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COPPER HILLS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE UTAH BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (June 12, 2017) — In its 32nd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Carlos Becerra of Copper Hills High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Utah Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Becerra is the first Gatorade Utah Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Copper Hills 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 Becerra as Utah'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 June, Becerra joins an elite alumni association of past state soccer award-winners, including Alexi Lalas (1987-88, Cranbrook HS, Mich.), Steve Cherundolo (1996-97, Mt. Carmel HS, Calif.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Heather O'Reilly (2001-02, 2002-03, East Brunswick HS, N.J.), Matt Besler (2004-04, Blue Valley West HS, Kans.), Jack Harrison (2013-14, Berkshire HS, Mass.), Mallory Pugh (2014-15, Mountain Vista HS, Colo.).

The 5-foot-10, 163-pound senior midfielder scored 13 goals and passed for 9 assists this past season, leading the Grizzlies (13-5-1) to the Class 5A semifinals. An All-Region honoree, Becerra was an Honorable Mention All-State selection as a junior.

Becerra has volunteered as a math tutor in his school. "Carlos Becerra is dangerous from anywhere and everywhere," said Thao Tran, head coach of West Jordan High School. "He's very strong on the ball, with a very high soccer IQ, and he plays the game with a passion."

Becerra has maintained a 3.98 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on scholarship at Coastal Carolina 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 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.

Becerra joins recent Gatorade Utah Boys Soccer Players of the Year Aidan Dayton (2015-16, Maple Mountain High School), Christian Bain (2014-15, Alta High School), Lucas Cawley (2013-14, Viewmont High School), Matthew Coffey (2012-13, Brighton High School), Taylor Fankhauser (2011-12, Brighton High School), Derek Boggs (2010-11, Alta High School), Thomas Loomis (2009-10, Brighton High School), James Rogers (2008-09, Highland High School), Jake Hustedt (2007-08, Jordan High School), and Jake Cook (2006-07, East High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Carlos 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 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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