

Minnesota Council on Economic Education

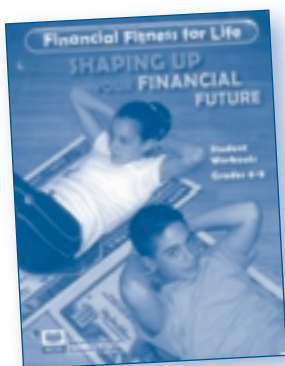
SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2002

FORTY-ONE YEARS OF EXCELLENCE IN ECONOMIC EDUCATION

THE KEY TO STUDENT SUCCESS: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR TEACHERS

In 2002, the Minnesota Council continued to concentrate on preparing teachers to enhance student understanding of economics and personal finance. Professional development opportunities were provided to over 750 Minnesota K-12 teachers, the greatest number served in one year by the Council.

- A major focus was to assist teachers in implementing the economics and personal finance graduation standards. Over half of state school districts now require knowledge of economic systems for graduation, and almost all districts offer personal finance courses. Educators participating in week-long professional development courses achieved remarkable increases in their economic understanding; 90% scored less than half correct on a standardized pre-test, but achieved an average increase of 30% in the post-test.



- A second focus was to integrate economics and personal finance into social studies and mathematics curricula. One hundred educators participated in workshops on the new economics-based personal finance curriculum, *Financial Fitness for Life*. The new *Mathematics and Economics: Connections for Life* curriculum was introduced to over 125 math educators, and 65 history, civics, and geography educators participated in graduate courses on enhancing the social studies curricula with economics.

OUTSTANDING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

- The *Economics Challenge* team from Fairmont High School won the National Championship in the "Fundamental Economics" division. The Edina High School team placed third nationally in the "Advanced Economics" division. Minnesota was the only state with two teams at the national contest.



National Champion Fairmont *Economics Challenge* Team

- 1,600 students participated in *Commodity Challenge*, a high school learning activity that illustrates the relationship between commodity prices and current events.
- 500 elementary students working with the *Seas, Trees and Economics* curriculum achieved an average increase in economic understanding of 42% from pre- to post-test. This nationally recognized curriculum was developed by Curt Anderson, Director of the Council's affiliated University of Minnesota-Duluth Center for Economic Education.

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HONORS FOR MINNESOTA ECONOMICS TEACHERS

Economic education awards for excellence and innovation were presented to six Minnesota teachers for 2002. In addition, Minnesota teachers received national recognition for excellence:

- Bill Mittlefehldt, Anoka High School, is the ten-state regional winner in the NASDAQ National Teaching Awards in Economic Education. This is the second time in the four-year history of the national awards that a Minnesota economic educator has been a national finalist.
- In 2002, three Minnesota educators were selected to participate in the National Council on Economic Education's study tours to Russia, Ukraine, and Lithuania.

HONORS FOR THE MINNESOTA COUNCIL FACULTY

In 2002, the following honors were received for excellence in economic education:

- Rich MacDonald, SCSU Center Director, served as President of the National Association of Economic Educators and was elected to the Board of Directors of the National Council.
- Curt Anderson, UMD Center, received the Bessie B. Moore award from the National Association of Economic Educators for outstanding service to economic education, the highest honor awarded by his peers.
- Claudia Parliament, MN Council, received the Outstanding Teacher Award from the students of the College of Agricultural, Food and Environmental Sciences, University of Minnesota.

STRATEGY FOR IMPROVING ECONOMIC UNDERSTANDING

EDUCATORS – THE KEY TO ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL UNDERSTANDING

Council emphasis is on the educator. Research shows that professional development of teachers is the most effective way to introduce and maintain economics in the K-12 curriculum. The Minnesota Council is the only organization oriented primarily to improving teacher understanding of economic and personal finance concepts.

COUNCIL PROGRAMS, TRAINING, AND MATERIALS ALL FEATURE:

- A thorough understanding of economic and personal finance concepts.
- Standards of performance.
- Nationally normed tests and assessment tools.
- Support for classroom implementation.
- Recognition of success for both educators and students.

UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS PROVIDE THE TRAINING

University professors in the Council's network of Centers for Economic Education deliver programs to teachers and students. Centers are located at:

- University of Minnesota – Duluth
- Minnesota State University – Mankato
- St. Cloud State University – St. Cloud
- Minnesota State University – Moorhead
- University of St. Thomas – St. Paul

The Council is based at the University of Minnesota, Department of Applied Economics.