

# Bosque School Teacher Wins One of Seven Prestigious Golden Apple Awards

Dr. Kim Lester, a sixth grade science and eighth grade math teacher at Bosque School, is the recipient of the prestigious 2006 Golden Apple award. Seven teachers from around New Mexico are awarded this honor each year. Other teachers selected for this award include Diana Barela, a Roosevelt Middle School physical education teacher; Victor Chacon, a Cleveland Middle School science teacher; Don Oman, a Kennedy Middle School math teacher; Suzie Doss, an eighth grade English teacher and department chair at Houston Junior High School in Hobbs; Jane Sutherland a science and art teacher at Holloman Middle School in Alamogordo, and Susie Tufts, who teaches English as a second language at Sierra Middle School in Las Cruces.

Dr. Lester has been teaching middle school science and math at Bosque School since 2003. She previously was a 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at Hubert Humphrey Elementary in Albuquerque. Dr. Lester holds a B.A. in Elementary Education from the College of Santa Fe, a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine and a Bachelor of Science from Cornell University. Along with her classroom teaching, Dr. Lester is a Bosque Ecosystem Monitoring Program (BEMP) master teacher. BEMP is a long-term ecological research program, which relies on volunteers (K-12 teachers and their students) to monitor key indicators of structural and functional change in New Mexico's Middle Rio Grande riparian forest, or "*bosque*." BEMP is a joint project of the University of New Mexico's Biology Department and Albuquerque's Bosque School. Dr. Lester also coordinated a 3-day "*Plantas del Bosque*" project, which merges Bosque School 6<sup>th</sup> grade students with Duranes Elementary School 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade classes during the 2005-2006 school year, which is funded by a PNM Classroom Innovation Grant. Sheryl Chard, head of Bosque's Middle School said, "Dr. Lester is the kind of teacher who is engaged in continual self-reflection and professional growth. She cares deeply about her students, and she understand the profound commitment required to teach in a way that allows every student to engage meaningfully with the new skills and knowledge being explored in her classroom." "Dr. Lester has a unique ability to integrate technology into the classroom, and her background in science, especially biology and medicine, create a dynamic outdoor experiential learning opportunity for students. She is an incredible leader and teacher," remarked Andrew Wooden, Head of Bosque School.

The award-winning teachers were nominated last fall by either their school's principal or by other teachers, parents, students or community members. Teachers were nominated from 41 communities around New Mexico, representing public, private, and charter schools in urban and rural areas.

The award includes a cash stipend and \$4,000 to be used by each winning teacher toward his or her professional development. Each also receives a computer system donated by Intel Corporation. Award winners become part of the Golden Apple Academy of Fellows, a 60-member strong group of outstanding teachers. The Academy meets three times each year, once for an extended professional development program in the summer and once each school semester for best practice presentations and information.