



# PIONEERS OF JOY

ARROWHEAD'S JOY CHRISTIAN  
HIGH SCHOOL WELCOMES ITS  
FIRST CLASS OF STUDENTS

BY SHERRY ANNE RUBIANO

**T**ransitioning to high school can be a rocky move. But if you ask 14-year-old Amy Marek about her freshman expectations, she will tell you she's not worried. In fact, it won't be that much different from the past nine years at Joy Christian School. Marek is staying on the same campus to attend the newly opened Joy Christian High School.

"I've been here all my life," Marek says. "It's kind of like a home to me."

Joy Christian High School debuted this year at the Community Church of Joy campus

near 75th Avenue and the Loop 101.

The school is starting out small—there are fewer than 20 students. But administrators, parents and students say they are looking forward to being pioneers at the new school, which touts its mission as "building the next generation of Christian leaders."

#### **A CHALLENGING EDUCATION**

Joy Christian High School is a Lutheran school open to students from all religious backgrounds. Principal Steven Glandorf says stu-



## ALL ABOUT JOY CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL

21000 N. 75th Ave., Glendale  
(623) 362-3250  
[www.joyschool.org](http://www.joyschool.org)

### ENROLLMENT TIMELINE:

2006-2007: Freshmen  
2007-2008: Freshmen and sophomores  
2008-2009: Freshmen, sophomores and juniors  
2009-2010: Freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors

Tuition: \$8,000 for the 2006-2007 school year. Tuition-assistance grants are available.

Fees (for 2006-2007 school year):

- Application fee: \$25
- Testing fee: \$25
- Registration fee: \$400

Entrance requirements: All incoming freshmen will be required to take an initial entrance test prior to acceptance. The application process requests a student essay, letters of recommendation and a transcript. Students entering the high school must schedule an interview with the principal.

Source: Joy Christian High School



dents do not need to be Christian, but said they will be exposed to its values on a daily basis.

"Our teachers constantly will be teaching our students the importance of living a Christian life, but, at the same time, they're going to be receiving a quality college-prep education," Glandorf says.

The school's four-year curriculum exceeds the state's minimum graduation requirements and meets entrance requirements for the state's universities. Subjects include theology, English, math, foreign language, fine arts,

lab science and social science. As the school grows, plans are to offer online courses that students can take to earn college credit while still meeting high school requirements.

The school's academics appealed to Angie Kulu. Her son, Alec Grevstad, is one of Joy Christian High School's ninth-grade students.

"I want his portfolio to have certain criteria," Kulu says. "Academically, I don't want to get him college-ready. I want to get him university-ready, and to become a very solid leader."

### DIFFERENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Most students in the high school's inaugural class are recent eighth-grade graduates from Joy Christian School. In this first year, freshmen will be the only students attending the high school. A new class will join them each year, and all four grade levels will be on campus in three years.

The first permanent high school classrooms will be completed during the 2008-09 school year, so classes are currently being held in an existing building. Construction on

other facilities for the high school has already begun.

A gym and a youth center are scheduled to open in February or March next year. When the school is complete, it will feature athletic fields, two swimming pools, library and media arts laboratories and dining facilities.

Even though this year's class size is small, Glandorf says the school offers all the benefits of a larger high school, including athletic programs, student council, homecoming dances and prom.

This year's ninth-grade students may not receive a "typical" high school experience, but do the students think they'll be missing out on anything? Freshman Ashlee Watt says no.

"If anything, we'll have so many opportunities that we'll be able to choose from," says Watt, 14.

One opportunity students will have is the chance to go on a mission trip for a week during each of their four years at the high school. Each student also has access to lap-top computers that they can use during the school day.



For Grevstad, the smaller classes and close-knit family environment are part of his decision to attend the school.

"I mean, just because there are more kids doesn't mean it's going to be better," he says. "It'll be a more controlled environment here. That will be really cool."

#### MEETING THE CHURCH'S VISION

Joy Christian High School is part of the Community Church of Joy's overall vision.

The church was founded in 1974 in Glendale and relocated to the current campus in Arrowhead Ranch in 1998. In addition to the private schools, plans for the nearly

200-acre master planned community include a banquet and conference center, a worship center, housing for seniors, a mortuary, cemetery, hotel and community park.

The church boasts about 8,000 members. Enrollment in the preschool and grades kindergarten through 8 grew to more than 800 students last school year.

Paul Sorenson, executive pastor of the Community Church of Joy, says the church aims to create a safe place where people can grow in their faith. The high school fits into this plan, he says, because it takes the church to the next level of building Christian leaders.

"We see there's a desperate need of young people to gain a greater sense of confidence in who they are and their gifts," Sorenson says. "We want to equip them to be servant leaders in their community. We think a high school's a great way to do that." ♦

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