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Elaine Sunne, Lake of the Woods Elementary Teacher, to Receive *Thrivent Financial Foundation Personal Finance Educator Award* on October 29, 2008

September 15, St. Paul, Minn. – The Minnesota Council on Economic Education will honor Ms. Elaine Sunne at its annual *EconFest* celebration on October 29, 2008, at the University of St. Thomas in Minneapolis. Ms. Sunne will receive the *Thrivent Personal Finance Award* which recognizes educators who are increasing student understanding of personal finance through original learning activities at the elementary and secondary levels. Winning entries were chosen based on innovation of approach, emphasis on personal finance concepts, ease of replication, and assessment of student learning.

Sunne combined economics with children’s literature for her second graders at Lake of the Woods Elementary. Using the story *Max’s Money*, by Teddy Slather, Sunne taught her second grade students about the personal finance concepts of saving, borrowing, earning power, and decision making. Students applied what they learned through the story and class discussions by creating a visual web representing an item they would like to have and ways to earn and save money in order to purchase it.

“One of the most effective ways to increase student understanding of economic principles is to make economics and personal financial decision-making skills come alive in the classroom,” said Minnesota Council Executive Director Claudia Parliament. “Every year, hundreds of Minnesota educators are doing just that. We look forward to recognizing their achievements and the outstanding work of Ms. Sunne and other award winners at our event on October 29.”

The Minnesota Council on Economic Education is a 47-year-old partnership of business, labor and education dedicated to improving economic and personal finance understanding and preparing K-12 students to participate in a complex, global economy. This marks the third year Thrivent Financial for Lutherans has been sponsoring the Awards Program.

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