Facebook at facebook.com/GatoradePOY, Instagram at instagram.com/Gatorade and Twitter at twitter.com/Gatorade.

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