

Lake County News-Sun

County teachers Golden Apple finalists

[Comments](#)

April 1, 2010

Two Lake County teachers are among the 30 finalists for the Golden Apple Awards for Excellence in Teaching. The finalists, all high school teachers, were selected from a pool of 229 applicants.

Golden Apple has recognized outstanding Chicago-area educators annually since 1986. The creation of Golden Apple founders Mike and Pat Koldyke, the Golden Apple Awards for Excellence in Teaching aim to recognize and honor outstanding teachers for their contributions to building a stronger, better-educated society. The recently honored finalists will undergo a final round of observation and review before the 10 winners are announced in May.

Lake County finalists are Stevenson High School math teacher Darshan Jain and Deerfield High School Spanish teacher Ryan Rockaitis.

Golden Apple accepts nominations each fall. Anyone may nominate an eligible teacher but teachers may not nominate themselves. Eligible teachers must be full-time classroom teachers at public or non-public schools in Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, or Will counties and be committed to continue teaching in Illinois for at least two subsequent years. Awards focus on a rotating group of grade levels (Pre-K-3, 4-8, and 9-12). In 2010, high school teachers are the focus of the awards.

Distinguished retired teachers, college/university professors, administrators, and former Golden Apple Award winners serve on Golden Apple's selection committee. The selection process includes classroom observations of all award finalists and interviews with colleagues, supervisors, students, and parents.

Each Golden Apple Award winner receives a tuition-free, six-month sabbatical to study at [Northwestern University](#). Each winner also receives a \$3,000 cash award.

Two hundred forty teachers in Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, and Will counties have earned Golden Apple Awards since the program's inception.

Winners of the 2010 Golden Apple Awards for Excellence in Teaching will be honored at a black-tie event Oct. 15 at WTTW/Channel 11 Studios in Chicago. WTTW will also broadcast the awards in a one-hour television program following the event.