

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 21, 2025

Rebekah Symank Named 2025 LEA Outstanding New Lutheran Elementary Teacher

Rebekah Symank was selected to receive Lutheran Education Association's 2025 Outstanding New Lutheran Elementary Teacher Award.

Rebekah has taught one year as the Resource Specialist (Student Success Center) at Abiding Savior Lutheran School in Lake Forest, California in partnership with Lutheran Special Education Ministries (LSEM). Rebekah graduated with a B.A. in Liberal Studies and an Education Specialist Preliminary Credential (CA) from Concordia University Irvine. At graduation she received the Outstanding Graduate of the Year - Concordia University Irvine.

About Rebekah's joys in teaching, she said, "The greatest joys I encounter are watching my students succeed academically and grow in their confidence. I love watching my students reach new milestones, especially those who face educational struggles. Watching the smile that comes from a student as they realize that they read their first sentence independently, were able to write a paragraph, or could use scissors correctly helps me see just how incredible this calling is. I also get to watch my students become more confident in their abilities. As they progress, they start to recognize that they are created as reflections of God's goodness, creativity, and love."

Rebekah's nominator supported her selection by saying, "She is driven, passionate, caring, and loves Jesus. The students she serves need to learn to read, do math, and write and she loves them all. Her classroom exudes her love for Christ with posters and scripture that remind students they are loved and made in His image. She shares her love of Christ with her students on a regular basis through prayer and conversation with them. She is relentless in her pursuit of new knowledge and understanding in an effort to better meet the needs of her learners."

The school administrator further supported Rebekah's selection. "She is extremely organized and professional. She has a true gift for wading through Individualized Educational Plans and writing accommodation plans for students. She understands the different learning styles of students and has made her classroom a safe place for students to grow and learn. Rebekah communicates very effectively with parents, often having to have tough conversations with parents about the abilities of their child. She shows empathy while working towards goals that will ultimately help the student."

Rebekah's pastor concurs with what others said. "She serves in an integral part of our school staff supporting students who need additional resources in the learning process. She works alongside the other teachers in our school. Her service goes beyond the classroom. She serves in our contemporary praise team. She also helps support our worship services and special events in the areas of technology and audio/visual."

Rebekah's mission statement is "As a child of God who was created in His image for His glory, I strive to ensure that every young person receives an education that prepares them for their future as they live out the unique vocations which they were created for. I seek to ensure that every child I work with is shaped academically, emotionally, socially, and spiritually through recognition of their unique identity, strengths, needs, and aspirations, individualized support to help them hone their skills, and social-emotional growth as they discover who God has called them to be."

###

Denise Rice
Lutheran Education Association
7400 Augusta Street
River Forest, IL 60305
708.209.3453 314.608.8360
www.lea.org denise.rice@lea.org lea@lea.org

