

## Principal Spotlight



From the Union Tribune - November 2009

### XAVRIA SCHWARZ

Xavria Schwarz knows each of the 180 students at Christ Lutheran School in La Mesa. She knows the names of each of their parents and siblings. Before the school year starts, her teachers visit the homes of every child who's going to be in their class, whether it's the child's first year at the school or the fifth.

"This is not just a job for any of us; this is a ministry," said Schwarz, the school's principal. "It's not just about teaching the kids to a level of algebra that's sufficient. We're motivated by a relationship with families and kids. And parents are confident that their kids are in a place where they will know Jesus, and that people will know and love them in a compassionate and real way."

Schwarz, 35, lives in La Mesa with her husband. She was recently named Administrator of the Year by the Pacific Southwest District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, which includes schools from Southern California, Arizona and Nevada. Third-grade teacher Chris Small was named the district's Teacher of the Year, the first time both awards have gone to the same school.

"I was thrilled. I really love being a principal... so to be recognized for that is thrilling, but I've got a bit of a competitive edge, so I really wanted to win," Schwarz said.

Schwarz said she loves watching children grow from preschool years to eighth grade. To see their faces and characters mature brings her a lot of joy, she said. The teachers at the school make her job easier because of "the strong sense of commitment they have in their role as teacher."

Some of Schwarz's goals this year are to continue working on the academic program, providing after-school sports and child care, and seeking fine arts programs and social activities.

"You walk in, it's just super-positive here," she said. "Everyone chooses to be here. You're not assigned to this school... it's an active choice that you make to be here."

- Lisa Deaderick