



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

30 Chicago area teachers honored as Golden Apple Award finalists Award for excellence in teaching celebrating 25th year

CHICAGO (March 31, 2010) – Golden Apple, a leader in advancing the teaching profession in Illinois for 25 years, is pleased to announce 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. (A complete list of the finalists can be found at the end of this release.)

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

“While other organizations bestow awards on teachers in K-12 education,” said Dominic Belmonte, president and CEO of Golden Apple, “the Golden Apple Awards go beyond teacher recognition, rewarding teachers with opportunities for renewal and leveraging their award-winning ideas and experience to benefit the profession.”

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. Committee members apply research-based professional standards to identify teachers who exemplify the highest standards and practices of the teaching profession. 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. Perhaps most importantly, Award-winning teachers become Fellows of the Golden Apple Academy of Educators, providing them a stronger voice and a larger stage from which to make an impact.

Quick Facts

- The 2010 Golden Apple Awards finalists include:
 - A Golden Apple Scholar
 - Two GATE teachers
 - Five National Board Certified teachers.
- Twenty-five of the 30 finalists teach in Cook County – including 16 CPS teachers -- three in DuPage County and two in Lake County.
- 240 teachers in Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, and Will counties have earned Golden Apple Awards since the program's inception. In addition, a cohort of 10 teachers from Central Illinois was inducted into the Academy in 2008.
- In addition to the Award winners, in 2007, Golden Apple began recognizing a select number of Teachers of Distinction—award finalists whose superior teaching work merits special acknowledgement.
- Golden Apple Academy members have directly helped more than 5,000 Illinois teachers to become more effective in the classroom and indirectly helped tens of thousands of others. Additionally, half a million Illinois children have been positively impacted by Golden Apple Scholars who have become teachers in Illinois since 1993 through the assistance of Golden Apple and mentoring of Academy members.
- The 250 currently active Academy members have more than 2,000 collective years of teaching experience.

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

About Golden Apple

Celebrating its 25th anniversary, Golden Apple began with founders Mike and Pat Koldyke and a shared inspiration — to offer outstanding schoolteachers a level of recognition and engagement in the larger work of education reform. Golden Apple's successful track record of integrated, innovative programs and resources enhance the quality, resiliency, and creativity of classroom teachers and improve teaching and learning throughout Illinois. Qualified, passionate educators — including Golden Apple Award-winners and finalists — lead a small staff of dedicated employees with functional and program expertise. A connected and committed board of directors oversees Golden Apple's strategic direction. Together with a larger community of expert educators, this nonprofit organization works to ensure that all Illinois children have the excellent teachers they deserve. Visit www.goldenapple.org for more information.

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For more information contact:

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Golden Apple Awards for Excellence in Teaching 2010 Finalists

Dr. David Baar, Providence St Mel School, Chicago
Subject: Choral Music

Anthony Curtis Phoenix Military Academy, Chicago
Subject: Survey Literature, Survey Literature Honors

Mike DiMatteo Hinsdale Central High School
Subject: AP European History, World Cultures

Christopher Esposito Downers Grove South High School
Subject: U.S. History, Anthropology

Emily Feltes-Maslanka Farragut Career Academy, Chicago
Subject: English, American Literature

Marilyn Gilbert-Mitchell Percy L. Julian High School, Chicago
Subject: Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) Elective

John Goczzy Mount Carmel High School, Chicago
Subject: LD Resource Reading, Journalism

Jacob Gourley, '94 Scholar Thornton Fractional South High School, Lansing
Subject: Government, Honors Government, AP U.S. History, College Prep Seminar

Susan Harsa Saint Francis High School, Wheaton
Subject: French 1, French 3 Honors, French 4 Honors

Michael Heinz, NBCT Niles West High School, Skokie
Subject: Chemistry, Advanced Placement Chemistry

Dr. Roz Iasillo Mother McAuley Liberal Arts High School, Chicago
Subject: Environmental Science, Biology

Darshan Jain Adlai E. Stevenson High School, Lincolnshire
Subject: Geometry, Pre-Calculus

Paul Karafiol, NBCT, GATE Walter Payton College Prep H.S., Chicago
Subject: Geometry, Advanced Geometry

Rosalind Kline-Thomas, GATE Michele Clark Academic Prep High School, Chicago
Subject: Algebra I

Jungsun Moon King College Preparatory High School, Chicago
Subject: Junior Year English, AP English Literature and Composition

Luis Navarro Richard T. Crane Tech Prep Common H.S., Chicago
Subject: Introduction to Automotive Technology, Automotive Technology II, Advanced Automotive

Leo Park Northside College Preparatory High School, Chicago
Subject: Beginning, Intermediate and Advanced Orchestra

Michael Pond Lindblom Math & Science Academy, Chicago
Subject: U.S. History, AP U.S. Government, Politics, History, Sociology

Scott Reed, NBCT, '07 TOD Niles North High School, Skokie
Subject: Physics, Honors Physics

Aaron Reedy Thomas Kelly High School, Chicago
Subject: Biology, Zoology

Ryan Rockaitis Deerfield High School
Subject: Spanish II, Spanish II Survey

Kelli Rushek TEAM Englewood Community Academy, Chicago
Subject: American Literature

Yolanda Sanchez Benito Juarez Academy, Chicago
Subject: Forensic Science, Biology

Frederick Schill The Chicago Academy for the Arts
Subject: Literature, Video Production, Film Studies, Screenwriting

Jennifer Trejo, NBCT William Howard Taft High School, Chicago
Subject: Beginning Level Art, AP Art

Darren Tuggle Kelvyn Park High School, Chicago
Subject: English

Patrice Turk, NBCT Chicago Academy High School, Chicago
Subject: Literary Studies, AP Literature and Composition

Dr. Mark Vondracek Evanston Township High School, Evanston
Subject: Physics, AP Physics

Jeanne Walker, DRIVE and Oppenheimer recipient Orr Academy High School, Chicago
Subject: Art Foundations, Studio Sculpture

Jeffrey Yordy Glenbrook South High School, Glenview
Subject: Horticulture, Language-Assisted Horticulture, Advanced Horticulture