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**ST. PIUS X HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE NEW MEXICO GIRLS TRACK & FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 22, 2017) — In its 32<sup>nd</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Haley Rizek of St. Pius X High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade New Mexico Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Rizek is the first Gatorade New Mexico Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from St. Pius X 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 track, distinguishes Rizek as New Mexico's best high school girls track & field athlete. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year award to be announced in June, Rizek joins an elite alumni association of state track & field award-winners, 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 (2013-14 & 2014-15, Grand Blanc High School, Mich.) and Candace Hill (2014-15, Rockdale County High School, Ga.).

The 5-foot-5 junior won a pair of individual titles at the Class 5A meet this past season, leading the Sartons to third place as a team. Rizek broke the tape in the 100- and 300-meter hurdles, clocking times of 15.17 and 45.69 seconds. She also took bronze in the javelin with a throw of 113 feet, 4 inches. At this month's Great Southwest Classic, she set personal-bests in five individual events to take silver in the heptathlon with a career-best 4,619 points.

Also a volleyball standout, Rizek completed over 35 hours of community service this past academic year as part of her school curriculum. "Haley can do it all," said St. Pius X head coach Jeff Turcotte. "She's simply the best and most coachable athlete I've had on any of my teams in my 29 years in track and field. There's more to come in her senior year."

Rizek has maintained a 3.65 GPA in the classroom and will begin her senior year of high school 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.

Rizek joins recent Gatorade New Mexico Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Jennifer Ramirez (2015-16, Onate High School), Natasha Bernal (2014-15, La Cueva High School), Lauren Martinez (2013-14, Eldorado High School), Jenna Thurman (2012-13, Del Norte High School), Gina Okoye (2011-12, Eldorado High School), Julia Foster (2010-11 & 2009-10, Albuquerque Academy), Lesly Torres (2008-09, Los Lunas High School), Skye Barnett (2007-08, Cibola High School), and Alexandra Darling (2006-07, La Cueva High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Haley 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](http://www.gatorade.com/poy).

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