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Contact: Pamela P. Smith
601-974-1325

Jackson Metro Teams Wins First Round in Economics Challenge

Students advance to state championship in Jackson

JACKSON, Miss., March 17, 2010—Nine teams from Madison Central and Northwest Rankin in Brandon won the first round of competition in the Mississippi Economics and Financial Literacy Challenge and will advance to the state championship March 25 at Millsaps College in Jackson.

Sponsored by the Mississippi Council on Economic Education and now in its seventh year of competition, the Challenge included an online preliminary round. The number of participating teams increased from 101 teams last year to 118 teams this year. A total of 472 students took the first round online economics and financial literacy tests, which is up from 372 last year. The highest scoring students and teams qualified to compete for scholarships and awards at the state level.

Only 20 teams throughout the state qualified for the finals. Madison Central will bring 5 teams coached by two teachers: Susan Shivers and Christy Walker and Northwest Rankin will bring 4 teams coached by Charles “Rush” Sweeney. Walker is the 2006 U.S. Senator Thad Cochran Economics Teacher of the Year and Sweeney is the 2009 Teacher of the Year.

“This year’s record high participation rate in the Mississippi Economics and Financial Literacy Challenge indicates that our schools recognize the importance of preparing students to address the most relevant topic in our nation today – the economy,” said Dr. Pamela Smith, president of the Mississippi Council on Economic Education, which coordinates the event. “Our competition will provide a look at our state’s fiscally responsible future leaders.”

Prizes include eight \$1,000 scholarships for students on the two state championship teams. These teams will represent the state at the Regional Economics Challenge in April. An additional \$500 scholarship will be awarded to the 2010 Economics Student of the Year. All scholarships are provided by BankPlus, Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi and State Farm Insurance.

The state competition produces a championship team in each of two divisions: the Adam Smith Division (Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate and honors economics students) and the David Ricardo Division (for single semester economics students).

Students from Madison Central High School in Madison and Oak Grove High in Hattiesburg won both divisions last year.

“The Mississippi Council on Economic Education provides teachers with professional development in economics and financial education that enables teachers to teach skills the

students need for success. Many of the Economics Challenge competitors are taught by Master Teachers of Economics, a relatively new endorsement established by the Mississippi Board of Education. As teachers' skills improve in teaching these complex courses, their students demonstrate greater success in the annual competition, ' ' added Smith.

2010 Mississippi Economics Challenge Teams

David Ricardo Division (single semester economics students):

<u>School</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>Teacher</u>
Hernando High School	Hernando	David Spencer
Lawrence County High School	Lawrence	Eddie Rials
Madison Central High School	Madison	Susan Shivers
Madison Central High School	Madison	Christy Walker (2 teams)
Newton County Career & Tech Ctr	Newton	Margaret Booth
Northwest Rankin High School	Brandon	Charles Rush Sweeney
Oak Grove High School	Hattiesburg	Terry Smith
Picayune Memorial High School	Picayune	Lucian Roberson
Sumrall High School	Sumrall	Amy Lee

Adam Smith Division (Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate and honors students):

<u>School</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>Teacher</u>
Amanda Elzy High School	Greenwood	Deborah Phillips
Bay High School	Bay St. Louis	Stacey Pate
Madison Central High School	Madison	Christy Walker (2 teams)
Lawrence County High School	Monticello	Eddie Rials
Northwest Rankin High School	Brandon	Charles Rush Sweeney (3 teams)
Ocean Springs High School	Ocean Springs	Angela Sanders (2 teams)

The Mississippi Economics Challenge is sponsored by BankPlus, Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi, State Farm, Millsaps College, the Mississippi Council on Economic Education and the Council for Economic Education,

For more information, contact Dr. Pamela Smith at the MCEE office at 601-974-1325.