

**ELSIK HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE TEXAS BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 8, 2020) — In its 35th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced Mayno Linares of Elsik High School as its 2019-20 Gatorade Texas Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Linares is the third Gatorade Texas Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Elsik 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 Linares as Texas'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, Linares joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Alexi Lalas (1987-88, Cranbrook High School, Mich.), Steve Cherundolo (1996-97, Mt. Carmel High School, Calif.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy School of Young Women, N.Y.), Heather O'Reilly (2001-02, 2002-03, East Brunswick High School, N.J.), Matt Besler (2004-05, Blue Valley West High School, Kans.), Jack Harrison (2013-14, Berkshire High School, Mass.) and Mallory Pugh (2014-15, Mountain Vista High School, Colo.).

The 5-foot-5, 130-pound senior forward led the Rams to a 21-0-1 record this spring before the season was canceled. Linares scored 19 goals and passed for a state-best 31 assists in 22 games. One of 40 players to participate in the Allstate All-America Cup in July, Linares was twice named the District 23-6A Offensive MVP. He concluded his prep soccer career with 103 goals and 86 assists, both school records.

Linares has volunteered locally on behalf of an elementary school literacy-outreach program and as a peer tutor. He has also donated his time as a mentor for children with special needs. "As an opposing coach, you can't help but appreciate Mayno's talents," said Luis Gomez, head coach of Brazoswood High School. "I admire his unselfishness, as he is willing to set up his teammates and give the ball up when he draws attention from the defense. He is a very smart player and is always able to find open spaces, with or without the ball."

Linares has maintained a 3.26 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on scholarship at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

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 work with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Linares joins recent Gatorade Texas Boys Soccer Players of the Year Andrew Erickson (2018-19, Legacy of Educational Excellence High School), Jose Umana (2017-18, Elsik High School), Jose Ortiz (2016-17, Sam Houston High School), Harris Partain (2015-16, Wakeland High School), Isidro Martinez (2014-15, Rivera High School), and Chris Madden (2013-14, Coppell High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

Since the program's inception in 1985, Gatorade Player of the Year award recipients have won hundreds of professional and college championships, and many have also turned into pillars in their communities, becoming coaches, business owners and educators.

To learn more about the Gatorade Player of the Year program, check out past winners or to nominate student-athletes, visit www.Gatorade.com/POY, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/Gatorade.

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