



# PRESS RELEASE

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## **Poway Unified Announces the Selection of Three District Teachers of the Year *Anthony Bayro, Megan Power, and Martin Reisert Receive Honors***

The Poway Unified School District proudly recognizes our teachers and announces that Anthony Bayro, Megan Power, and Martin Reisert have been chosen as Poway Unified School District Teachers of the Year for 2012-2013 from a distinguished list of school site teachers of the year. A committee of past winners and school administrators selected the three district-level Teachers of the Year. All the honorees have incorporated exemplary learning programs into their teaching, and are making a positive difference to the students of the Poway Unified School District.

### **Anthony Bayro**

*Third Grade Teacher, Los Peñasquitos Elementary School*

***“Teaching isn’t what I do; a teacher is what I am.”***

Eleven years ago Anthony Bayro was hired to become a fifth grade teacher in a little known program called the Los Pen Academy. At that time there were many who did not understand why teachers would volunteer to give up their summers and teach two extra hours each day. To the Los Pen team the answer was simple: The Academy was created for their students. They were committed to forming a school-within-a-school that knew no limits to the academic success of each student. They knew that all students could learn and achieve at high levels if parents, teachers, and students worked collaboratively, and extra time and support for learning was provided.

Some of the students face daily challenges which include parents who work multiple jobs, families who are not native English speakers, single parent homes, and families dealing with drug abuse and criminal behaviors.

Over the years, Anthony’s students in the Los Pen Academy have become highly motivated learners, embracing the educational journey. Results on California proficiency tests have continually outshined the state. Anthony feels it is truly an honor to be part of a program that is

making a difference to kids. It is not uncommon for former students to fill him in on how they are doing. The following message is an example:

"Hey Mr. Bayro! I am currently taking a Sociology of Education class and I am learning so much about the education system! I just wanted to take some time to thank you because I didn't realize until now the impact you had on my educational career. You were a great influence on me as one of the few Asian American male educators in my life."

Anthony is a firm believer that you should give back to your community. He says that if everyone had this kind of attitude the world would be a much better place. He is proud to work in the community in which he grew up. He attended PUSD's Black Mountain Middle School and Mt. Carmel High School, and remembers having teachers who really cared about their students.

"I try to emulate those teachers and strive to be that special teacher my students will remember when they think about people who made a difference in their life," Anthony said. As a teacher he holds himself to the same high standards that he holds his students. He is constantly asking his students to give him their best. Therefore he requires the same amount of effort from himself. "The kids need me to give 110% to them." He passionately believes that it is important to have the same expectations for all kids, and any baggage needs to be put away.

When asked about a student he strongly influenced, Anthony speaks about a fifth grader who has had a difficult time since he was in kindergarten. Anthony met with his dad who told him, "I'll be in prison in a month," and then added, "Please take care of my son." The dad had gone to prison before; he would now be a three-striker.

It was a rough first month – a time when Anthony set firm guidelines, a structured environment, and clear consequences for the student. As is part of the Academy program, he called the student every night. With these clear expectations, the child knew his teacher cared. He also knew his Dad had spoken to him, and he grew to respect Anthony. There was a complete 180 degree change from where he was. While life challenges do not vanish (his Dad is out of prison and deported to Mexico), the student loves going to school, is doing his homework, and knows education will help him succeed in life.

Los Peñasquitos Elementary School Principal Deanne McLaughlin said, "Passion, dedication, and commitment are qualities Anthony brings to his classroom each day. His excitement for teaching creates a stimulating learning environment for his students. He is admired by colleagues and called upon as a leader in technology innovation."

Anthony has taught first grade and fifth grade at Los Peñasquitos Elementary School since 1999. Previous to that, he worked as an ESS (Extended Student Services) Instructional Assistant at Morning Creek Elementary School. Anthony received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Cal State San Marcos and his Masters of Arts degree from National University.

## **Megan Power**

*Kindergarten Teacher, Del Sur Elementary School*

### ***“Ignite the fire for learning.”***

Megan Power says her greatest accomplishment in education is motivating her students to passionately pursue learning. She teaches her students – who are kindergarten youngsters at Del Sur Elementary School – not just curriculum and standards but to care, be responsible, and to feel empowered. She lets them know that they are important, and that their efforts can and will make a difference in their lives and others around the world. Megan encourages her students not to wait around for someone to tell them what to do, but to take their learning into their own hands, set goals, and use whatever tools are accessible to assist them in accomplishing their goals.

“When students are inspired to learn on their own,” said Megan, “they ignite their own passion for learning.”

Megan believes that individualizing learning for all students and utilizing technology and multimedia are instrumental in educating students in today’s high tech world. She tries to make learning come alive for her students through project-based learning units that inspire and motivate students to collaborate together and do their very best.

Whether the students are writing and filming a public service announcement to collect food for the San Diego Food Drive, creating stop motion films to teach other student the parts of an apple tree, or collecting, sorting, and setting up a classroom grocery store, they are learning that they are important members of our world while also improving their academic skills.

With project-based learning students are immersed in and take charge of their learning. Megan guides her young students, helping them make connections and highlighting areas of instruction. Reading, writing, math, science, and social studies are all integrated.

Recently the kindergarten students completed a unit on endangered animals. In groups they researched, scripted, and created persuasive public service video announcements to convince other students to help save their animals. After viewing the videos, the Del Sur student body voted to help the Javan Rhinos. The class created and sold trail mix at recess to raise money for the World Wildlife Fund. “This project transformed my young students from a group that previously demanded a lot of hand holding and teacher guidance to a group of independent passionate learners,” said Megan.

When Megan taught first grade, she welcomed a scared little girl who had just moved into the country from Russia. She knew how to say only one word in English (bathroom). Megan tried to keep her on task, but she needed one-on-one support. Turning to technology, Megan incorporated a voice thread tool. She pre-recorded herself reading lessons and stories which the little girl could listen to and then practice by recording and hearing herself. The little girl used this

at home and would practice recording again and again until she got it right. By the time the class had their "Red Carpet Premier" after creating and producing a movie, this new student had gained success and independence and strolled down the aisle with her classmates so very proud and secure in her new country and school. She was now at grade level in her schoolwork and loves learning.

Innovative instructional methods have produced success for these young learners as measured by project outcomes, grade level assessments and benchmarks, report card marks, and primary Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) testing. Last year 100% of the students met and exceeded their expected growth on MAP in math and reading; 100% of the students exceeded their optimal growth in math, and 95% of the students exceeded their optimal growth in reading.

Del Sur Principal Doug Johnson said, "Megan serves as a catalyst for our school in integrating technological tools and applications within our classrooms. She is a dynamo who works tirelessly to bring real life lessons to her students in many forms. With Megan's one-to-one laptop program, she is able to differentiate instruction for each student on a regular basis. Having served on the Leadership team in preparing to open Del Sur Elementary, her visionary and child-centered focus provided important groundwork for establishing the key initiatives that would form the foundation of our school."

Megan and her students have won San Diego County Office of Education Innovative Videos in Education awards. She was chosen Time Warner Cable's National Teacher of the Year in 2009 and is a teacher of teachers, giving workshops for district teachers, and sharing activities and lessons as a teacher blogger for Scholastic.com.

Megan began her career at Poway Unified in 2004 as a second grade teacher at Stone Ranch Elementary School. She taught K-1 at Sundance and first grade at Shoal Creek before going to Del Sur where she teaches kindergarten. Megan holds a Bachelor of Arts degree with a double major in Elementary Education and Speech, Theater, and Child Drama from Rowan University, Glassboro, New Jersey, and a Master of Arts degree in Teaching, Learning, and Leadership from Cal State San Marcos.

## **Martin Reisert**

*Sixth Grade Teacher, Oak Valley Middle School*

***“Find their strength and nurture it.”***

Martin Reisert, once a reluctant student himself, still remembers the teacher who inspired him back in fourth grade. Jack Ryan, a hands-on, involved teacher, encouraged him to try, and then celebrated his successes. Mr. Ryan celebrated the catch Martin made during a lunchtime football game. Then, while it took some time to achieve, Martin finally made the 100 Second Club for mastery of multiplication facts, earning another celebration from Mr. Ryan. Even now Martin often thinks, “What would Mr. Ryan do?”

It’s middle school, and it’s all about establishing personal connections, and encouraging middle school youngsters to be involved in their learning. With his students, Martin shares the challenges he had during his days in middle school, working with them to establish expectations for learning and sharing tips for success through organization and goal setting. Martin tries to model by example, and give them opportunities to reach out to others. He says that helping students discover and participate in something bigger than themselves has been his biggest accomplishment.

“Martin is an amazing teacher. He transforms his students in so many ways. They leave his class after one year with all the necessary knowledge, a new confidence about themselves, and a new awareness and passion about helping other people who may need help in our school, community or the world!” said Oak Valley Middle School Principal Sonya Wrisley. “Martin is not just their teacher for sixth grade—he stays in touch with them for years! He truly loves his students, he makes learning fun, and he teaches them to be compassionate.”

As the students study world cultures, Martin can often be found dressed in the clothing of the region. The classroom is filled with artifacts and pictures as students explore the cultures. Students are seeing they can look beyond the classroom and truly make a difference. They have raised funds for local and international charities from helping tsunami victims in Thailand to raising funds and awareness for orphans in Malawi. They have written essays and letters about issues of importance to their community.

Leading by example is a way of life for Martin. His compassion is a strong part of who he is. Teyva, one of the students in Martin’s class, was missing a lot of school due to her Spina Bifida condition. He would check on Tehya by visiting her and her family at home and in the hospital. Usually very upbeat, she had begun doubting herself and her condition worsened. Pep talks and tutoring were not helping. Martin thought about what he could do. He asked the family if it would be okay if he completed an Ironman triathlon in honor of Tehya, raising money and awareness for a charity of her choice. The family was touched by the gesture.

The quote, "He runs for her...until she can run again" became the motto for the race. Martin had never run such a race and wasn't sure he could complete the task. Tehya was his inspiration during the training.

During the next several months Tehya's condition improved and she started to attend school again, earning A's in her classes. Tehya and her family drove out to Tempe, Arizona to cheer Martin on at the event. Nearly 14 hours later, upon approaching the finish line, Tehya, in a wheel chair at the time, got up and walked with Martin across the finish line.

After the race a nonprofit organization named Tehyathon was set up to raise funds for Spina Bifida patients, and as is Tehya's wish, to offer aid to the homeless of San Diego.

For a student who was just skating by and the family questioning low grades, changes in confidence and achievement came during the school year. A handmade card sent by the student and family thanked Martin for caring and making a difference, and contained the following quote: "Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all." (Aristotle)

Martin offers differentiated instruction and assessment to his students targeting specific areas for basic, proficient, and advanced mastery. His LearningPoint site offers tutorials and interactive websites to help and challenge students. In the classroom, lessons are hands on, inspiring students to see beyond their daily middle school classroom into the world around them.

Martin was presented with a Permanent Motivation Award by the teachers of Bernardo Heights Middle School when he transferred to Oak Valley, and special recognition by Channel 10 News for initiating a recycling program at Oak Valley and in the community which recycles over 10,000 pounds of paper and more than 25,000 bottles and cans annually. He has helped students and parents at Del Norte High School and several elementary schools in helping them establish recycling programs.

Martin has been at sixth grade Basic Education teacher at Poway Unified for 11 years. He taught at Bernardo Heights Middle School from 2001 to 2004 before going to Oak Valley Middle School where he is presently teaching. Martin holds a Bachelor of Arts degree and a Master of Science degree in Education from Dowling College, Oakdale, New York.

## 2012 Poway Unified School Site Teachers of the Year

The following is a list of all 2012 Teachers of the Year selected by their school sites. All of these finalists are outstanding representatives of the high caliber of educators that is characteristic of Poway Unified School District teachers:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Site</b>	<b>Grade/Subject</b>
Bob Lutticken	Abraxas High School	Biology
Kimberley Maneval	Adobe Bluffs Elementary School	Preschool - Special Ed
Cheri Navidi	Alternative Programs	New Directions
Jennifer Strachan	Bernardo Heights Middle School	7 <sup>th</sup> Grade Humanities: Language Arts/ Social Studies/ASB Director
Sue Bledsoe	Black Mountain Middle School	7 <sup>th</sup> Grade Science
Rodger Dohm	Career, Technical, & Adult Ed	9-12 Engineering and Art
Morwenna Kehoe	Chaparral Elementary School	Speech-Language Pathologist
Sara Gilpin	Creekside Elementary School	Kindergarten
Cindy Morrison	Deer Canyon Elementary School	Special Ed
Jim Krenz	Del Norte High School	Math
Megan Power	Del Sur Elementary School	Kindergarten
Darlene Roland	Garden Road Elementary School	Kindergarten/ 1 <sup>st</sup> Grade
Cindy Sivas	Highland Ranch Elementary School	2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade
Anthony Bayro	Los Peñasquitos Elementary School	3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade
Bambi Kelly	Meadowbrook Middle School	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Language Arts/Social Studies
Greg Strachan	Mesa Verde Middle School	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Humanities – Language Arts/ Social Studies
Lindsey Orrell	Monterey Ridge Elementary School	1 <sup>st</sup> Grade
Tamra Barker	Morning Creek Elementary School	Special Day Class
Kathy Oxford	Mt. Carmel High School	Resource Specialist
Martin Reiser	Oak Valley Middle School	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Jillian Rivaldi	Pomerado Elementary School	Speech-Language Pathologist
Sherry Lockie	Poway High School	English
Holly Lecakes-Jones	Rancho Bernardo High School	Spanish
Connie Houk	Shoal Creek Elementary School	5 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Tracy Yeager	Stone Ranch Elementary School	2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade
Pam Pacilio	Sundance Elementary School	2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade
Amy Nilsen	Sunset Hills Elementary School	Non-Severely Handicapped
Michaëlle Cosgrove-Stamp	Turtleback Elementary School	Kindergarten
Patrick Fawcett	Twin Peaks Middle School	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Math/Science/K-RAM
Ledia Flores	Valley Elementary School	2/3 Dual Language
Bruce Hubschmitt	Westview High School	Math
Renee Ostrander	Westwood Elementary School	4 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Stacey Lamb	Willow Grove Elementary School	2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade