



NEWS GRAPHIC

OZAUKEE COUNTY'S NEWSPAPER SINCE 1883



Top teacher

First Immanuel Lutheran School teacher Nicole Valdez named Elementary Educator of the Year by Missouri Synod district.

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Valdez named teacher of the year



VALDEZ

Cedarburg — First Immanuel Lutheran School fifth grade teacher and language arts specialist Nicole Valdez has been selected as the 2012 Elementary Educator of the Year by the South Wisconsin District of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod. Valdez was presented with her award at a recognition dinner on March 4.

Valdez was nominated due to her desire to serve her students with best practice teaching behaviors. Especially notable is her development of a digital storytelling unit for her language arts classes. She researched the topic independently and reached out to Concordia University Wisconsin professors to help her create the program. She also utilized CUW professors, community members and other First Immanuel teachers to help teach the important elements of digital storytelling that go beyond the story, like images, photography, music and narration.

In addition, Valdez was instrumental in implementing the Junior Achievement Biztown curriculum at First Immanuel, bringing that unique real-world experience to fourth and fifth grade students.

“It was awesome to see the students using their knowledge and applying it during their simulation day,” Valdez said. “What an amazing experience!” Valdez also volunteered to lead and expand First Immanuel’s student council into a true leadership development program.

First Immanuel Principal Dawn Walker noted something else that makes Valdez special. “Mrs. Valdez has been a true Christian role model,” said Walker. “Whether it is during class, meeting with a parent or helping students solve a relationship problem – she always brings Christian values and solutions to the table.”

Valdez was selected from among hundreds of the teachers in the 63 elementary schools of the South Wisconsin District of the LCMS.

“Supportive people have been instrumental to my growth as an educator,” Valdez said. “I partner with phenomenal leadership, faculty, parents and students every day at FIL. I am truly honored and blessed by God to receive this award!”