



PRESS RELEASE

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PUSD Teacher Chosen as San Diego County Teacher of the Year

The Poway Unified Board of Education and PUSD Superintendent, Dr. John Collins congratulate and celebrate Kerry Araiza, Second Grade Teacher at Pomerado Elementary School for being selected as one of the five 2014 San Diego County Teachers of the Year.

"Salute to Teachers" presented 45 school district nominees for San Diego County Teacher of the Year in an Academy Awards-style live television event on October 5, 2013, including the three nominees from PUSD: Kerry Araiza of Pomerado Elementary School, Jay Posteraro of Mesa Verde Middle School and Heather Smith of Willow Grove Elementary School. The 45 nominees represented 26,000 San Diego County teachers. Each year ten finalists are chosen during the two-hour program which culminates in the announcement of the five teachers chosen to represent San Diego County for 2014. This year, all three of Poway Unified's nominees were selected as Top Ten Finalists.

This tribute to teachers and the incredible work they do on behalf of children is like none other in the nation. During the program, the nominees shared their passion, innovation, and heartfelt commitment to students and learning.

Araiza will represent San Diego County throughout the 2013-2104 year as a County Teacher of the Year and will also be in the running for a spot as a California State Teacher of the Year.

Kerry Araiza
Second Grade Teacher, Pomerado Elementary School

Nine years ago, Kerry came to Poway Unified with extensive experience from Temecula as an expert in classroom management, English/language arts curriculum, and bilingual education. Since coming to Poway Unified School District ten years ago, she taught history/English at Meadowbrook Middle School, then at Pomerado Elementary School for the last three years as a first and second grade teacher. Her varied experience has given her a valuable perspective on education. Hearing from former students about what they have done and accomplished in their lives is what Kerry describes as a "full circle moment for me."

It was Kerry's desire to take on new challenges that led her to transfer to elementary school for work with first and second graders. She wanted to try out new curriculum and methodologies she had learned through various professional developments in reading and writing. This was not an easy decision to make at this point in her career, but one that excited and challenged her professionally.

It is Kerry's desire to continually learn new ideas and methodologies that led her to work with Scholastic, an educational literacy company designed for educators, as part of their National Advisory Board and Learning to Read Advisory Panel. She has helped Scholastic improve their website to better serve teachers and parents. Her association with Scholastic has resulted in receiving a grant for a set of iPads

for her classroom. She has sought out training in how to leverage this tool instructionally with her students, opening the door to a variety of ways to more actively engage her students in their learning.

Most of all, she has fun with her students. "I laugh, sing, dance, and even speak in funny accents in class. I will do whatever it takes to make learning fun and engaging. I want my students to be inspired and to be curious about the work around them. I want them to feel successful, to set goals, to organize their learning, and reach for their dreams."

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