

**V. SUE CLEVELAND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE NEW MEXICO GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 20, 2024) — In its 39th year of honoring the nation’s most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Ella Lent-Koop** of **V. Sue Cleveland High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade New Mexico Girls Soccer Player of the Year**. Lent-Koop is the first Gatorade New Mexico Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from V. Sue Cleveland 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 Lent-Koop as New Mexico’s best high school girls 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 Aly Wagner (1997-98, Presentation High School, Calif.), Mallory Swanson (2014-15, Mountain Vista High School, Colo.) and Kennedy Fuller (2022-23 & 2021-22, Southlake Carroll High School, Texas).

The 5-foot-11 senior midfielder and defender led the Storm to a 22-1 record and the Class 5A state championship this past season. Lent-Koop scored 12 goals and passed for nine assists while fronting a defense that conceded just 13 goals and recorded 12 shutouts. A United Soccer Coaches All-West Region selection, she’s a two-time Class 5A First Team All-State honoree.

Lent-Koop volunteers daily in Cleveland High School special education classes, teaching math, reading and life skills. She has also donated her time at Camp Enchantment, a summer camp for children with cancer in addition to serving as a youth soccer coach. “From her dominant physical presence through her superior technical abilities to her competitive nature, Ella dominates the midfield,” said Gregory Rusk, head coach of Cleveland High School. “She immediately commands attention on every soccer field she steps onto.”

Lent-Koop has maintained a weighted 4.22 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a national letter of intent to play soccer on scholarship at Messiah University in Pennsylvania 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.

Lent-Koop joins recent Gatorade New Mexico Girls Soccer Players of the Year Jordan Candelaria (2022-23, Sandia High School), Emily Aguilar (2021-22, Cibola High School), Alexa Dugan (2020-21, Carlsbad High School) and Gabriella Montoya (2019-20, Volcano Vista 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.