

Samina Khan honored with prestigious Golden Apple award

CHICAGO - Samina Khan of the Michele Clarke Academy Preparatory Magnet School, Chicago has been bestowed with prestigious Golden Apple Award for being an outstanding teacher with distinction. Samina hails from Malerkotla, near Patiala, in Punjab. Daughter of Malerkotla-based educationist Prof M.H. Khan, who retired as a professor of education at PPS Nabha. The award, one of the highest honors of US in education, is given to educators of various schools across America for teaching excellence. It is for the first time in 22 years—ever since its inception—that the honor has been bestowed upon an Indian. Teacher Samina Khan was unaware of the news when their respective classes began and looked visibly surprised when their regular class assignment was interrupted by the sudden entrance of video cameras, family members and business associates congratulat-

ing them on winning the award. The Golden Apple Award, given on behalf of the Golden Apple Foundation, recognizes excellence in teaching both in terms of in-class success and pre-class preparation. Samina Khan teaches science. She is one of the 10 teachers chosen for the award out of 850 candidates.

“I’m just speechless,” said Samina Khan, as her science class began to clap in unison. “I want to thank God first of all, as well as my colleagues and parents. I will always be the apple of their eye.”

“This is like a dream come true,” she added. “My father used to say that the most respected professions are teacher, priest and doctor. I feel as though this is the Nobel Prize in my profession. But I couldn't have done it without these great kids.”

Samina Khan was raised in Nigeria. Her family hails from Malerkotla near Patiala in Punjab. After obtaining her bachelor's

degree in microbiology at Kaduna Polytechnic in Nigeria, she moved to Wisconsin in 1994 where she lived for a year and a half. She moved to Chicago in 1999 and began to pursue a career as an educator. She received her master's degree in education from DePaul University. Since entering the Chicago Public School system via the Global Educators Outreach program, Khan has received several accolades, including the ComEd100 in 2004 and the Drive Award in 2006. The Golden Apple Award recipients receive a tuition-free spring-term sabbatical at Northwestern University, a \$3,000

“I FEEL AS THOUGH THIS IS THE NOBEL PRIZE IN MY PROFESSION”
—Samina Khan



Samina Khan proudly displays her plaque received from the Golden Apple Foundation.



It was the Indian Reporter newspaper that my dad came across with the advertisement for the Chicago Public Schools (GEO) Global Educators Outreach program. I applied in response to this. Chicago Public Schools recruited me through the GEO program after I qualified rigorous written examination and interview. Thousands of candidates from 23 countries contested. Only 50 applicants were chosen. I was among them." Samina Khan says. Surrounded by her students, Ms. Samina Khan (center) speaks to Chicago's premier television station.

cash prize, an IBM personal computer, induction into the Golden Apple Academy of Educators, as well as the award itself which will be presented to them during a special ceremony on 06 Sept. 2008.

The awards selection committee is comprised of Chicago-area educators. The process of choosing the teachers began last fall with recommendations from middle school faculty members. From there, nominees needed to provide personal essays

regarding their methods and goals as educators. Then letters of recommendation from colleagues are assessed and after the number of finalists was narrowed to 31, Golden Apple committee members visited the schools to observe them during in-class sessions. Afterward, members interviewed each principal and selected colleagues, parents and students.

The Golden Apple awards have been presented to outstanding educators since 1986.



Samina Khan's (second from left) students pose for a photo with her soon after the announcement of her selection for the Golden Apple award.



Samina Khan (sitting; second from left) on the sets of television station CBS Channel 2 with its announcers and staff soon after being interviewed about the Golden Apple award.