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### ***Lauren Serrano is named Augusta Technical College's 2021 GOAL Winner***

Grovetown, GA– Lauren Serrano, a Paralegal Studies student at Augusta Technical College from Augusta, has been named as the college's winner of the Georgia Occupational Award of Leadership (GOAL). The announcement was made virtually by college president, Dr. Jermaine Whirl, on March 3, 2021.

Ms. Serrano chose to attend Augusta Technical College to thrive in the competitive paralegal field and to utilize her valuable technical knowledge, skills, and experience to positively impact the community.

"Ms. Serrano is an outstanding example of the students who attend Augusta Technical College," stated Dr. Whirl. "Her story of perseverance exemplifies the spirit of our Cougar Family. We know she will represent us well in the upcoming state competition."

After being selected, Ms. Serrano remarked, "Winning the GOAL Student of the Year award as a first-generation college student would signify a great honor to my family and I, showing that children of immigrants can succeed and bring prosperity to their family as well. It would also prove that it is never too late to pursue educational goals and that hardships do not have to be a deterrence to success, but rather a motivating factor to success."

Ms. Serrano was chosen by a panel of local leaders over three other nominees for the award. The runners-up were Angela Cammarano-Moses, Villa Rica, Occupational Therapy Assistant, Afaf Elbawab, Augusta, Medical Assisting, and Kaylei Martin, Martinez, Business Healthcare Technology. GOAL, a statewide program of the Technical College System of Georgia, honors excellence in academics and leadership among the state's technical college students. Local GOAL winners are selected at each of the state's 22 technical colleges.

Ms. Serrano will represent Augusta Technical College at the regional competition on April 22, 2021. The nine regional finalists, three finalists from the three regions, will be announced in May 2021 and if selected, Ms. Serrano will participate in state competition in May 2021. A panel of leaders from the business, industry and government sectors will interview them and choose one to be the 2021 State GOAL Winner, TCSG's Student of the Year, and the recipient of the GOAL medallion. The grand prize also includes a brand-new car, courtesy of KIA, the statewide corporate sponsor of the GOAL program.

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If you would like more information about this topic, please contact Kimberly Holden Director of Community Engagement & Public Affairs.

