

Local affiliate of  
EconomicsPennsylvania

Robert Morris University Center  
for Economic Education  
Leonard M. Kokkila School of Business  
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Serving schools in Washington, Fayette and  
Greene Counties & Surrounding Areas



Promoting economic  
literacy through education  
in the k-12 classroom

### PARKER/HUNTER HEATS UP \$ STOCK MARKET GAMES!

'Looking for "cruise control" for your Stock Market Games Teams? We've got it for you! In addition to our own workshop training & support from EconomicsPennsylvania, did you know that Parker/Hunter will send out a classroom consultant to help/coach/ keep you on track? Mr. Jay Yard, Sr. Vice-President of Parker/Hunter Professional Services, and newly-elected President of the Pittsburgh EconomicsPA Board, has always given many important learning opportunities to teachers and students, on-site tours, materials and curriculum support. This year, we learned that Parker/Hunter will assist participating classroom teacher with their SMG activities by sending a consultant to the requesting classroom. Mr.

Bob Archbald, Parker/Hunter South Hills Office, has already assisted at our SMG training workshops and will visit your classroom by request. Call us at the Pitt - 412-648-1724 or call Robert Morris University 412-760-7667 - Centers and we will arrange it for you.

The "Stock Market Games" is a ten-week simulation of Wall Street trading that teaches students about the American Economic System. SMG is designed specifically for classroom use to help students understand stock trading, cost & benefits of investing, sources and use of capital, profit and loss and other economic concepts. There are many other benefits to playing this game: meets educational standards across disciplines, promotes cooperation and group autonomy among students teams, creates interest in current events and others. More than 450,000 students in 49 states play this game each fall & spring. Three game divisions for grades 4-6, 7-8 and 9-12 are available. Find out more about this game by contacting game coordinators at: [SMGofPA@temple.edu](mailto:SMGofPA@temple.edu) or go to [www.EconomicsPA.org](http://www.EconomicsPA.org) to learn even more. Our goal for Pennsylvania is to have 100,001 students playing! Thanks, Parker/Hunter for your expert help!

#### PLAN AHEAD for BUSINESS PLAN COMPETITION!

You don't want your students to miss out on this educational and valuable experience! Business students and potential Entrepreneurs need to learn how to write a Business Plan and to enter their plans in the Regional competition for prize money!

#### 2005 Deadlines & Dates Are:

Teacher Registration: March 21

Plans Due: April 29

Regional Finalists will be announced in early June. We are proud of our local 2004 winners. The top three winners in the Eastern PA Region and from the Western PA Region will be entered into the statewide competition. More information is at: [www.EconomicsPA.org](http://www.EconomicsPA.org)

Teacher Information Packets may be obtained by calling 570-372-9997



## TRADE-OFFS

Newsletter of the Robert Morris University Leonard M. Kokkila Center for Economic Education  
Dr. Mark Eschenfelder and Denise C. Letterman, Co-Directors  
Tara O'Brien, Field Consultant



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everydayECONOMIC\$ for educator\$

### ECONOMIC CHALLENGE ON THE WAY—YEAR #2

*Tara O'Brien Reporting*

EconomicsPennsylvania is pleased to announce the Sojka Family Student Pennsylvania Economics Challenge State Finals. Pennsylvania will join 33 other states in offering the opportunity for high school economics students to participate in a national competition sponsored by National Council on Economic Education (NCEE) and the Goldman Sachs Foundation.

REGISTER YOUR TEAMS BY MARCH —, 2005!  
SEE DETAILS BELOW.

#### BENEFITS OF 'THE CHALLENGE'

- \* Increases understanding of economic concepts and an appreciation for policy issues.
- \* Provides an opportunity for enjoyable and stimulating activity matching your team's understanding of economics with teams from other schools.
- \* Motivates independent study and stimulates interest in economics and other social studies curriculum.
- \* Enhances debate, discussion and analytical skills.

#### GENERAL INFORMATION

Teams of four (4) students representing their high schools are invited to compete in one of two Pennsylvania regional competitions. At each level of competition, student teams face off against one another in answering rigorous questions on microeconomics, macroeconomics, international economics and

current economic events. Students answer questions both individually, and as a team. The final round at each level will feature the top teams in each division facing off in a fast-answer round.

In addition to all-expenses paid trips to the next level of competition, winning teams at the State, Regional and National Level will receive significant prizes, including U.S. Savings Bonds.

#### HOW IT WORKS

The winning team at the State Final in each division will advance to the Eastern Regional Competition. The Eastern Regional winning team in each division will advance to the national competition

#### TWO COMPETITIVE DIVISIONS:

The David Ricardo Division: for students enrolled in a one-semester economics, consumer economics, or personal finance economics course with emphasis placed on real life economics applications.

The Adam Smith Division: for students enrolled in a two-semester course, AP, Honors or IB course focused more on the theoretical aspects of economics including problem solving.

#### LEVELS OF COMPETITION:

- \* Pennsylvania state finals
- \* Eastern Regional National Finals\* (PA state winners compete against the state winners from Maine to Virginia) (expenses paid by NCEE/Goldman Sachs Foundation) (See P. 3)

### NEW FIELD CONSULTANT JOINS PITT & RMU TEAM

She is not new to Economics Education. But that's only one reason we are glad she is with us. Mrs. Donna Dado earned her Bachelor's Degree at Slippery Rock University and her Master's Degree at the University of Pittsburgh. She retired early from teaching at Bethel Park's Independence Middle School in 1999 where she worked as Facilitator for the Gifted Education Program. This followed many years of successful classroom teaching and professional involvement with students, parents and colleagues. As a member of the Executive Board of the Pennsylvania Association for Gifted Education, Donna has served two terms as Treasurer. She has presented at many state-wide conferences, stayed in touch with the Allegheny Intermediate Unit #3, serving as resource and judging at student competitions. Her hobbies are wood-carving, painting, gardening and movies. ...and we hear she is a great cook, too! Donna has two grown children, a son and a daughter, and lives in Elizabeth, PA with her husband, Jerry. She is working to help both Pitt and RMU Centers with workshops, grants and general office management. We welcome her and appreciate her energy, hard work and unique vision for opportunity.

Sojka Family Student  
PENNSYLVANIA  
Economics Challenge

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## FINANCIAL LITERACY for ALL—A HEINZ ENDOWMENT PRIORITY IN PITTSBURGH & THE MON-VALLEY

Reported by Lora Spence

The overall mission of this project, funded by the Heinz Endowments, is based on growing evidence of need for Financial Literacy Education in Western Pennsylvania. Students and their Parents in schools along the Monongahela River Valley and in the City of Pittsburgh need formal curriculum support for mastering skills in Spending, saving, investing, using credit and budgeting. Evidence from local banks and credit counseling services shows that predatory lending is up 40% from the 2004 year's data and academic tests show that these skills are either not being taught nor mastered in consistent ways. The PSSA does not measure Financial Literacy skills except for Business & Consumer Education courses at high school levels, not for all students, K-12. These facts point to the need for education among the general public as well as in the schools and local communities, especially those showing poor academic achievement.

Schools targeted for this project were chosen from those whose PSSA and Standardized tests show a pattern of below standards mastery, especially in the middle school levels. Four participating Mon-Valley Schools for the 2004-2005 year are: Clairton City, Steel Valley, East Allegheny and McKeesport. These schools have been training teachers to supplement their own local program using the NCEE's Financial Fitness for Life curriculum and other materials provided by EconomicsPA. This program is unique in that it has a Parent Component and provides parents with activities complimentary to the classroom lessons their children are receiving. The Pittsburgh City Schools are participating in this project in four of their high schools, Brashear, Alderdice, Langley and Westinghouse and they are using resources from EconomicsPA to refresh, update and strengthen their Business & Finance Academy, offering both students and parents opportunities for valuable business connections and on-site visits. A special Pilot Program has been developed among the Pittsburgh and EconomicsPA Pitt Center staff, with Emily Davis, Pittsburgh's Supervisor of Business Education, and Roland Handy, Career Counselor, taking the district lead with this effort.

The Heinz Endowment has given EconomicsPA a unique and precious opportunity to help these schools and to assist in eventual community improvement. For more information about the Heinz Endowment Project, please, go to [www.economicspa.org](http://www.economicspa.org). Our heartfelt thanks to Heinz and to the schools who are working so hard to make this project a reality!  
~ A 10,000 mile journey begins with one phone call!~

## NEW ENVIRONMENTAL CURRICULUM

Contributed by Dr. Mike Gumper, Millersville University Center for Economic Education

If you want excitement and contemporary content in your classroom lessons, consider using EconomicsPennsylvania's new Environmental Curriculum! Based on a research project funded by the Center for Rural Pennsylvania entitled, "An Interdisciplinary Approach to Benefit Cost Analysis of Public Farmland Preservation Programs," an interactive, interdisciplinary, and high interest curriculum for grades 10-12 was developed. This curriculum is designed to promote an understanding and increased awareness of environmental problems related to land use and preservation. The lessons and activities encourage students to examine and explore farmland preservation and land use historically, geographically, and demographically while they learn and apply both fundamental and current economic tools and analysis.

The curriculum features 8 full units incorporating more than 80 hours of classroom lessons and activities and culminates in an interactive simulation entitled Res Publica, translated, "a Public Thing", where students assume special interest roles as they tackled the question of commercial and residential development vs. traditional and agricultural preservation. The lessons integrate solid research problems, mathematical and statistical analysis, comparison and contrast evaluation, and internet exploration. Basic economic fundamentals such as scarcity, opportunity cost, benefits and costs, supply and demand, the influence of economic systems from traditional to free market, and the efficient use of productive resources are taught. In addition, this curriculum is unique in that it explores more sophisticated and complex environmental economic concepts such as intrinsic and altruistic value, consumer motivation for environmental resources, and the measurement of aesthetic value. Students are exposed to interactive lessons that will teach them the basic techniques used by environmental economists. Special note to teachers: The lessons and units can be used individually and integrated into your current curriculum.

Content Units Are:

- ZOOMING IN ON ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES
- SHOULD MALTHUS BE IN MOTHBALLS?
- LAND, LAND EVERYWHERE: LAND USE ISSUES -WHERE'S THE BEEF?
- USING ECONOMICS AND MAPS TO ANALYZE ISSUES RELATED TO AGRICULTURE AND LAND USE
- THE AMISH AND LANCASTER COUNTY FARMLANDS
- ECONOMICS OF LAND USE: APPLYING THE FUNDAMENTALS
- THE ECONOMICS OF FARMLAND PRESERVATION
- RES PUBLICA – A SIMULATION

Participating teachers will receive an introduction to the curriculum, an introduction to environmental economics from Millersville University experts, lesson demonstrations, and great classroom ideas.

Look for workshop sites and costs for this new and exciting curriculum at: [www.economicspa.org](http://www.economicspa.org)

April is  
Financial  
Literacy  
month

ECONOMICS CHALLENGE, (cont'd from P. 1)

### PRIZES:

All participating students receive t-shirts and certificates  
\* Pennsylvania Economics Challenge state final winners receive \$300 Savings Bonds and engraved plaques  
\* NCEE/Goldman Sachs Economics Challenge Eastern Regional National Finals receive \$500 Savings Bonds  
\* NCEE/Goldman Sachs Economics Challenge National Competition winners receive \$1,000 Savings Bonds  
For sample questions, printable brochure, registration form and more information, please, go to

[www.economicspa.org](http://www.economicspa.org)

~ "EIGHTY PERCENT of SUCCESS

IS JUST SHOWING UP"! ~

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### NEW WINTER—SPRING WORKSHOP SCHEDULE-2005

#### Stock Market Game Workshops

After-school workshops will introduce first-time advisors to the Stock Market Game. A review of economic concepts and stock market basics, along with hands-on computer experience will prepare teachers to guide their students through the Stock Market Game Program.

January 31<sup>st</sup> at Intermediate Unit #1  
4:00-7:00 pm, light dinner served

February 1<sup>st</sup> at Intermediate Unit #3  
4:00 -7:00 pm, light dinner served

#### Understanding the Pennsylvania Economic Standards

This workshop will provide an understanding of what is expected from the PA Economic Standards. A review of the standards will accompany a lively discussion and modeling of best classroom practices.

February 3<sup>rd</sup> at Intermediate Unit #1  
4:00-7:00 pm, light dinner serve

#### Financial Fitness for Life

EconomicsPennsylvania is pleased to provide two workshops on Financial Literacy. Both parents and teachers will have the opportunity to engage in lessons from the Financial Fitness for Life curriculum, and to receive personal copies of the curriculum, including the CD-Rom.

March 4<sup>th</sup> for TEACHERS grades 6-8  
at IU#1  
9:00-4:00, lunch and snacks will be provided

March 11<sup>th</sup> for PARENTS at Allegheny Intermediate Unit #3  
2 Sessions, 9:00 am-Noon 1:00-4:00 pm  
Lunch 12:00-1:00 for all sessions

#### The Stock Market Game Program

The Stock Market Game Program™ (SMGP) is a ten-week simulation of Wall Street trading that provides a framework for teaching students about the American economic system. The SMG is designed specifically for classroom use to help students understand the stock market, and many other related economic concepts.

To learn more about the SMG and to register, please visit our website: [www.economicspa.org](http://www.economicspa.org)

#### The American Corporation

A Roundtable discussion with Corporate Presidents, CEOs, and Entrepreneurs regarding the economics & structure of the American Corporation. Small groups discussions will take place mid-morning.

FEBRUARY 3, 2005 from 8:30-noon. If you are interested in attending this event, you must reserve space with Lora Spence (lspence@economicspa.org)

#### NCEE/Goldman Sachs Economics Challenge

The National Council on Economic Education (NCEE) and EconomicsPennsylvania invite all High School Economics Students and Teachers to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Pennsylvania State Finals, April 5, 2005.

Teams of four students answer rigorous questions on microeconomics, macroeconomics, and international economics. The most exciting round of the competition is the final round conducted in an oral quiz-bowl format. Winning teams advance to the Regional Finals at the end of April. Many exciting prizes for all teams!

For more information, visit [www.economicspa.org](http://www.economicspa.org) or [www.economicchallenge.ncee.net](http://www.economicchallenge.ncee.net)

===== GIVE PAYCHECKS A BOOST! =====

It is TAX season and there are valuable benefits available to families and individuals which may mean putting thousands of paycheck dollars back into pockets of low to moderate income earners. Earned Income Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit and the PA Tax Back Program are important tax benefits that all should know about. Free tax prep services are available from VITA throughout Allegheny County Jan 20-April 15. Call the IRS at 1-800-829-1040 or call 1-800-829-2050 to find out more about these. Or contact: Kristie Weiland, Tax Campaign Coordinator at Just Harvest; [www.justharvest.org](http://www.justharvest.org)

### PENNSYLVANIA DATES & LOCATIONS:

Pennsylvania Finals: April 5, 2005 in Harrisburg, PA

### NATIONAL DATES & LOCATIONS:

Eastern Regional Competition to be held April 22, 2005 in Baltimore, MD

National competition: Held in New York City  
May 21-23, 2005

WE WELCOME ALL TO ENTER THIS  
EXCITING, PRESTIGIOUS EVENT!

Contact Tara O'Brien at:

[tobrien@economicspa.org](mailto:tobrien@economicspa.org)

412-760-7667

All  
workshops  
qualify for  
Act 48  
credit  
hours.