



## Golden Apple

### **New law increases Golden Apple Scholars' tuition aid and size**

Governor Rod Blagojevich has signed a bill that will at least double the amount of tuition aid provided to Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois and increase the number of participants in the program.

The new law makes Scholars in their junior and senior year of college eligible for at least \$5,000 in tuition assistance through the Illinois Future Teacher Corps (IFTC). That is twice as much as the \$2,500 Golden Apple has been able to give Scholars since 2003.

The law, which goes into effect January 1, 2009, also offers the possibility of making Scholars eligible for \$10,000 or \$15,000 of tuition assistance for both junior and senior years, depending on certain qualifying factors yet to be negotiated with the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC), which is the agency that administers the funds for both the Scholars and IFTC programs.

Golden Apple currently selects 100 talented and committed Illinois high school and college students each year who wish to pursue teaching careers and augments their university education with uniquely intensive advanced teacher preparation, mentoring and practical experience.

Under the new law, at least 125 students will be selected for the program next year and 150 in the following years.

“Beginning September 15, Golden Apple will hold discussions with ISAC to determine procedures for carrying out the new law,” said Golden Apple President and CEO Dominic Belmonte. “The measure was achieved through almost two years of negotiations and the support of state legislators and many members of the Golden Apple community, to whom I am deeply grateful.”

More than 1,100 Golden Apple Scholars are now teaching or on their way to teaching in schools of need throughout Illinois. In return for tuition assistance, Scholars agree to teach for five years in an Illinois school that serves low-income students or has below-par student test scores.

Golden Apple will continue to pay Scholars a \$2,000 stipend per summer to participate in four Summer Institutes that provide early student-teacher experience, mentoring, and coursework on the practice of teaching by Golden Apple Award-winning teachers.

IFTC parallels the Scholars program in providing tuition assistance to academically talented Illinois students who are seeking to become teachers but without the advanced teacher preparation and mentoring elements the Scholars program provides.

Studies show that teachers prepared by Golden Apple are twice as likely to stay in teaching and significantly more likely to remain in hard-to-staff schools than their peers who do not receive this advanced teacher preparation and mentoring.