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**LCPS Electrician Honored by NEA**

LAS CRUCES – Following in the footsteps of six of his fellow CSEC-Las Cruces Union colleagues, Joseph Leonard Almaguer was honored as NEA-New Mexico’s Education Support Professional (ESP) of the Year at the annual delegate Council held in Albuquerque on November 5, 2011, according to a news release from NEA-NM.

Almaguer has worked as an electrician in the LCPS Physical Plant Department (PPD) for 12 years. He served as a custodian for three years, then moved to ground maintenance for another three years before studying to be an electrician at Doña Ana Community College, where he earned a 4.0 GPA. Almaguer currently holds his journeyman’s license and is well on his way to becoming a master electrician.

“I am proud to say I am a Las Crucen,” said Almaguer. “I believe in the public schools! My wife, Nancy, and I attended the public schools here in Las Cruces from kindergarten until we graduated from Mayfield High School. My kids, Aleena and Justin, are attending (LCPS schools) now, while my oldest son, Joseph, graduated from LCPS.”

Almaguer is one of 20 ESP members chosen nationwide to participate in NEA’s ESP Leaders for Tomorrow program. As a member of the Classified School Employees Council-New Mexico (CSEC-NM), he was instrumental in organizing more than 85 percent of his fellow PPD employees for collective bargaining in just three weeks and now serves as vice president of CSEC-LC.

Almaguer also volunteers as varsity baseball coach at Mayfield High School.

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