

# New Mexico Activities Association Student-Athlete Spotlight

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## Martinez Focused on Future in the Classroom

By Tyler Dunkel, NMAA Sports Information Director

Andres Martinez, a senior at Escalante High School has lived in the Chama, New Mexico area his entire life. Growing up, he has always had just one passion and that is playing sports. However, it wasn't until recently, that Martinez found another passion in the form of his education.

Martinez has always believed that hard work will get you everywhere you want to go in life and, for the first part of his high school career, that value has proven true. He has competed in the NMAA State Track & Field Championships and helped the Lobos to back-to-back state football titles in 2014 and 2015. Then this year, Martinez and Lobos once again made it to the state championship.

"Chama and the surrounding area is very unique. We all grew up in the area but lived so far away from each other. Growing up, I remember playing against other teams from the area and thought that one day we would all be part of one team and have one common goal. I think we all want to be the best team in the state year in and year out."

He says that sports have taught him that hard work is the key to find success and Martinez lives that every day.

"The main life lesson I have learned from sports is to work hard. If you put in the hard work, it will pay off in the end. Sports have also taught me to overcome adversity at times as well. Life won't always go your way but how you react to the situation paired with hard work to overcome adversity will define who you will become."

Despite the team's success over the last few years, Martinez realized that his future was in his academics and he knew that a change was needed in order to help secure his future.

"Before this year I wasn't too interested in doing the extra work in school but I knew I needed to step up my game in the classroom this year if I wanted to achieve my goals for the future. So I decided to take a few dual credit courses to help me prepare for college. It has been hard at times but very rewarding. I only wish I would have started sooner."

He continued by saying, "To get college credit while I'm still in high school is a big deal. Really, you are getting college classes for free in a sense, so why not take full advantage? If all goes according to plan, I will graduate with an Associate's Degree and then hopefully attend either the University of New Mexico or New Mexico State University. I'd be the second person in my family to attend and graduate college."

Martinez is looking forward to the remainder of his high school career and plans to play basketball and run track for the Lobos this winter and spring.

Martinez said his parents never pressured him to be success-



ful yet gve him the choice to make his own path. Through his hard work and ability to work through adversity, he certainly has made steps in the right direction.