



2011 Golden Apple Award recipients announced

Award for excellence given to seven Chicago and three suburban teachers

CHICAGO (May 10th, 2011) – Golden Apple, a leader in advancing the teaching profession in Illinois for 26 years, is pleased to announce the 10 recipients of the Golden Apple Awards for Excellence in Teaching. The honorees, all 4th – 8th grade teachers, were selected from a pool of more than 600 nominees. (The complete list of 2011 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, spring semester 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.

"We are thrilled to present these superb middle school teachers from the Chicago area as emblematic of the thousands of devoted teachers of 4th-8th grade students daily bringing them instruction, confidence and hope," said Dominic Belmonte, president and CEO of Golden Apple. "We happily join these ten to the legion of the Golden Apple Academy previously recognized in pursuance of our mission to transform teachers and teaching".

The recipients of the 2011 Golden Apple Awards for Excellence in Teaching will be honored at a black-tie event on Friday, October 21, 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 2012, Pre-K to 3rd 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 more than 250 currently active Academy members have greater than 2,000 collective years of teaching experience.

About Golden Apple

Celebrating its 26th anniversary, Golden Apple began with founders Mike and Pat Koldyke and a shared inspiration — to offer outstanding teachers 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-recipients 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.goldenappleillinois.org for more information.

2011 Golden Apple Teachers:

Judy Choi, City Charter - Bartolome de Las Casas, 4th Grade

Judy was one of the very first teachers at Bartolome de las Casas, a very small charter school in the middle of the historic and culture-enriched Pilsen region in Chicago. She provides the school with institutional memory and is noted for her caring, high expectation teaching style. She feels her purpose at Bartolome is to challenge herself to make each child she teaches confident and self-motivated. She bases her personal success on the long-term growth of her individual students.

Ronald Hale, City Charter - Chicago International Charter (Avalon), 7th and 8th Science and Character Education

Ronald loves to collaborate with teachers, a foundation of his teaching. A graduate of the Chicago Public School system and now as an instructor, he feels he has a unique perspective of today’s students. Ronald sees himself a perpetual advocate for students, always looking to find what will bring them success. He feels much can be learned from students by listening to them, and he hopes to remain the teacher who continues to link the interest of teachers and students. He sees his job “is to pass the baton from one generation to the next.”

Marc Hans, Chicago Public - Hanson Park School, 6th Science

Marc started his own not-for-profit organization called “the scienceFIST foundation” at www.sciencefist.org. Marc is dedicated to providing after-school science mentoring programs to at-risk youth. The strength of his program lies in the pedagogical approach and the mentoring relationships the students have with scientists and mentors. Marc plans and writes

the curriculum, seeks donations and funding, handles its marketing and promotion, fosters working relationships with scientists, science institutions, universities, supply companies and science experts. Marc is a 2009 winner of the Chicago Public Schools DRIVE Teacher Award and a member of the DRIVE Teacher Advisory Council.

Arleta Ingram, Chicago Public - Carnegie Elementary, 5th to 8th Science

Arleta has taken on the role of the unofficial science coach in her school because of the wealth of resources in her classroom that she shares with colleagues. Because of the relationships Arleta has established with the University of Chicago, the Museum of Science and Industry, and the University of Illinois Chicago, the school has a wealth of educational opportunities through academic enrichment programs during and after school. Arleta is a 2010 winner of the Chicago Public Schools DRIVE Teacher Award and a member of the Teacher Leadership Advisory Council.

Gerard Kovach, Chicago Public - Rubén Salazar Bilingual Education Center, 8th Language Arts and 6th to 8th Science

Gerard is a National Board Certified Teacher who teamed up with an engineer from Motorola Corporation who leads the company's Latino community outreach program. His students have benefited from this partnership with Motorola through sponsored field trips to the company headquarters to learn about the work of engineers. Gerard also has taken numerous courses in Spanish so he can communicate more effectively with his Hispanic students and families. He participated in a study abroad program that took place on the Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico. He lives his school's motto: "Being bilingual is our future!"

Kyle Radcliff, Chicago Public- Newberry Math and Science Academy, 5th and 6th Math

Kyle started a Family Math Night at Newberry that he called Night at The Academy. As a math teacher, he felt this would be a great way to reach out to the community and to allow teachers a chance to interact with students. His theme centered on the Academy Awards. Kyle said he had the same thought as Mike and Pat Koldyke when they started the Golden Apple Foundation to celebrate extraordinary teachers. He wanted to give students that "star treatment" and to have them come to school with their families for a fun night.

Eliza Ramirez, Chicago Public - Emiliano Zapata Academy, 7th Reading and Writing

Eliza credits the University of Chicago with teaching her about uncommon questions and responses. The Latin School of Chicago taught her about work ethic, the way peers shape and strengthen each other's mind, and to live as a counterweight to the inequities of the world. The High Jump Program taught her about humility, diversity, and provided opportunities that she didn't know existed. She feels the education she received has transformed her from thinking she was the kid with all the right answers to the teacher who poses difficult questions to compel students to think and respond dimensionally.

Michael Sementa, Mundelein Public - Carl Sandburg Middle School, 6th to 8th Science & Technology

Michael believes that "how we present ourselves to parents, visitors, and students sets the right impression on how we would like to be seen." He feels creating a positive relationship with the community makes for better lines of communication and a less adversarial relationship

between the school and the community. Parents feel Michael is an integral part of the Sandburg school community. He is known as a stalwart champion of his students who insists, and receives, high level of performance from them.

Carla Stone, Evanston Public - Nichols Middle School, 6th Math

Much of Carla Stone's classroom instruction focuses on team work and how to be a positive efficient member of a team. She grew up in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada where she played semi-pro basketball for the Canadian National Team. She believes her short-lived professional basketball career, ended after a knee injury, allows her to teach students how to overcome hardship. As a competitive Academic All-American Team member at DePaul University, Carla understands the power of positive thinking, strong mental attitude, setting goals and achieving those goals. She exemplifies resilience and belief in the better tomorrow to her students.

Howard Templer, Highland Park Public - Braeside School, 4th Grade

"Howie" Templer, as he is known, grew up in the community in which he now teaches. He is a leader in instructional pedagogy and content knowledge. His technology expertise has provided an opportunity for his student to Skype with students in Wales. He shares his technology skills with colleagues and teaches sessions on wikis, blogs, iMovie, Animoto, discovery Streaming, PowerPoint, and Promethean Boards. Howard's students enjoy his great interactive classroom website 4tpride@pbworks.com. His embrace of technology and command of the nuances of teaching make him an expert at creating community in his classroom.

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