

**SANDIA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE NEW MEXICO GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 23, 2023) — In its 38th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Jordan Candelaria** of **Sandia High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade New Mexico Girls Soccer Player of the Year**. Candelaria is the fifth Gatorade New Mexico Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Sandia 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 Candelaria as New Mexico's best high school girls soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in June, Candelaria joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Alyssa Thompson (2020-21, Harvard-Westlake School, Calif.), Mallory Swanson (2014-15, Mountain Vista High School, Colo.), Heather O'Reilly (2002-03 & 2001-02, East Brunswick High School, N.J.) and Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy School of Young Women, N.Y.).

The 5-foot-4 senior midfielder scored 26 goals and passed for 15 assists this past season, leading the Matadors (14-6-2) to the Class 5A state tournament quarterfinals. A two-time Class 5A First Team All-State selection, Candelaria participated in the High School All-American Game in December. Ranked as the nation's No. 151 recruit in the Class of 2023 by PrepSoccer.com, she concluded her prep soccer career with 43 goals and 19 assists.

Candelaria was one of two Sandia High athletes to attend the invite-only, New Mexico Activities Association's Student Leadership Advisory Council regional meeting. She has volunteered locally as a tutor for children with cancer, and she has donated her time as a youth soccer coach. "Jordan Candelaria is the most complete player I have come across in my 25 years coaching this game," said Dave Modica, head coach of Sandia High School. "She sees the game and situations like no other. She's very calm and collected under pressure, and her ability to play and achieve what she has in this game is outstanding."

Candelaria has maintained a weighted 4.37 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a national letter of intent to play soccer on scholarship at the University of Cincinnati 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.

Candelaria joins recent Gatorade New Mexico Girls Soccer Players of the Year Emily Aguilar (2021-22, Cibola High School), Alexa Dugan (2020-21, Carlsbad High School), Gabriella Montoya (2019-20, Volcano Vista High School), and Eliza Mariner (2018-19, Albuquerque Academy), 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.