



LUTHERAN LIFE

Abwazet
Igniting the World with Christ's Love

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LCS Execs Jacob, Armstrong Honored

Rev. Dr. Mel Jacob and Rev. Dr. Rick Armstrong — Lutheran Counseling Services' executive and associate directors — were 2006 Distinguished Alumnus of the Year awards by Concordia University-Austin.

The awards were presented in February to six individuals "whose lives were altered and perhaps changed forever by the

hurricanes of the past year both in Florida and Louisiana," said Suzanne Mueller, Concordia's Alumni Director. "Each of these men, by their commendable leadership, have contributed in a very special way to the hurricane relief and recovery efforts this past year."

Jacob is directing the coordination of emotional and spiritual recovery efforts for

Lutherans in the areas affected by the 2004 and 2005 hurricanes. Lutheran Disaster Response in conjunction with Lutheran Services of the South is utilizing Armstrong to coordinate the emotional/spiritual recovery efforts for Lutherans in the areas affected by the 2005 hurricanes.

As a result of the recent hurricanes and their work with pastors and educators, Jacob and Armstrong have implemented and are now leading Respite Retreats for church workers affected. Their ministry of caring for the care giver and the Lutheran commitment to long-term recovery issues will continue for months to come.

Dr. Mel Jacob

After graduating from Concordia-Austin in 1967, Jacob went on to earn a B.A. from Concordia Senior College-Fort Wayne, IN; a Master's of Divinity from Concordia Seminary-St. Louis; and a Doctorate in Pastoral Counseling from Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary-Columbia, SC. He is Florida Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist.

Jacob has parish pastor experience in Florida, Georgia and South Carolina and extensive counseling experience throughout the Florida-Georgia District. He is Director/Coordinator for Church Worker Care for Florida-Georgia; Director/Coordinator of Ministerial Assistance Program for the Florida-Bahamas Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and Ministerial Assessment Specialist for the FL Conference of the United Methodist Church. He has authored numerous journal publications/books, and has been a presenter throughout the United States on numerous subjects.

Jacob serves on the Consultation Committee as Convener for the LCMS-ELCA in Specialized Pastoral Care and is a Certified Supreme Court of Florida Family Mediator. He serves as Chaplain for the 143rd Transportation Command in Orlando and the United States Army Reserves. He has received numerous awards from the United States Army in this capacity.

Jacob's wife, Mary (ARNP, Ed.D.), works on LCS' staff in providing professional therapy and consultation services.

Dr. Rick Armstrong

A 1973 graduate of Concordia-Austin, Armstrong served as a parish pastor for 25 years with extensive experience in Florida prior to joining LCS. He has been Team Manager for three of the LCMS National Youth Gatherings and Chairman of the Church Worker and Family Care Commission of the Florida-Georgia District.

Armstrong is a registered Marriage and Family Therapist for the State of Florida and received the Distinguished Service Award in 2003 for the Lutheran Schools Association in New York. He co-authored *God's Care in Crisis*, a manual to train crisis teams in Christian schools to prepare and provide aftercare in crisis situations; *God's Care*, for educators to help children through loss and grief; and *God's Care for Congregations in Times of Crisis*, a manual for crisis teams in congregations.

Armstrong made many trips to New York following 9/11 to work with the schools there.

His wife Kristi is a registered nurse and fellow '73 alumnae of Concordia-Austin. □

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District President Gerhard Michael reminds us that, "Everyone you come into contact with is someone for whom Christ died," and encourages us to act on that. - Page 2

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Dr. Rick Armstrong and Dr. Mel Jacob with their Distinguished Alumnus Awards from Concordia University-Austin.

Bob Ziegler Named LEA Distinguished Lutheran Elementary Administrator

Bob Ziegler, principal of Saint Michael Lutheran School-Fort Myers, FL, is the 2006 Lutheran Education Association Distinguished Lutheran Elementary Administrator.

Saint Michael honored Ziegler at the March 12 morning worship which featured a presentation from Dr. Jon Laabs, LEA Executive Director. A reception followed the service.

Ziegler officially received the award at the LEA National Administrators Conference in St. Louis, March 27-29.

Ziegler has served in LCMS schools for 25 years, including Peace-Fort Lauderdale; St. John-Good Thunder, MN; Mount Hope Redemption-Bloomington, MN; St. John-Ellisville, MO; and Concordia-Peoria, IL; before coming to Saint Michael in 1999.

He earned a B.A. in education from Concordia University Nebraska and an M.S. in administration from Mankato State University in Minnesota.

Previous national service and honors include piloting National Lutheran School Accreditation, helping to establish

the School Leadership Development project (in which he still serves) and being a Rotary International Paul Harris Fellow.

In announcing Ziegler's selection, LEA officials noted, "Bob is respected because of his work and personality. One school parent wrote, 'Bob's solid faith in Jesus Christ is perhaps his strongest attribute. Being principal of a Lutheran school gives quite an opportunity for witnessing to children and their families about Jesus Christ. Bob not only openly shares God's Word with

all of our staff and students, but most importantly, Bob demonstrates his faith throughout his day-to-day walk.'"

In reflecting on the call process that brought Ziegler to Fort Myers, Pastor Jon Zehnder said, "We were looking for an administrator who could not only continue to keep Saint Michael on the cutting edge of academic excellence but also one who could effectively lead and communicate the preciousness of our faith in our Savior Jesus Christ. Bob has delivered on both fronts!"

When asked about his ministry, Ziegler said, "My greatest joys come when we baptize a student into the family of God." Furthermore, "When a student is kind and caring ... or writes an essay or poem about Jesus' love, I know we are making a difference for life here and for eternity."

The Distinguished Lutheran Elementary Educations is chosen based on the following criteria:

- Strong commitment to serving the Lord

- Active in local community as well as Lutheran community
 - Commitment to excellence and meeting the social, emotional, spiritual, and cognitive needs of children and families
 - Active administrator in a Lutheran elementary school with at least five years experience
 - Equipped and willing to profess and teach Christian faith from a Lutheran perspective; desired: synodically trained, colloquized, or active participant in Colloquy program
 - Outstanding leadership through curriculum development, staff morale, and family involvement.
 - Active member of LEA, participant in LEADnet, and member of other professional associations.
- Ziegler is the 17th principal to receive the award since its inception in 1990. □



Bob Ziegler

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