

**ARLINGTON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE CALIFORNIA BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 14, 2024) — In its 39th year of honoring the nation's most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Javier Hernandez of Arlington High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade California Boys Soccer Player of the Year**. Hernandez is the first Gatorade California Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Arlington High School.

The award, which celebrates the nation's top high school athletes for excellence on the field, in the classroom and in the community, distinguishes Hernandez as California's best high school boys soccer player. From CEOs and coaches to star athletes, Gatorade Player of the Year winners showcase the power of sport, touting an all-star group of alumni that includes Lyle Yorks (1987-88, E.O. Smith High School, Conn.), Alecko Eskandarian (1999-00, Bergen Catholic High School, N.J.) and Ben Bender (2019-20, Calvert Hall College High School, Md.).

The 6-foot-1, 175-pound senior forward scored 31 goals and passed for six assists this past season, leading the Lions (25-2) to the Southern Section Open Division Tournament championship game. Hernandez is ranked as the nation's No. 132 recruit in the Class of 2024 by TopDrawerSoccer.com and earned Southern Section All-Open Division honors in his only year playing high school soccer (as opposed to playing exclusively for his club). He made his professional debut on Mother's Day with Los Angeles FC 2, the reserve side of Major League Soccer's LAFC.

Hernandez is a cowboy who competes in roping, bull riding and various other activities while on horseback. A member of MECHA, a club at his school that promotes cultural activities, he has volunteered locally as a youth soccer coach. "Javier was a big reason for Arlington's success this past season," said John Mosher, head coach of Patriot High School. "He was their field general. He was the player that we had to be aware of at all times."

Hernandez has maintained a weighted 4.30 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a national letter of intent to play soccer on scholarship at the University of North Carolina 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.

Hernandez joins recent Gatorade California Boys Soccer Players of the Year Simon Vaca-Lorenzi (2022-23, Davis Senior High School), Eddie Villeda (2021-22, Servite High School), Alex Halevy (2020-21, Garces Memorial High School) and Andrew Valverde (2019-20, North High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

As part of Gatorade's commitment to breaking down barriers in sport, every Player of the Year also receives a grant to donate to a social impact partner. To date, the Gatorade Player of the Year program has provided more than \$4.9 million in grants to winners across more than 1,900 organizations.

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 X(Twitter) at x.com/Gatorade.