

**FAIRFAX HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE VIRGINIA FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 6, 2023) — In its 38th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Tony Rojas** of **Fairfax High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade Virginia Football Player of the Year**. Rojas is the first Gatorade Virginia Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Fairfax 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 Rojas as Virginia's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award to be announced in January, Rojas joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Trevor Lawrence (2018-19 & 2016-17, Cartersville High School, Ga.), Matthew Stafford (2005-06, Highland Park High School, Texas) and Emmitt Smith (1986-87, Escambia High School, Fla.).

The 6-foot-3, 205-pound senior running back and linebacker rushed for 2,240 yards and 38 touchdowns this past season, leading the Lions (13-1) to the Class 6 state semifinals. Rojas also caught 17 passes for 281 yards and two scores. Defensively, he recorded 72.5 tackles and 13 sacks with 19 quarterback hurries and five forced fumbles. A two-time Patriot District Player of the Year, he is ranked as the nation's No. 103 recruit in the Class of 2023 by 247Sports.com.

A member of the Fairfax High School leadership council, Rojas has volunteered locally as part of community beautification projects, and he has donated his time as a youth football coach. "Tony affects the game on both sides of the ball by dominating on both sides of the ball," said Anthony Parker, head coach of West Springfield High School and also the 1986-87 Gatorade Washington D.C. Football Player of the Year. "I think he has changed the game for most opposing coaches. His size and speed combination is unparalleled."

Rojas has maintained a 3.23 GPA in the classroom. At the time of his selection, he'd made a verbal commitment to play football on scholarship at Penn State University 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.

Rojas joins recent Gatorade Virginia Football Players of the Year Zach Rice (2021-22, Liberty Christian Academy), Kelvin Gilliam (2020-21, Highland Springs High School), TreVeyon Henderson (2019-20, Hopewell High School), and Brandon Smith (2018-19, Louisa County High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Being a Gatorade Player of the Year means paying it forward for the next generation. Through Gatorade's Play it Forward initiative, every Player of the Year receives a grant to give to one of Gatorade's social impact partners, supporting Gatorade's ambition to fuel the future of sport. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners' grants have totaled more than \$3.5 million across more than 1,300 organizations.

For nearly 40 years, Gatorade has honored high school athletes at the top of their game as teammates, supporting their communities and achieving academic success. From CEOs and coaches to star athletes and community leaders, Gatorade Player of the Year winners showcase the power of sport.

To learn more about the Gatorade Player of the Year program, check out past winners or to nominate student-athletes, visit playeroftheyear.gatorade.com or follow us on social media on Facebook at facebook.com/GatoradePOY, Instagram at instagram.com/Gatorade and Twitter at twitter.com/Gatorade.

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