



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FINANCIAL READINESS SKILLS TO BE ASSESSED STATEWIDE

JACKSON, MS—February 25, 2010—Next week, students from throughout the state will face off in the second annual online Mississippi Economics & Financial Literacy Challenges provided by the Mississippi Council on Economic Education. Middle and high school students are eligible for both the Economics Challenge and the Financial Literacy Challenges, which are available on-line March 1-5, 2010. Teachers can register as many teams of four students as they wish at no cost to the teams and prizes are available for students and their teachers who achieve the highest scores. All high schools are urged to participate. First phase competition is regional with winners advancing to the State Finals on March 25, 2010. For information, go to the MCEE website at www.mscee.org and click on Fact Sheet for 2010 Challenges.

Carole Lynn Meadows (Gulfport), the Chair of the Board of Directors for the MCEE , expressed the Board's commitment to economic and financial literacy, "The business and education leaders who serve on the Board are very pleased with the results we are seeing from our six years of programming with Kindergarten through Grade 12 teachers. The best investment we can make for Mississippi is in the teacher training of those who will give our students the tools they need to succeed," said Meadows.

Charles Sweeney, the U.S. Senator Thad Cochran Economics Teacher of the Year from Northwest Rankin in Brandon, commented on the program, "The Economics Challenge is a wonderful opportunity for my students to get a better understanding of how our economy works and real world connections. States are continuing to raise academic standards, there is no better tool to have your students enter the Mississippi Economics Challenge. The competition is intense and the tests are rigorous. The best students in the state of Mississippi are vying for cash scholarships and a chance to represent their great state. If you teach economics, I strongly encourage you to require your students to enter the Challenge, who knows, you could be teaching the next Warren Buffett.

The State Championship Economics Challenge, scheduled for March 25, 2010 at Millsaps College in Jackson, provides the opportunity for at least 8 students to win \$1,000 scholarships. It is made possible by the generous support of the Council on Economic Education, BankPlus, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Mississippi, State Farm Insurance, the Mississippi Department of Education and Millsaps College. The Challenges are a state competition for middle and high school students from both public

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and private schools, designed to provide a fun and motivating way for students to increase their understanding and interest in economics and finance and win scholarships and other prizes.

In 2009, nearly 250 high school students from throughout the state participated in the Mississippi Economics Challenge. The winning team in the Adam Smith Division (for Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and honors students) was from Oak Grove High in Hattiesburg. The winners of the David Ricardo Division (for single semester students) were from Madison Central High. Zachary Yoder from Murrah High School in Jackson was named **Mississippi Economics Student of the Year**. Winners in the 2010 competition will each receive \$1,000 scholarships and the opportunity to represent Mississippi in the National Economics Challenge in New York City as well as the National Personal Finance Challenge in Kansas City.

“The current economic crisis underscores the reasons for demonstrated economic and financial literacy. We are fortunate that our State’s Board of Education recognized the need to make economics a graduation requirement and the State Superintendent Tom Burnham is a strong advocate for the professional development teachers need through the MCEE,” said Pamela P. Smith, President of the Mississippi Council on Economic Education.

Smith summarized the competition, “The students who compete in the 2010 Economics and Financial Literacy Challenges will be our state’s future business leaders and the Mississippi Council on Economic Education is delighted to bring this statewide competition to our students,” said Smith.

The MCEE’s fundamental goal is to provide every Mississippi student with a sound non-partisan understanding of basic economic principles and how economics relates to their lives as workers, citizens and consumers in a global economy. MCEE is a state-wide organization with thirty-eight members of the Board of Directors, composed of business and education leaders from throughout the state. MCEE is affiliated with the 60-year old Council for Economic Education based in New York.

For additional information about the MCEE, please contact: Pamela P. Smith, President, at 601-974-1325.

“Giving Our Children the Tools They Need to Succeed”