

**CARLSBAD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE NEW MEXICO SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (June 9, 2022) — In its 37<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Faith Aragon** of **Carlsbad High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade New Mexico Softball Player of the Year**. Aragon is the third Gatorade New Mexico Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Carlsbad 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 Aragon as New Mexico's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award to be announced in June, Aragon joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Cat Osterman (2000-01, Cy Spring High School, Texas), Kelsey Stewart (2009-10, Arkansas City High School, Kan.), Carley Hoover (2012-13, D.W. Daniel High School, S.C.), Jenna Lilley (2012-13, Hoover High School, Ohio), Morgan Zerkle (2012-13, Cabell Midland High School, W. Va.), and Rachel Garcia (2014-15, Highland High School, Calif.).

The 5-foot-5 junior left-handed pitcher and outfielder led the Cavegirls (30-1) to the Class 5A state championship this past season. Aragon compiled a 16-1 record with a 1.91 ERA, striking out 182 batters in 99 innings pitched. A First Team All-State and All-District selection, she also batted .598 with 15 home runs and 48 RBI, amassing an OPS of 1.863.

Vice President of her school's Interact Club, Aragon has volunteered locally on behalf of food donation drives, community clean-up initiatives and youth softball camps. "I believe the best player in New Mexico was Faith Aragon," said Ron Romero, head coach at La Cueva High School. "She really got it done on both sides of the plate. She has a great bat and she's an excellent pitcher too, throwing it 60-plus with a good rise ball."

Aragon has maintained a 3.67 GPA in the classroom. She 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 leverages experts including coaches, scouts, media and others as sources to help evaluate and determine the state winners in each sport.

Aragon joins recent Gatorade New Mexico Softball Players of the Year RyLee Crandall (2020-21, Artesia High School), Brianna Gallegos (2019-20 & 2018-19, Rio Rancho High School), and Kali Crandall (2017-18, Artesia High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Gatorade has a long-standing history of serving athlete communities and understands how sports instill valuable lifelong skills on and off the field. Through Gatorade's "Play it Forward" platform, Aragon has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national organization of their choosing that helps young athletes realize the benefits of playing sports. Aragon is also eligible to submit a short 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 \$3.5 million across more than 1,300 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](http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com) or follow us on social media on Facebook at [facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://facebook.com/GatoradePOY), Instagram at [instagram.com/Gatorade](https://instagram.com/Gatorade) and Twitter at [twitter.com/Gatorade](https://twitter.com/Gatorade).