



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

2010 Golden Apple Award recipients announced  
Award for excellence in teaching celebrating 25<sup>th</sup> year

CHICAGO (May 12, 2010) – Golden Apple, a leader in advancing the teaching profession in Illinois for 25 years, is pleased to announce the 10 recipients of the Golden Apple Awards for Excellence in Teaching. The honorees, all high school teachers, were selected from a pool of 562 nominees. (The complete list of 2010 Golden Apple teachers 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 recognize and honor outstanding teachers for their contributions to building a stronger, better-educated citizenry.

Each Golden Apple Award recipient receives a tuition-free, six-month sabbatical to study at Northwestern University. Each winner also receives a \$3,000 cash award. Perhaps most importantly, Golden Apple teachers become Fellows of the Golden Apple Academy of Educators, providing a stronger voice and a larger stage from which to make an impact, through ongoing professional development and engagement in education reform, such as the mentoring of future teachers through Golden Apple's Scholars program.

"Every year we have an amazing group of recipients and this year's teachers are no different," said Golden Apple President and CEO Dominic Belmonte. "We believe teachers should have the opportunity to develop their ideas and a forum to share their thoughts on improving education. We're proud to have achieved 25 years of providing such important resources and recognition to our best educators."

The recipients 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.

Golden Apple accepts nominations for the Awards 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.

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 the Golden Apple Scholars who have become teachers in Illinois since 1993 through advanced teacher preparation and mentoring by Academy members. The 250 currently active Academy members have more than 2,000 collective years of teaching experience.

#### About Golden Apple

Celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> 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](http://www.goldenapple.org) for more information.

#### 2010 Golden Apple Teachers:

Dr. David Baar  
Choral Music  
Providence St Mel School  
Chicago

Dr. David Baar's wish for his students is simple, to leave Providence St. Mel with an appreciation of music. While in his charge, David gives them the skills and tools to experience great music, and feels that he has a responsibility to fully study and comprehend the pieces before he brings it to his students. Always seeking a wide variety of performance opportunities both within the school community and in regional and state competitions, David believes that his students' only limitations are due to his inability to teach the music in such a way that they will understand. David's expectations for his students are that they learn to make music, understand music and value music. His quest for selecting purposeful music that represents various styles, origins and eras begins in the summer where he makes sure that the lyrics are meaningful and artistic. Another important element is that David has to like the music. David hopes that his students will leave his class with the necessary skills and knowledge to further study music.

Mr. Anthony Curtis  
Survey Literature, Survey Literature Honors  
Phoenix Military Academy  
Chicago

Required summer reading, online book reports and first day of school assessments are among Anthony Curtis' high expectations for his students. Equally passionate about striving for excellence as he is about teaching literature, Anthony expects the same from himself as he does in his students. Never asking his students to do what he cannot, nor doesn't know how to do, Anthony, through literature, teaches his students to be critical thinkers. Each school day students are asked by Anthony, "Who are you?" And, their collective response is, "I am a proud cadet in survey literature where success is not an option, but a requirement for me. I will strive for perfection in everything I do, Sir." Anthony inspires his students to strive for excellence outside of his classroom, and promises to do the same for them, as it his life purpose, not just as their literature teacher. He wants to show his students that reading literature is not an ancient pastime just to be done in his classroom, but a way in which to become analytical in their thinking, which will shape their futures.

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

Realizing that history is a constant unfolding of events and something that his students are a part of is one of U.S. history teacher Jacob Gourley's goals that he wishes to impart to his classroom. Jacob feels his responsibility as a teacher is to instill the passion for knowledge to his students. Through awakening this passion, students will hone their communication skills through careful evaluation by asking questions and forming educated decisions to articulately support their positions. These competencies will serve Jacob's students long after they have left his classroom and will allow them to open many doors in their future. Jacob, through his history teachings, believes he is arming his students with a sense of purpose that they will be empowered to take ownership and have a strong voice in their own democracy. Teaching the ability to seek knowledge and giving them the skills to do so, shapes Jacob's students into persevering adults giving them the confidence to overcome many obstacles.

Ms. Susan Harsa  
French 1, French 3 Honors, French 4 Honors  
Saint Francis High School  
Wheaton

Susan Harsa's French students describe her classroom similar to looking through a kaleidoscope- full of vibrant colors, exciting and always changing. Touted as a creative, energetic, tenacious and fair teacher, her classroom exudes the infamous French "joie de vivre" by the many pictures, maps, puppets and even stuffed animals that adorn her classroom's walls and shelves. Recognizing that not all students learn alike, Susan incorporates seven teaching styles into her curriculum. "Linguistic learners" engage in lively conversational French; "logical learners" implement correct verb tenses; "spatial learners" artistically interpret a chapter in Antoine de Saint-Exupery's French classic *Le Petit Prince*; "musical learners" enjoy recounting the months to the "Macarena," reciting prepositions to the "Bunny Hop" or the subjunctive to a lively rap song; "bodily learners" enjoy the movement of classroom interviews or verb relay; "interpersonal learners" thrive in the cooperative aspects of group work; and "intrapersonal learners" understand through the independence of journaling. According to Susan, her classroom topics range from telling time via a student's "human clock" to the philosophical interpretations of existentialism. Because she maintains a sense of humor and a childlike excitement about the magic of learning, Susan feels this adds value to her students as to how they learn. Susan feels a true sense of

accomplishment when she sees her students, at all levels, moving, speaking French and laughing as they enjoy the moment of learning.

Mr. Darshan Jain  
Geometry PreCalculus  
Adlai E. Stevenson High School  
Lincolnshire

Darshan Jain attributes his teaching skills to those of his favorite teacher- purposeful, precise and thoughtful. Darshan feels that what he learned from his teachers, the ability to have fun, respect classmates' ideas, and encouraging thoughtful debates have greatly influenced his teaching style and benefit his math students. Realizing the need for mutual camaraderie in his classroom, Darshan doesn't believe his job is to simply deliver knowledge, but rather to be an active participant in the learning process along with his students. Encouraging a free-thinking atmosphere, Darshan enjoys watching his students interpret mathematical ideologies differently than he does as it opens their imaginations to make connections that he has not made. Building on his need for camaraderie, Darshan wants his students to share their experiences and build their mathematical knowledge as a group. Darshan's classroom is a safe haven for students to disagree, make mistakes, question and promote alternative solutions. Darshan is delighted when he can make connections with his students and teach them strategies that they may have not considered, and at the same time having fun.

Ms. Rosalind Kline-Thomas, NU-Teach  
Algebra I  
Michele Clark Academic Prep High School  
Chicago

Making learning algebra fun, Rosalind Kline-Thomas combines popular songs recognized by her students and substitutes the original lyrics with helpful hints for working with algebraic formulas. She uniquely uses the help of Jamie Foxx's lyrics in the song, "Young Independent" to clarify the often misunderstood independent variables of  $x$  or  $y$ . Passionate about math, and hoping this is shared by her students, Rosalind also feels it important for her students to employ smart study habits, self control and respect for self and others. She feels strongly that once her students trust her as a teacher, they will begin to show their vulnerable side and it is at that point when they will start to ask questions. A proponent of establishing mentorships with Rosalind's students holds the same importance as the content of mathematics. Rosalind does not consider her role solely as a teacher of mathematics, but also has a responsibility to teach her classrooms to be better students, leaders and friends.

Mr. Jungsun Moon  
Junior Year English, Advanced Placement English Literature and Composition  
King College Preparatory High School  
Chicago

Self described as "Stuff of legends that older brothers and sisters warned their younger siblings about," English teacher Jungsun Moon really hopes that his students perceive him as the teacher how shows up each day ready to fight for higher expectations and achievements. Initially labeled by students as a tough teacher, Jungsun feels that anything less than tough would be a disservice to his students. Taking his role as an English teacher seriously, Jungsun has been known to wield a plastic sword, jump up on tables when discussing prepositions and faking sleep should students stray from the current topic.

Many of Jungson's students poke fun at him for how involved he is but this does not bother him in the least. Jungson believes that supporting data from standardized test data is not the sole predictor for measuring a student's success, and those beliefs and ideologies must be shaped by the students. An advocate of gauging success by how a student overcomes adversity is very important to Jungson and this is evident in his teaching.

Mr. Scott Reed, NBCT, '07 TOD  
Physics, Honors Physics  
Niles North High School  
Niles

From the first day of school and throughout the school year, physics teacher Scott Reed establishes a respectful, positive and supportive classroom environment. Wanting to truly understand his students and share their successes, Scott's classroom engages in team building activities and highlights their victories through posting their pictures throughout his room. Scott believes that his students need to feel that they are known, needed and respected by their peers as well as their teacher. He learns about their interests by giving them a survey where students share their interests, goals and learning style preferences. Through knowing each of his students, Scott feels that strong connections are made and is critical to his development of lesson plans and activities that appeal to his student's strengths. Scott believes that each student has an important voice, and all voices need to be heard and respected to achieve the class' high goals and expectations. While students are focused on mutual respect in a safe learning environment, Scott feels that this is when the fun of learning, exploring, discussing, predicting, sharing, demonstrating and empowering each other can begin.

Mr. Aaron Reedy  
Biology, Zoology  
Thomas Kelly High School  
Chicago

Beyond his role as a biology teacher, Aaron Reedy expects his students to understand that effort put into learning will result in actual learning. Despite his student's level of academic success, he is steadfast that they will feel more capable of achieving success once they have entered his classroom. Always starting his class with a question, whether it be a new topic or a something they have already studied, Aaron can quickly see how prepared his students are that particular day. Through questions, Aaron is challenging his classroom to work collaboratively to arrive at the answers. Telling his students that if they do their jobs, and he does his job, then by the end of each class the initial question posed at the beginning of class will be answered through experiments, teamwork activities and open forum discussions. Put simply, when Aaron works with his students, they learn.

Ms. Patrice Turk, NBCT  
Literary Studies, Advanced Placement Literature and Composition  
Chicago Academy High School  
Chicago

With an extensive background in drama, literary studies teacher, Patrice Turk has resorted to some creative shenanigans when helping her students understand the literal interpretation of a poem. Patrice enjoys the element of surprise and feels that her acting out piques her student's interest and is helpful in their learning. Known to stand on a chair and become a soaring eagle complete with talons, Patrice

has also crawled around a student's feet to personify the hissing of leaves. A subscriber of Parker Palmer's description of a good teacher in his book, *The Courage to Teach*, they "are truly present in the classroom, deeply engaged with their students and their subjects. They are able to weave a complex web of connections among themselves, their subjects and their students, so that the students can learn to weave a world for themselves." Patrice is inspired and challenged to teach her students to become the master weavers of their world. Her passion to develop a community of readers, a love of reading and making reading COOL for her students is a daily goal for Patrice. Ultimately, she wants books to hold the same importance to her students as their cell phones.

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For more information contact:  
Jill Morino  
Ph: 847-526-2707