

The Dreamer

Exclusive news for the St. Joseph's Indian School DreamMakers



April 2023

Four from St. Joseph's Indian School Receive National Honors

The ability to connect with others, each in their unique way, is a gift shared by four from St. Joseph's that made them standouts to win nationally recognized Catherine Hershey Awards.

The Coalition of Residential Excellence (CORE) is the only national organization exclusively representing children's homes and boarding schools providing residential (home-like), non-treatment related services to children. As members of CORE, St. Joseph's Indian School must meet rigorous standards in the care we provide.

Each year CORE awards exceptional leaders, educators and houseparents with Catherine Hershey Awards, recognizing excellence in member organizations. A student and staff members of St. Joseph's were included on the list of winners.

David and Tia, houseparents in the High School Program, received "Houseparents of the Year." Annie, a second grade teacher, was honored as "Educator of the Year." And recent high school graduate ShyAnne was named "Student of the Year."

Student of the Year

ShyAnne's nomination says she connects through **wacháŋtognaka** — *generosity* — a core value of the Lakota people. It means sharing not only material goods but also heart, comfort and support.

Her Family Service Counselor, Darcy, recently said, "She has a glowing smile that warms your heart."

Darcy added that in ShyAnne's work as a certified nursing assistant (CNA), her gentle presence and compassion assured residents that she was there to care for them and lend a listening ear. ShyAnne continues to work as a CNA, and she plans to further her healthcare education after gaining more experience.

ShyAnne used a new skill, sewing, to connect with family. Darcy organized sewing bees to teach the high school girls how to make ribbon skirts and shirts, which are historical

(over, please)



Annie, ShyAnne, Tia and David accept their awards.

and traditional clothing for Indigenous people. After making her first ribbon skirt, ShyAnne sewed a ribbon shirt for her nephew and a ribbon skirt for her nephew’s mother.

★ **Houseparents of the Year**

David’s and Tia’s nomination described the couple as going “above and beyond,” making connections in various ways. Perhaps none more significant than their Louisiana-bred hospitality and Tia’s excellent cooking. She knows every student’s favorite food and uses it to build relationships and express love.



In another example of connection, when the darkness of grief fell over their campus home, the couple purchased memorial lanterns for each girl and helped them fill them with prayers, notes and special memories, then lit and launched them at a predawn ceremony on the Missouri River. It was a lesson about how we depend on each other when we are vulnerable.

Despite the myriad ways the couple goes above and beyond for the students in their care, they maintain strong connections in the

community, supporting countless high school extracurricular activities during their time off, providing meals for families in need and staying active in their faith family.

★ **Teacher of the Year**

Annie’s nomination for “Educator of the Year” notes, “Connection is a priority with Annie,” and describes her as a teacher who wants her students to feel at home, safe and nurtured.



Sharmel, St. Joseph’s Principal, adds, “When one approach isn’t working well with a student, Annie finds another. She is patient, flexible and understanding with every child. Her students feel seen, heard and valued.”

Annie connects not only with her own students, but also builds camaraderie in the first through third-grade community. For a fun activity, she organized the classes in rows and gave each child a cup. The first child in each row had water in their cup, and the goal was to pass the cup overhead, pouring water into the child’s cup behind them without spilling or turning around. She planned the activity to build connections through laughter and teamwork.

St. Joseph’s Indian School salutes these four remarkable people who build powerful connections in the school and community at large.



DID YOU KNOW?

St. Joseph’s has won several awards over the years. Read all about them by visiting stjo.org/awards.



St. Joseph’s Indian School
We serve and teach, we receive and learn.
PO Box 326
Chamberlain, SD 57326
1-800-762-2162 • www.stjo.org/Dreamer

Printed at Tipi Press Printing



Hi my name is Emilia. I am in 7th grade. I like St Joe's because I get a good education and the teachers and other staff are nice. My favorite thing to do is go outside with my friends. My favorite subject is reading because my teacher is Amazing. I enjoy going to gym with my home. When I grow up I want to be a teacher, or a house parent. In the spring I like to go outside a lot because it is nice and warm out. Thank you so much for donating to my school ♡♡

Emilia