

Contact: Kelsey Rhoney (312-729-3685)

VOLCANO VISTA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE NEW MEXICO GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (June 18, 2018) — In its 33rd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced **Brianna Martinez of Volcano Vista High School** as its **2017-18 Gatorade New Mexico Girls Soccer Player of the Year**. Martinez is the first Gatorade New Mexico Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Volcano Vista 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 Martinez as New Mexico's best high school girls soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in June, Martinez 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 (2004-05, Blue Valley West HS, Kans.), Jack Harrison (2013-14, Berkshire HS, Mass.) and Mallory Pugh (2014-15, Mountain Vista HS, Colo.).

The 5-foot-7 senior midfielder scored 10 goals and passed for two assists this past season, leading the Hawks (14-6) to the Class 6A state semifinals. Martinez missed six games during the season because of her commitments to multiple U.S. Soccer women's national teams, including a trip to China in September with the U-19 team. A three-time All-American selection by United Soccer Coaches, Martinez is rated as the nation's No. 16 recruit in the Class of 2018 by TopDrawerSoccer.com. She concluded her prep soccer career with 38 goals and 16 assists.

Martinez has volunteered locally as a peer tutor and youth soccer coach. "Brianna Martinez is a frighteningly good and dominant player," said Greg Rusk, head coach of Cleveland High. "She is the best player in the state."

Martinez has maintained a weighted 4.35 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a national letter of intent to play soccer on scholarship at the University of Notre Dame beginning 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.

Martinez joins recent Gatorade New Mexico Girls Soccer Players of the Year Lexi Baca (2016-17, Cibola High School), Jordyn Lacy (2015-16, La Cueva High School), Cassie Boren (2014-15, La Cueva High School), Zoie Hensley (2013-14, Taos High School), Courtney Riley (2012-13, La Cueva High School), Erika Nelson (2011-12, Hope Christian High School), Victoria Barba (2010-11, Sandia High School), Jenni White (2009-10, Albuquerque Academy), Victoria Barba (2008-09, Sandia High School), Courtney Tinnin (2007-08, St. Pius X High School), and Alexis Ball (2006-07, La Cueva High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Martinez 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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