

**LA CUEVA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE NEW MEXICO BOYS TRACK & FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (June 29, 2023) — In its 38<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Tanner Montano** of **La Cueva High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade New Mexico Boys Track & Field Player of the Year**. Montano is the second Gatorade New Mexico Boys Track & Field Player of the Year to be chosen from La Cueva 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 Montano as New Mexico's best high school boys track & field athlete. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Track & Field Player of the Year award to be announced in July, Montano joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Nico Young (2019-20, Newbury Park High School, Calif.), Michael Norman (2015-16 & 2014-15, Vista Murrieta High School, Calif.), Grant Fisher (2014-15 & 2013-14, Grand Blanc High School, Mich.) and Robert Griffin III (2006-07, Copperas Cove High School, Texas).

The 6-foot, 156-pound freshman won the long jump and took second in two sprint events at the Class 5A state meet this past season, leading the Bears to a second-place finish as a team. Montano won the long jump with a leap of 23 feet, 7.75 inches which ranked No. 38 nationally among prep competitors in 2023. He crossed the line second in the 100-meter dash in 10.95 seconds and second in the 200 in 21.90. He also competed on the state title-winning 4x100 and 4x200 relay quartets.

Montano has volunteered locally with the Special Olympics and as a mentor to youth track athletes. He has also donated his time helping the unhoused move into new living facilities. "Few ninth graders achieve the instant impact that Tanner Montano did in his debut prep season," said Rich Gonzalez, editor of PrepCalTrack.com. "Not only did he play a role in three event wins at the state meet, but he also finished as the top overall scorer in Class 5A, the largest division in the state."

Montano has maintained a 3.42 weighted GPA in the classroom. He will begin his sophomore year of high school 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.

Montano joins recent Gatorade New Mexico Boys Track & Field Players of the Year Kayden Gonzalez (2021-22, Farmington High School), Luke Wysong (2020-21, Cleveland High School), Teagun Glenn (2019-20, Albuquerque Academy), and Jonah Vigil (2018-19, Taos 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).