

News Release

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Athens, GA – Cary Handy, a Hotel, Restaurant, and Tourism Management major at Athens Technical College, was selected as a regional finalist for the Georgia Occupational Award of Leadership (GOAL), a statewide program that recognizes academic excellence among students enrolled at the member institutions of the Technical College System of Georgia.

Ms. Handy discovered Athens Technical College while working as a part-time banquet server at the Classic Center in Athens.

“One of my coworkers was a student at the college, and she constantly talked about how great it was to be a student there,” Ms. Handy said.

She continued by noting that her coworker always emphasized that she had gotten to know her instructors personally and that the instructors wanted their students to be successful in life.

These positive comments led Ms. Handy to schedule a meeting with Dr. Jackie Wilson, chair of the Hotel, Restaurant, and Tourism Management program.

“Dr. Wilson spent time with me talking about what I enjoy doing and what my goals are,” Ms. Handy said. “We talked about how I have always worked in the food service industry and how I enjoy interacting with people.”

This meeting led her to enroll in the Hotel, Restaurant, and Tourism Management program; Ms. Handy’s excellent academic record and hard work led Dr. Wilson to nominate her for GOAL.

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Athens Technical College

Handy selected as regional GOAL finalist

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“Faculty members have the opportunity each year to nominate their outstanding students for this award,” explains Darrell Brewer, the college’s director of student activities. “Each nominee must give a speech and be interviewed by a panel of college personnel as part of the selection process. This panel selects four finalists who are then interviewed by a panel of community leaders.”

After being selected as the college’s GOAL student, Ms. Handy competed at the regional level in Gainesville on April 2. Judges evaluated the GOAL students from Athens Technical College, DeKalb Technical College, Gwinnett Technical College, Lanier Technical College, and North Georgia Technical College before selecting Ms. Handy and Gina Smith, an Administrative Office Technology major at DeKalb Technical College, as the two finalists to represent the northeast region at the state-level GOAL competition.

The state competition is slated for May 20 and May 21 at the Renaissance Waverly Hotel in Cobb County. Twelve regional finalists from around the state will once again be interviewed by a panel of judges in order to select the 2009 state GOAL student. The state will receive a new car and will serve as the student ambassador for the Technical College System of Georgia.

When asked how she reacted when she learned that Dr. Wilson had nominated her for this award, Ms. Handy said that she was extremely surprised considering the fact that Dr. Wilson had so many outstanding students that she could have nominated.

The daughter of Mark and Robin Handy of Young Harris, Ms. Handy graduated from Towns County Comprehensive High School in 2005. Cary was promoted to event coordinator at the Classic Center, which she received a Hospitality Heroes Award in 2009. She plans to pursue a career in event planning.

The other finalists at Athens Technical College include Joseph Lee, Biotechnology; John Phillips, Drafting Technology; and Lorna Wright, Radiography.

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