

October 16, 2007

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Grand Marais Teacher Ann Russ Receives Innovative Educator Award

1st Place award for innovative teaching of economics to elementary students in Cook County

Minneapolis, Minn. Sawtooth Mountain Elementary School teacher Ann Russ was recognized for her innovative learning activities by the Minnesota Council on Economic Education. Russ who teaches fifth grade in the Cook County Public Schools, received the first place 3M Innovative Economic Educator award.

There is an increasing national awareness of the importance of teaching economics and personal financial skills. Financial advisers and credit counselors often see people in difficult personal financial straits because they do not have a good understanding of personal finance and how our economic system works. It's never too early to start teaching life-long skills.

Russ uses children's literature to help her students learn basic economic concepts. Russ developed a learning activity that introduces the economics concepts of scarcity, opportunity costs and decision making through the book *Flute's Journey: The Life of a Wood Thrush* by Lynne Cherry. The book tells the story of a wood thrush's migration and the difficulties the young bird encounters.

To encourage teachers to teach economics, the Minnesota Council works with the 3M Foundation to sponsor the Innovative Educator Award for elementary and high school teachers who develop innovative learning activities in teaching economics. Russ received the award at the Minnesota Council's *EconFest* ceremony this week at the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis.

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