

Golden Apple Foundation

NEWS RELEASE

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Golden Apple Foundation names new President and CEO

(Chicago — April 18, 2006) Golden Apple Foundation today named Dominic Belmonte, currently Director of Teacher Preparation, as its new President and Chief Executive Officer to replace Elaine Schuster, who is retiring from administrative work to pursue teaching opportunities. The appointment is effective May 1.

Belmonte, 52, a former English teacher and department chair at York Community High School in Elmhurst, received the Golden Apple Award for Excellence in Teaching in 1987. He was named Golden Apple's Director of Teacher Preparation in 1996. Belmonte co-created the Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois in 1989, the largest pre-service teacher-support program in the nation, which now has more than 1,000 Scholars teaching or on their way to teaching in high-need schools throughout Illinois. In 1996, he co-created the Golden Apple Teacher Education program (GATE), which provides an alternative pathway to teacher certification for mature adults in mid-career who wish to teach secondary math, science, or elementary school children.

"As we begin our 21st year to ensure that all Illinois schoolchildren have the excellent teachers they deserve, it is significant that this year associated with the start of adulthood, provides Golden Apple with a smooth passage to maturity from one experienced educator to another," said Glenn W. "Max" McGee, Board Chair of Golden Apple Foundation. "The Board is fortunate to have a person of Dom's creativity, energy, and commitment agree to step up to the leadership position."

Elaine Schuster has been involved with Golden Apple since its inception, becoming president and CEO in January 2001. She previously served as superintendent of schools of the Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago, the nation's largest non-public school system.

"Elaine has been an outstanding steward of the Foundation," said Martin J. "Mike" Koldyke, founder of Golden Apple. "She has stabilized its fiscal condition, led the development of a strategic plan for significant growth, and above all, enhanced Golden Apple's image for great teaching and concern for disadvantaged children. We thank her and we wish her well."

The Golden Apple Foundation, founded in 1986, is dedicated to the belief that all children deserve excellent teachers. The Foundation's mission is to "advance the teaching profession by recognizing excellent teachers; leveraging their thinking and efforts to improve education; recruiting and preparing prospective teachers with a special emphasis on schools of need; and providing teachers access to innovative resources."

The Foundation is highly regarded for its contributions to the teaching profession. It is arguably best known for annually presenting the Golden Apple Awards for Excellence in Teaching to 10 outstanding teachers in the Chicago metropolitan area. The Foundation also operates the Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois program, which annually recruits, prepares and mentors high school graduates who represent a rich ethnic diversity for successful teaching careers in high-need schools throughout Illinois. The Golden Apple Teacher Education program (GATE), has become an exemplary model in supporting career-changing professionals seeking an alternative route to Illinois teacher certification.

Additionally, the Foundation presents teachers with continuing professional-development workshops in science and storytelling; provides TEN, an online community for educators (www.teachingexcellencenetwork.org); creates model programs and partnerships; and encourages all teachers to attain ever-higher levels of excellence and commitment to teaching as their life's work.

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