

6-13-2008

Lalanne in Lone Star State

Follow this and additional works at: https://ecommons.udayton.edu/news_rls

Recommended Citation

"Lalanne in Lone Star State" (2008). *News Releases*. 1818.
https://ecommons.udayton.edu/news_rls/1818

This News Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Marketing and Communications at eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in News Releases by an authorized administrator of eCommons. For more information, please contact frice1@udayton.edu, mschlangen1@udayton.edu.

University of Dayton, Ohio (url: <http://www.udayton.edu/index.php>)



Lalanne in Lone Star State

06.13.2008 | Catholic, Education The Lalanne Program, created by the University of Dayton's Center for Catholic Education, will place four teachers this fall at three San Antonio Catholic schools primarily serving low-income families.

The program is designed to meet the needs of beginning Catholic school teachers and improve retention in Catholic education. Teachers make a two-year commitment to a Catholic school while living together and pursuing professional and spiritual development.

Recent UD graduate Emily Wagner, 21, jumped at the chance to apply for the new cohort. After completing the University's Urban Teacher Academy and attending Catholic schools from kindergarten through college, she saw the program as a logical next step.

"I see Lalanne as a program where I can use my training in urban education partnered with my Catholic faith to make an entrance into a field where I hope to spend my career making a difference in children's lives," Wagner said.

The program, entering its 10th year this fall, appears to be making a difference, said Lalanne Director Debra Sanderman, who was also a member of the first cohort in 1999 and continued teaching at a Catholic high school for six years before taking her current post in 2007.

"We have very good retention in Lalanne," Sanderman said. "Of our 80 graduates, more than 90 percent are still in education, and of those, half are still in Catholic education."

This high rate of return was a one of the reasons the Archdiocese of San Antonio worked two years to bring the program to the city, said Superintendent of Catholic Schools Sister Carla Marie Lusch, SSND.

"These are teachers who are coming here because they have a real spirit of service and ministry, they're not just looking for a teaching job," she said.

Lusch said she often sees new teachers come into her schools, stay for a year or two and then leave for more opportunity or more pay.

"My hope is that we would be lucky enough that some of these teachers would decide to stay in San Antonio at our schools, or at the least we would give them a good enough experience that they would be totally sold on Catholic education," she said.

It's not just Catholic education that is experiencing high turnover rates. According to a report from the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, approximately one-third of America's teachers leave the profession sometime during their first three years of teaching, and almost half leave during the first five years.

"That's one of the reasons Lalanne started," said Jacinta Mergler, coordinator of teacher activities in the Center for Catholic Education. "We have a mentor at the school for each teacher. At night, the teachers grade papers together, and they can talk about what they're going through and share ideas for solving problems."

Lalanne staff members visit classrooms twice a year to observe and evaluate teachers, and participants also receive spiritual support, Sanderman said. In the summer, participants take classes at UD toward their master's degrees.

The teachers will live in the former rectory of a Marianist-led diocesan parish across the street from St. Mary's University. Each participant, considered a volunteer, receives a stipend from the school. Lalanne provides each participant with health care, graduate tuition and lodging.

The four teachers headed to San Antonio will comprise the program's fourth community, and bring the 2008 Lalanne corps to 22 teachers. Lalanne's other communities are in Dayton, Cleveland and Indianapolis.

"San Antonio is an ideal expansion site for the Lalanne program because of its Marianist connection and resources such as St. Mary's University and the Catholic Schools Office of San Antonio," Sanderman said. She plans to soon add a fifth city and have

30 Lalanne teachers in service each year.

In order for a Catholic school to qualify for Lalanne teachers, at least 35 percent of its students must qualify for free or reduced-price lunches by federal standards. A school also can qualify if it receives Title I funding, which is earmarked for schools with high percentages of children from low-income families.

The Lalanne program is named for the Rev. Jean Baptiste Lalanne, S.M., the first disciple of Marianist founder Blessed William Joseph Chaminade.

For more information, contact Cameron Fullam, assistant director of media relations, at 937-229-3256 or fullam@udayton.edu.