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**Press Release**

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## **DCSD Reveals the 2024 Apple Awards Winners**

The Foundation for Douglas County Schools annually honors exceptional Douglas County School District educators and staff who are inspiring a love of learning in their students and trailblazing extraordinary innovation in our schools. Thousands of nominations are submitted every year. Just five receive an Apple Award.

**Lauri Simington-Echer is the Classified Employee of the Year** and also the Secretary to Assistant Principal Craig Bowman at Chaparral High School. Lauri is involved in almost every aspect of life at Chaparral. She is in charge of marketing the high school, managing communications to the families and students, and also helps to organize Sources of Strength. Lauri works diligently to create the best learning environment for the staff and the students.

**Michelle Lewis is the Department Employee of the Year** and for good reason. Michelle travels all across the district to help identify students who have advanced potential in the arts. She uses many different strategies with students who may need extra support and one of the ways is through the use of games. The work Michelle is doing in DCSD classrooms is having a lasting impact here and across the country.

**Jessica Mason is the Elementary Educator of the Year** and a first-grade teacher at North Star Academy. She is known as a passionate, funny, and supportive educator and co-worker. Jessica's love for working with the young learners can be seen and felt as soon as you walk into her classroom. She loves to sing and often incorporates movement and song into her lessons. Jessica takes great pride in helping her students develop a love for learning.

**Damon Larson is the Secondary Educator of the Year** and has been with Chaparral High School since the doors opened. He serves as a research coach and also a librarian. Damon is a friend to all the students at Chaparral and knows them by name. He works hard to make sure every student who walks into the library feels seen and acknowledged. If you need a book recommendation, help with a research project, or just someone to confide in, Damon is more than willing to give you his time.

**Dr. Jenny Brown is the District Administrator of the Year** and the Principal of Gold Rush Elementary School. Dr. Brown has served her families and students for the past 12 years. She is rarely in her office and can often be found in the classrooms connecting and observing the students who attend her school. Dr. Brown is known as someone who leads by example

and is willing to perform any task to help her staff and students. She knows all of her students by name and works tirelessly to be a part of every child's education.

To read more and see all of the nominees, please visit the [Foundation's website](#).

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*About DCSD*

Douglas County School District is Colorado's third largest school district and serves 63,000 students. Learn more at [www.dcsdk12.org](http://www.dcsdk12.org).