

**CENTENNIAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE NEW MEXICO VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (January 13, 2023) — In its 38<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Tess Fuqua** of **Centennial High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade New Mexico Volleyball Player of the Year**. Fuqua is the first Gatorade New Mexico Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Centennial 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 court, distinguishes Fuqua as New Mexico's best high school volleyball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Volleyball Player of the Year award to be announced in January, Fuqua joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners, including Lexi Sun (2016-17, Santa Fe Christian School, Calif.), Jordan Larson (2004-05, Logan View High School, Neb.), Foluke Akinradewo (2004-05, St. Thomas High School, Fla.) and April Ross (1999-00, Newport Harbor High School, Calif.).

The state's returning Gatorade Player of the Year, the 6-foot senior outside hitter amassed 621 kills and 231 digs this past season, leading the Hawks (19-7) to the Class 6A state quarterfinals. Fuqua also tallied 34 service aces and 32 blocks, posting a .445 kill percentage and a .307 hitting percentage on the attack. A PrepVolleyball.com Honorable Mention All-American honoree, she concluded her prep volleyball career with 1,511 kills.

Fuqua participated in an internship last summer with Las Cruces Public Schools, assisting computer programmers to update and set up technological devices within the school system. She has volunteered locally with Best Buddies International and as an English Language Learners tutor. "Tess improved as an overall player from last season, which is saying a lot," said Al Rosen, head coach of Centennial High School. "Tess had to carry almost all of the point-scoring for our team. She was amazing."

Fuqua has maintained a weighted 3.77 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play volleyball on scholarship at the University of Arizona 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.

Two-time winner Fuqua joins recent Gatorade New Mexico Volleyball Players of the Year Sidney McIntosh (2020-21, La Cueva High School), Mariana Sharp (2019-20, La Cueva High School), and Brie Mortensen (2018-19, La Cueva 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](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).