

## ALBUQUERQUE ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE NEW MEXICO GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR

**CHICAGO** (June 13, 2019) — In its 34<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced **Eliza Mariner of Albuquerque Academy** as its **2018-19 Gatorade New Mexico Girls Soccer Player of the Year**. Mariner is the second Gatorade New Mexico Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Albuquerque Academy.

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 Mariner 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, Mariner joins an elite alumni association of past state soccer award-winners, including Alexi Lalas (1987-88, Cranbrook High School, Mich.), Steve Cherundolo (1996-97, Mt. Carmel High School, Calif.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women, N.Y.), Heather O'Reilly (2001-02, 2002-03, East Brunswick High School, N.J.), Matt Besler (2004-05, Blue Valley West High School, Kans.), Jack Harrison (2013-14, Berkshire High School, Mass.) and Mallory Pugh (2014-15, Mountain Vista High School, Colo.).

The 5-foot-9 senior forward led the Chargers to a 21-2 record and the Class 4A state championship this past season. Mariner recorded 62 goals and 14 assists, including one of each in the team's 4-1 win over Hope Christian High in the state title game. A two-time Class 4A Player of the Year, Mariner is also a three-time First Team All-State selection. She concluded her prep soccer career with 155 goals and 25 assists.

A member of her school's Student Diversity Leadership Club, Mariner has volunteered locally at an animal shelter called Watermelon Mountain Ranch. "Eliza made the difference for her team," said Andrew Wiese, head coach of Eldorado High. "She has an incredible knack for scoring goals. I don't think we'll see production like that again for some time."

Mariner has maintained a weighted 4.27 GPA in the classroom. She has made a verbal commitment to attend Cornell University, where she will play soccer, 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. From the 12 national winners, one male and one female athlete are each named Gatorade High School Athlete of the Year. In all, 607 athletes are honored each year.

Mariner joins recent Gatorade New Mexico Girls Soccer Players of the Year Brianna Martinez (2017-18, Volcano Vista High School), Lexi Baca (2016-17, Cibola High School), Jordyn Lacy (2015-16, La Cueva High School), Cassie Boren (2014-15, La Cueva High School) and Zoie Hensley (2013-14, Taos High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Mariner also has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of her choosing. She is also eligible to submit an essay to win one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants for the organization of choice, which will be announced throughout the year.

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 [www.Gatorade.com/POY](http://www.Gatorade.com/POY), on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY](http://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) or follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/Gatorade](http://www.twitter.com/Gatorade).

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