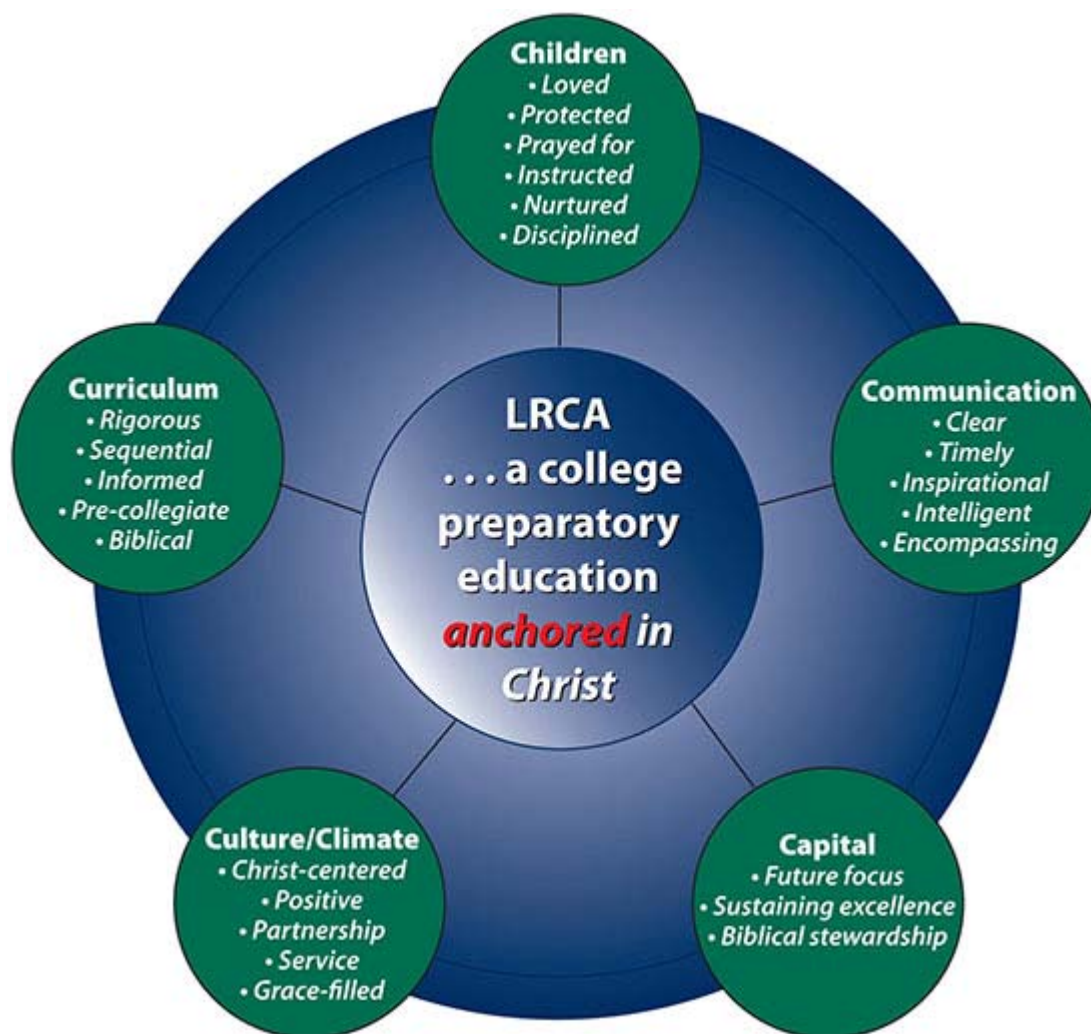




April 22, 2010

## A Warrior Interview with Dr. LRCA, aka Dr. Gary Arnold, Head of School

For a meeting with the LRCA Communications Advisory Group last month, Dr. Arnold brought along a graphic we affectionately call the LRCA molecule which illustrates the atomic structure, so to speak, of our pursuit of excellence. Having shared this graphic with many of you in 2008, imagine Dr. Arnold's surprise when, preparing to speak to an eighth grade leadership class this month, he glanced at the teacher's bulletin board and noticed the LRCA molecule posted, front and center, for all to see.



**Warrior: Dr. Arnold, why the emphasis on the LRCA molecule?**

**Dr. Arnold:** By maintaining focus and delivering on these core targets, we will fulfill our purpose and our potential. By living out these priorities, LRCA will continue to pulsate with Kingdom energy as a school. Please pray for our board of trust, my leadership team and me as we press on and plan for a fruitful 2010-11 school year.

**Warrior: What Scripture is God using to direct your thoughts these days?**

**Arnold:** " . . . *that in everything He might have the supremacy . . .* " (Col 1:18) We can never lose sight of the centrality of Christ in everything we do. The board of trust and I are embarking on a fresh strategic planning process. One of our longstanding strategic goals is to provide a preeminent, Christ-centered, K-12 education. One might ask: is the goal of "preeminence" fitting for a Christian school? Is our pursuit of excellence an exercise of idolatry? Not if we remember that Christ is the Preeminent One; Christ is the Excellent One. Then, and only then, our pursuit to provide an excellent, preeminent education reflects His glory and, at the same time, gives Him the glory.

**Warrior: And, in real life that means?**

**Arnold:** Not only do our students have to be preeminently prepared for the college of their choice, we are passionate that they be ambassadors for Christ in the most complex and challenging culture in the history of mankind.

**Warrior: What else is lighting your fire these days?**

**Arnold:** Two things. The first is witnessing the call of God in the lives of prospective families and teachers to join the LRCA school community. I am humbled to hear the stories of families applying for admission and equally amazed to listen to faculty candidates testify to how God is leading them to serve at LRCA. We are looking for the right families and the right teachers to accomplish our goal of preeminence in order for Him to be glorified. God is providing both. That lights my fire!

**Warrior: What's the second thing?**

**Arnold:** A national leader shared these words recently: "There are very few options in the coming world if you don't take learning and the mind seriously." I agree. In the modern workforce it's going to be either "learn or leave." I want our kids eager to learn.

To that end, Mr. Neff, Mrs. Chami, Dr. Turner and I are reading a book entitled, Mindset, written by a Stanford professor. It reaffirms our core belief that a person's mindset plays a huge role in determining one's success in life. The author asserts, "***With the right mindset and the right teaching, people are capable of a lot more than we think.***" We'll need mom and dad's help to develop the right mindset in our students. And as Christian educators, we'll continue to work hard to display right teaching.

**Warrior: What's the word on new turf for Warrior Field?**

**Arnold:** Contributions and advertising money were received with the permission of the school's board of trust to enhance the school's master plan. The Warrior Field initiative is not part of the school's capital campaign nor is it a mandate from the board of trust. Rather, the school's leadership decided it was in the school's best interest to receive this facility improvement that would impact the quality of fall and spring sports, the band, special events and scheduled elementary recess and P.E. classes. No debt is attached to the project. As of today, it is highly probable that this gift to the school will happen.

**Warrior: Are the baseball and softball field improvements coming out of the school's operating budget?**

**Arnold:** No. The school prepared the fields, sodded the fields and irrigated the fields as part of the *FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS* capital campaign. Beyond that, all improvements are courtesy of Warrior families who love baseball and softball. We are very grateful for this significant contribution to the school's master plan.

**Warrior: PTF had a major fundraiser last fall. What did we do with all that money?**

**Arnold:** PTF works very hard to raise money to enhance the LRCA experience as partners to the teachers and administration. We are grateful for the tens of thousands of dollars that PTF has provided our school to improve daily school life. The biggest example of this is the steel canopy at the front of the elementary complex. For years, students sweltered under the summer sun and were drenched by winter rains. Now, they are properly sheltered making arrival and dismissal flow like a charm. PTF is responsible for this improvement.

More recently, PTF purchased the green security fences to protect our children at recess. PTF added voice amplifiers in the classroom and has pre-funded our educational tech plan for 2010-11. The recent upgrade of middle school cafeteria tables is courtesy of PTF. High school chapel benefits from the PTF purchase of a new drum set and keyboard. God is praised!

**Warrior: Is there a LRCA school board like there is in public school?**

**Arnold:** LRCA is held in trust by a governing body called the board of trust. It differs from a public school board in many ways. First, the board of trust nominates and installs men and women who have a track record of holding up the mission of the school. A Christian school board member must be mission-friendly, mission-passionate, and mission-protective. The board is accountable to preserve the integrity of the school's longstanding and God-inspired mission.

Accountable for the fiscal, spiritual and educational health of the school, the board of trust hires one employee to lead the way to optimal operations. That person is the head of school. Humble before God and eager to seek His will, the board of trust and the head of school govern LRCA together under the school charter that was established in 1995.



**Warrior: With all the talk about national educational standards these days, is LRCA accredited?**

**Arnold:** By all means! In fact, the Arkansas Nonpublic School Accrediting Association (ANSAA) and the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) are visiting LRCA on April 25-27 as part of our application for accreditation renewal. We are extremely pleased to display our maturation as a school, knowing that God has done great things among us.

**Warrior: With a school this big, what is the best way to keep as informed as possible?**

**Arnold:** That is the question I recently asked my Communications Advisory group. I am receiving good counsel from them. I expect that in the coming year we will focus on a healthy balance of paper vs. digital communication and keeping the mission of the school front and center. The best place to start is the mother lode of all school information - our website. Additionally, access news via:

- My blog: [www.lrcaroundtable.com](http://www.lrcaroundtable.com)
- Twitter: @drlrca
- Facebook: [Little Rock Christian Academy](#)
- [Warrior News](#) (digital weekly newsletter)
- The Golden Triangle (digital quarterly updates from the Head of School)
- Campus Connection (digital quarterly newsletter)
- Notes from the Upper School (digital quarterly newsletter)
- Classroom newsletters

**Warrior: Dr. Fitz Hill spoke at graduation last year. Who is speaking this year?**

**Arnold:** Brandon Bernard of Fellowship Bible Church. This year, graduation will be held at Immanuel Baptist Church. The Class of 2010 will assemble for a graduation ceremony on May 28th at 7:00pm. Come join us!

**Warrior: Our kids keep talking about biblical worldview. What are they talking about?**

**Arnold:** In a word - WISDOM. Through biblical worldview, we aim to heighten our students' ability to discern truth from untruth, good from evil, and right from wrong. People ask, "What's it all about?" Biblical worldview has an answer. Biblical worldview is a framework for understanding the meaning and purpose of life. We think it is a pretty important part of the school day.

**Warrior: How is what you are reading influencing your leadership these days?**

**Arnold:** I am asking my board and our biblical worldview teachers to share a new book with me, [To Change the World](#). Kind of a grandiose title and it is a pretty deep book but the bottom line is this: to change the world (culture), we stand a better chance with committed Christians in influential places than we do boycotting Disney. The way to more effectively influence culture is from the top down, not from the bottom up. That is why it is important to us that our graduates succeed in college and set high career expectations. There is a Christian school in Denver whose motto is "Influence through Excellence." Imagine if their motto was, "Influence through Mediocrity."

**Warrior: Why does the big rock at the west gate have paint on it? Is it graffiti?**

**Arnold:** No, no. Mr. Neff and I designated the big rock as the Senior Rock. Only seniors can paint the rock and the message must remain positive at all times.

**\*Full Disclosure:** the above interview with Dr. Arnold was conducted by Dr. Arnold. He is happy to elaborate or address other questions. Dr. Arnold may be contacted via email at [gary.arnold@littlerockchristian.com](mailto:gary.arnold@littlerockchristian.com)