

**IOLANI SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE HAWAII BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (June 16, 2023) — In its 38<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Kaleb Abara** of **Iolani School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade Hawaii Boys Soccer Player of the Year**. Abara is the thirteenth Gatorade Hawaii Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Iolani 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 Abara as Hawaii'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, Abara joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Ben Bender (2019-20, Calvert Hall College High School, Md.), Jacob Shaffelburg (2017-18, Berkshire School, Mass.), Jack Harrison (2013-14, Berkshire School, Mass.) and Steve Cherundolo (1996-97, Mt. Carmel High School, Calif.).

The 5-foot-8, 140-pound senior midfielder led the Raiders to a 9-1-3 record and the Division I state championship this past season. Abara scored nine goals and passed for eight assists, saving most of his production for the postseason. The Honolulu Star-Advertiser Player of the Year, he tallied five goals and two assists in three postseason games, including the lone goal in Iolani School's 1-1 (4-3) shootout victory over Mililani High School in the state final.

Abara has volunteered locally as a peer math tutor and as a youth soccer coach. He has also donated his time to multiple community service initiatives through his school's Leo Club. "Kaleb is one of the hardest-working players I have ever coached," said Travis Watanabe, head coach of Iolani School. "He is the leader of our group on and off the field. The team was able to come from behind many times this season, and Kaleb's never-say-die attitude was a huge reason the team was able to persevere."

Abara has maintained a weighted 3.88 GPA in the classroom. He will attend Azusa Pacific University, where he 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. 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.

Abara joins recent Gatorade Hawaii Boys Soccer Players of the Year Ian Ngonethong (2021-22, Kaiser High School), Jonah Kawamura (2020-21, Iolani School), Johnnie Dodge (2019-20, Punahou School), and Skyler Goo (2018-19, Saint Louis 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).