

Tracy Press

In the Spotlight: At the head of the class

by Jaclyn Hirsch / Our Town

Sep 03, 2010



Krista Beltran, a seventh-grade teacher at Hawkins School, was named the San Joaquin County Teacher of the Year. Glenn Moore/Our Town

Krista Beltran spends most of her time recognizing and nurturing her students' talents. But now, it's her turn for kudos.

Beltran, a seventh-grade teacher at Hawkins School, was named the 2010-11 San Joaquin County Teacher of the Year last month.

She said she was shocked and "very humbled and excited" when she found out that she had been selected from among the many applicants. She would have expected the honor, given to only one teacher from the 14 school districts in the county, to go to someone with more experience, she said.

Beltran, 30, has taught in the district for seven years but has been a teacher for nine.

She said she has always loved children, and she figured teaching would be the best way to pursue that passion in her career.

“I definitely knew I wanted to work with kids,” she said.

Beltran is the student council adviser at Hawkins, one of roles she plays within the district. She said she enjoys working with the sixth-, seventh- and eighth-graders on the student council, because she gets to see the students “grow and develop as leaders.”

She also runs an after-school book club for middle school girls and is a member of several committees in the Jefferson School District, including the district technology committee.

“Ms. Beltran is the kind of teacher that makes her classroom better, makes her grade level better, makes her school better and makes our district better,” Jefferson Superintendent Dana Eaton said. “It is difficult to find a committee that she is not on.”

In the classroom, Beltran said, she enjoys teaching all subjects, but she especially likes English-language arts and history, because she can tie them together.

She plans to focus a lot of time on writing this school year after attending a summer workshop with the Great Valley Writing Project last year. The Great Valley Writing Project is run by California State University, Stanislaus and teaches innovative ways to approach writing lessons in the classroom.

As a consultant for the project, Beltran and some other teachers in the school district have planned workshops to introduce their peers to different ways to teach writing to kids.

She said she thinks of her students as her children, and she loves to be a support and role model for them as they go through seventh grade, which she noted can be an especially rough time.

“I love the relationships that I develop with my students and seeing them grow and mature,” she said.

Beltran said she keeps in touch with many of her former students, especially via e-mail, and many stop by to visit. She said some even ask her for help or advice years later with college applications and admissions.

“You know that you made some kind of impact on them if they want to come back,” she said.

Meet Krista Beltran

- Age: 30
- How long in Jefferson School District: Seven years
- Education: California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo

• *In the Spotlight* is a weekly feature profiling a member of our community. To nominate someone who lives in Tracy or Mountain House, e-mail tpnews@tracypress.com or jhirsch@tracypress.com.

Read more: [Tracy Press - In the Spotlight At the head of the class](#)