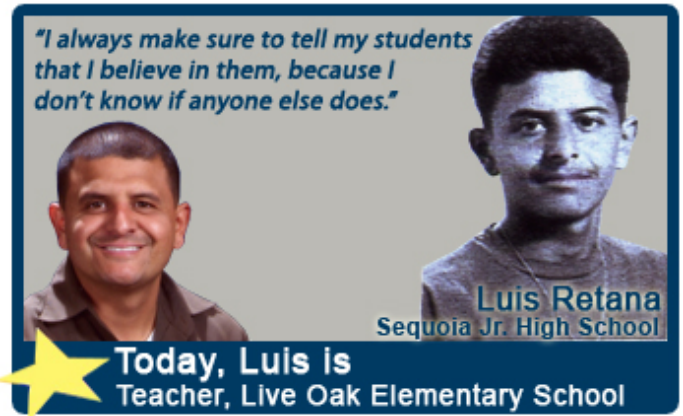




# Fontana STAR

## Luis Retana

shares how he is inspired



Profile in Excellence:	
<b>FUSD Schools Attended:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Live Oak Elementary, 6<sup>th</sup> grade (1988-1989)</li> <li>• Sequoia Junior High, 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> grade (1989-1992)</li> <li>• Fontana High School, 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade (1992-1995)</li> </ul>
<b>Higher Education:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Riverside Community College - AA</li> <li>• Cal. State, San Bernardino - BA in Sociology</li> <li>• National University - MA in Education</li> </ul>
<b>FUSD Career Experiences:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• America Reads Tutor, Live Oak Elementary School (1999-2000)</li> <li>• 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Teacher, Live Oak Elementary (2000-Present)</li> </ul>
<b>Who were the FUSD staff that affected you most as a student?</b>	<p><i>Mr. Hilliard at Sequoia was one of my inspirations to be become a teacher. He was well liked by students although he was very structured and strict. I now know that is not easy to balance.</i></p> <p><i>Mr. Dunn at Fontana High taught me personal responsibility. I truly earned my grades in his chemistry class, they weren't good grades, but they were mine. After high school I interviewed him about being a teacher, and during that interview he said something I hadn't heard from any other teacher. He basically told me that he believed in me and knew I had the drive to finish college.</i></p> <p><i>I now try to build a personal relationship and have fun with my students, but I have the same structured class and expectations that both Mr. Hilliard and Mr. Dunn had in their classes. I always make sure to tell my students that I believe in them because I don't know if anyone else does.</i></p>
<b>What did you dream of growing-up to be as a child that would lead you to your work with FUSD?</b>	<p><i>I really didn't decide what I wanted to do until my sophomore year in college. I knew I wanted to work with children, so I applied to be an America Reads Tutor. When the opportunity arose for me to come back to Fontana, I specifically asked if I could work at Live Oak. I wanted to come back to my community. I knew it would be a great opportunity for me and I wanted the students to have someone in their community show them that they can go on to graduate from college no matter what circumstances they grew up under.</i></p>
<b>Since you've joined FUSD as staff, what experience(s) have you been most proud of?</b>	<p><i>I often have former students come back and visit me. I love hearing about how school is going and seeing how much they have matured. I like to think I played a part in that.</i></p>

*I'm also very proud to be a member of our Live Oak family. I say family because that's what we consider ourselves. I've been teaching for ten years and I have the least seniority at Live Oak. We've been through a lot here, both personally and professionally. We've celebrated births, weddings, and professional accomplishments. We've supported one another through divorces and deaths. I feel very fortunately and proud to be part of this school.*

**What keeps you up at night about your work for FUSD?**

*Students! I often reflect on my day. I'm always asking myself am I really doing all I can for my students. As teachers, we want our students to be as successful as they can be, and we try to tap all the resources that are available for them. And at the end of the day, I still ask myself is there anything else I can do.*

**What do you think is the biggest misconception the public has about our work?**

*For most people work stays at work, they clock in and clock out. Teaching demands so much more! Yes, we take home papers to grade and material to plan, but it's more than that. Teaching can be so emotionally draining. We deal with all the problems and struggles that our students face daily in their lives inside and outside of our classrooms. It's not an 8-3 job!!!*

**What can the community do to strengthen public education?**

*Put education first!!! Many of our parents don't make education a priority in their lives. People need to realize that education does not only take place in school, it needs to extend to their homes.*

**What inspires you to give your very best for the students of FUSD?**

*I'm very lucky to be surrounded by such dedicated and wonderful people. Our Live Oak teachers are constantly working on trying to do everything they can to improve Live Oak. It is because of them that I come to work and give all that I can to make our school the very best. I'm just trying to keep up with my fellow teachers!*

**What might staff or students be surprised to learn about you?**

*People that know me know I'm not shy. I don't mind drawing attention to myself for laughs. However, through my elementary years I was very shy and quiet.*

*If you know of a "Fontana Star," particularly one who was an FUSD alumnus, you can nominate him or her to be featured by emailing [webmaster@fUSD.net](mailto:webmaster@fUSD.net). Please provide your name, the name of the individual being nominated, contact information for both of you and a brief description as to why you think the individual qualifies as a Fontana Star.*