

# STUDENT OF INTEGRITY

STORY BY MARISA LYTLE // PHOTOGRAPHY BY DANIEL YEAGER

FOR ROGERS NEW TECHNOLOGY HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR **KAREN ELEONOR GARCIA PERALTA**, integrity means doing the right thing when people aren't watching and taking responsibility for your actions. Nominated by school staff to be featured as *Celebrate Arkansas'* Student of Integrity this month, Peralta strives to go above and beyond, treating everyone with respect and always doing the right thing no matter the circumstances. "It doesn't matter about the credit, she says, "I will put others first. ... If I see my peers succeed, then I know I have succeeded."

Garcia Peralta, 17, was born and raised in Northwest Arkansas as daughter to Mexican immigrants Eduardo Garcia and Maria Peralta and sister to Emmanuel, 19; Lili, 11; and Candy, 8. Soon to be the second in her family to attend college (Her older brother enrolled in the nursing program at Crowder College is the first), Garcia Peralta says her parents entered the U.S. to find a better quality of life, and she believes receiving her high school diploma will allow her to repay them for the sacrifices they've made for their family.

Her faith and relationship with God, her family, and her studies are Garcia Peralta's top priorities, she says, and she is grateful to have mentors who guide her to uphold these ideals and reach her potential in life. She cites her brother, Emmanuel, and teacher Daniel Burdess as mentors. "Even though I know I will always have the support of my parents, my brother Emmanuel is the person who I can look up to if I have any doubts in anything. ... He's the one who keeps me company late at night finishing homework; the one who guides me to make the right decisions; the one who helps me apply to colleges, scholarships, and FAFSA. ... The passion he has willing to help others is something to look up to.

"Mr. Burdess has supported me in every way possible, from giving advice and feedback, and being able to understand when I have had a rough week. ... I have become a great leader thanks to Mr. Burdess. I have learned how to become humble and learn to have confidence in myself."

As scholar, athlete, and good citizen, Garcia Peralta has participated in National Honor Society, Rogers Honors Academy, the NorthWest Arkansas Community College LIFE Program, NWACC Upward Bound, Student Leadership Class, Hispanic Ambassadors, and Rogers Varsity Cross Country and Track. She has volunteered with Run Bentonville Series, NWA Women's Products service project, blood drives, Samaritan House, Helping Hands, SVDP Food Pantry, C.A.S.A, Sabor Latino Dance community service, and LIFE Program. Since 8<sup>th</sup> grade, she has served as captain of her cross country team, named state runner up in 2018. She also took first place in the 4x800 relay at the 2016-17 Indoor Track State Championship. Other awards include the Lowell Chamber Award and Native Speaking Spanish Poetry Slam 1<sup>st</sup> place.

Garcia Peralta plans to attend the University of Arkansas and major in marketing. She aims to be a positive role model for her younger siblings. "I want to prove to my siblings that when you have a goal and you work hard for it, nothing can stop you from achieving that goal," she explains. "I would like to have the opportunity to help people with low or no resources. This is why once I graduate from college, I would like to work in a place where I can support people and make a difference in people's lives. My goal is to one day be able to travel and one day have a family of my own." ■

**KAREN ELEONOR  
GARCIA PERALTA**

ROGERS NEW TECHNOLOGY  
HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT



FEATURE PRESENTED BY

