

Keefe Tech student making it her business to succeed

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FRAMINGHAM —

For Keefe Tech's Estefanny Caicedo, success in school has led to the first steps toward a career in business.

"If you want to do good and succeed, you have to find time for everything," said Caicedo, who is enrolled in Keefe's business technology program and will help represent the school in a national competition in business education this spring.

The 17-year-old senior will also receive the Outstanding Vocational Technical Student Award, presented by the Massachusetts Vocational Association in Worcester, on April 16.



Margaret Ellis, vocational coordinator at Keefe, said the school's business technology program trains students to work in a professional office environment, and gain experience in accounting, database management and other skills. Outside of her business studies, Caicedo is also class secretary, a student council treasurer and a member of the girls varsity basketball team. Her grades place her in the top 5 percent of her class, and she has earned awards in algebra, trigonometry, Spanish and business technology.

Caicedo will also be the first member of her family to attend college: She was accepted to schools such as Suffolk, Curry and Merrimack, but hopes to study business at UMass-Amherst in the fall.

"I feel like it will help me in the future," Caicedo said.

The youngest of three sisters, Caicedo was born in the United States after her family immigrated from Columbia. She attended Framingham High School for a year, but transferred to Keefe before her sophomore year because of its business program, she said.

"It grabbed my attention and interest."

The program's mix of professional training and work opportunities - she works as an administrative assistant at the MetroWest Chamber of Commerce - gives her an advantage over other college-bound seniors, Caicedo said.

The school hopes Caicedo's experience will provide an extra benefit. "We're hoping the experience with her will open up the door to future students," Masiello said.

Caicedo is also a secretary with Business Professionals of America, a national organization for students pursuing careers in business management, office administration, information technology and other areas. The organization also oversees local and national contests that allow students to demonstrate their office management skills.

In state-level BPA competitions, Caicedo and other members of Keefe's four-student team has earned first- and second-place awards. They also attended the national-level event in Reno, Nev., last year.

She and her teammates will represent Keefe this May for the BPA's national competition in Dallas.

Though Caicedo will graduate this spring, she has spoken to students at Framingham's middle schools, encouraging them to take a close look at Keefe.

"She's a role model" for fellow students, said Andrea Masiello, Caicedo's guidance counselor. "You can be social and still be a great student."

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