

**NORTHWEST CLASSEN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE OKLAHOMA BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 16, 2023) — In its 38th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Federico Palacios** of **Northwest Classen High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade Oklahoma Boys Soccer Player of the Year**. Palacios is the first Gatorade Oklahoma Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Northwest Classen 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 Palacios as Oklahoma'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, Palacios 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-6, 140-pound senior forward led the Knights to a 13-5 record and a berth in the 6A state semifinals this past season. Palacios scored 20 goals and passed for 18 assists to average more than two points per game. He was named the Oklahoma Boys Soccer Jim Thorpe High School Player of the Year and the All-City Conference Player of the Year.

A National Honor Society member and Student Council Representative, Palacios has volunteered locally with Latinos Without Borders, which engages Latino high school students in Oklahoma and seeks to empower them to pursue a higher education and become leaders in their community. He has also donated his time on behalf of multiple community service initiatives through his church. "His finishing from everywhere (in the offensive third) is almost unstoppable," said Southmoore High School head coach Kit Stephenson. "He hit highlight reel shots all the time. His movement off the shoulder of defenders is awesome. He's also very good at finding the ball in tight spaces and getting his shot away quickly."

Palacios has maintained a 3.4 GPA in the classroom. He will attend Mid-America Christian 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.

Palacios joins recent Gatorade Oklahoma Boys Soccer Players of the Year Will Applegate (2021-22, Bishop Kelley High School), Isaias Silva (2020-21, Mustang High School), and Will Edwards (2019-20 & 2018-19, Jenks 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.