

Contact Information:

**Tools for Life – Georgia’s Assistive Technology Act Program**

**Georgia Institute of Technology | AMAC Accessibility Solutions**

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**Melanie Leyva-Abad wins the 2015 Tools for Life Assistive Technology Innovation Award at the Institute Designed for Educating All Students (IDEAS) Conference**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**St. Simon’s, Georgia | June 2015 – Melanie Leyva-Abad, with the Gwinnett County School System** was presented with the prestigious **2015 Tools for Life Assistive Technology Innovation Award** on **June 5, 2015**. Melanie Leyva-Abad won the hotly contested prize over other nominees throughout Georgia.

The **Tools for Life Assistive Technology Awards Ceremony** has been a tradition within Georgia for the last **19** years. The **Assistive Technology Innovation Award** recognizes **innovation, creativity and/or unique integration of AT in the lives of individuals with disabilities**. This award was created by Tools for Life, Georgia’s AT Act to promote creativity and encourage AT and universal design principles for equal access of all people.

**Melanie Leyva-Abad accepted the Assistive Technology Innovation Award in person in front of 775 educators and assistive technology professionals from throughout Georgia at IDEAS. Melanie Leyva-Abad rose above the other nominees for a variety of reasons; including her ability to inspire, incorporate new ideas, and implement design solutions for her student’s achievements.**

Ms. Leyva-Abad received a unique hand-crafted bowl created exclusively for the Tools for Life AT Award Winners by Georgia artisans, In the Woods Studio, LLC. These beautiful pieces serve as a reminder of the knowledge, skills and abilities that overflow from Ms. Leyva-Abad’s “bowl” as she assists students with disabilities in achieving their educational goals.

Tools for Life, Georgia's Assistive Technology Act Program, is dedicated to increasing access to and acquisition of assistive technology (AT) devices and services for Georgians of all ages and disabilities so they can live, learn, work and play independently and with greater freedom in communities of their choice. Find out more at [www.gatfl.gatech.edu](http://www.gatfl.gatech.edu).

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