

**CALDWELL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE IDAHO BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 11, 2021) — In its 36th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Damian Arguello of Caldwell High School as its 2020-21 Gatorade Idaho Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Arguello is the first Gatorade Idaho Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Caldwell 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 Arguello as Idaho'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, Arguello joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, 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 of 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-8, 135-pound senior midfielder netted 28 goals and passed for 14 assists this past season, leading the Cougars (10-4-1) to the Class 4A state quarterfinals. A two-time State Player of the Year, Arguello sparked Caldwell to its only two state championships in school history. A 2020 United Soccer Coaches All-Far West Region selection, he concluded his prep soccer career with 108 goals.

Arguello has volunteered locally at the Idaho Foodbank and as a youth soccer coach. He has also donated his time to multiple community service initiatives through his church. "Damian Arguello is one of the most talented attacking players I have seen at the high school level in Idaho," said Christian Adamson, head coach of Vallivue High. "His situational awareness, quick decision-making, his first touch and finishing quality make him a huge threat. His soccer IQ is well advanced for a player his age."

Arguello has maintained a B average in the classroom. Arguello has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on scholarship at Salt Lake 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 works with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Arguello joins recent Gatorade Idaho Boys Soccer Players of the Year Jordan Sykes (2019-20, Skyview High School), Kristian Quiros (2018-19, Rocky Mountain High School), Ahmed Ibrahimovic (2017-18, Borah High School), and Jonah Dalmas (2016-17, Rocky Mountain High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Through Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Arguello has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of their choosing. Arguello is also eligible to submit a 30-second 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 \$2.7 million across 1,117 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, on Facebook at facebook.com/GatoradePOY or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/Gatorade.

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