

Highest award of the Federal Republic of Germany for Christine Brandmeir



Christine Brandmeir receives Federal Cross of Merit for her commitment for the international rural youth.

Christine Brandmeir, 36 years old, from Southern Germany has been awarded the Federal Cross of Merit on Ribbon for her manifold commitment for youth in rural areas worldwide. The Bavarian Minister of State Dr. Beate Merk decorated the former Secretary General of the International Movement of Catholic Rural Youth (MIJARC) in the context of a Ceremony in the Rococo Saloon of the Swabian Government in Augsburg.

Christine Brandmeir is Social Pedagogue and mother of three children. Between 2003 and 2008 she was Secretary General of MIJARC and worked for a sustainable development of rural areas and an improvement of the situation of rural youth in more than 40 countries worldwide. Focus of her work was public relations and political engagement, especially in collaboration with UN-organizations like UNESCO and the Food and Agriculture Organization FAO. "The day-to-day engagement of many young rural people worldwide, without having big financial resources, was my motivation", so Christine Brandmeir.

She was very surprised about the decoration. She wants to take it representing numerous young rural people within the KLJB and the MIJRC. „I especially think of Torribio Gonzalez, who is fighting for his land in Paraguay, of Pushpa Koyon in India, who fights for women's right together with other women, or of Joseph Kayondo, who trains young people in Uganda in rural projects". But she also thinks of the rural youth in Europe, those who try to find new ways between industrialized agriculture and professional youth work, to create rural areas in a new way and to give perspectives to other youngsters. She sees the decoration as motivator for youngsters in rural areas worldwide. „I wish for them that they are open minded, questioning all, and looking for a sense and for hope. That they are full of humor, crazy and cheeky, and that they always keep in mind, that they got the potential here and now to change things.

For Christine Brandmeir the award assures her wish, that responsible in politics, organizations and church take rural youngsters for serious, and respect them in their self organization and engagement.

Christine Brandmeir started her work at the local level of KLJB Germany in Affing. From 1993 till 1997 she worked as a chairwoman in the diocese Augsburg on voluntary basis, in 1999 she was elected for 3 years as a full-time chairwoman at the national level of KLJB.

The Federal Cross of Merit was donated in 1951 by the then Federal President Theodor Heuss. It is the highest award of the Federal Republic of Germany donated for merits for the common welfare. The Federal Cross of Merit is not combined with a financial benefit. Up to now it was donated 240.000 times.