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GCEE Newsletter - May 2023

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Looking Back, Looking Forward

Just like that, the 2022-2023 school year is coming to an end. A happy time for teachers and students and a time to reflect on memories created since the school year kicked off back in August. It's also a time for the GCEE team to look back on the important role we played in helping thousands of teachers and students gain a deeper understanding of important economic and financial literacy concepts.

Throughout the school year, GCEE consistently created and delivered engaging resources to help teachers make economics and financial literacy come alive for students. GCEE also rolled out an entrepreneurship-themed online game (Start It Up!), a series of lessons to accompany a popular children's video series (\$martPath), and an economics superhero meme generator (Econ Empress & the Scarcity Kid). We also delivered more than 160 professional development workshops for teachers in every corner of the state.



As you'll see in the stories and photos below, we recognized excellence in teaching and tested student's knowledge in economics and personal finance through various competitions.

We also found time to debut our newly redesigned logo and branding!

Looking ahead, the GCEE team will be offering several exciting summer programs for teachers at all grade levels in the coming weeks. Summer highlights will include a teacher study tour to Ottawa, [an economic education expo in Savannah](#), an online [Advanced Placement Summer Institute](#), and an immersive economics residential program with our friends at Georgia-Pacific. And we are already planning exciting things for teachers in the fall. Make a plan to check our [website](#) in August for our fall programs and workshops.

Enjoy your summer!

- Mike Raymer



Jason Eisele: Making Economics Relevant

One way Jason Eisele, an economics teacher at McIntosh High School in Fayette County, reinforces economic and personal finance concepts with his students is by turning his classroom into a “mini-economy.” Students earn income based on the grades they receive in his class. The better they do, the more “money” they make. They use it to pay rent on their desks. And, like in real life, if they don't pay their rent, they get evicted. He allows them to earn additional income by doing optional assignments or

coming in for extra help.

“Students must invest in their grade by earning and saving money,” Eisele says. “I have been amazed at how well this system has worked in my classroom and what students will do to earn fake money!”

Eisele also uses simulations, storytelling and real world examples to engage his students.

“Economics is just so relevant,” he says. “It’s so encouraging for me to see them make the connections and understand how these concepts impact them and can benefit them.”

Eisele was inspired to be a teacher by the social studies teachers he had in high school – coincidentally the same high school where he has been teaching his entire career. He hoped to teach history, but instead was assigned economics as a long-term sub. With no lesson plans, he was forced to “build everything from scratch.” When he got the job permanently the next year, he attended several GCEE workshops, and has been attending them regularly ever since. He now helps write lesson plans and has facilitated workshops for GCEE.

“GCEE has been an indispensable resource,” says Eisele, who is now the Social Studies Department Chair at McIntosh High School. “You always come away with something you can use right away. I also like collaborating with other teachers who love economics education as much as I do.”

2023

Georgia Economics Teacher of the Year



Austin Green: Sharing a Love for Economics

Austin Green, an economics teacher at Milton High School in Fulton County, planned on being a lawyer. But halfway through his prelaw studies at Kennesaw State University, he changed his mind. Capitalizing on his love of history, he switched his major to education and became certified to teach social studies. The subjects he didn't want to teach were world history and economics.

That changed when he was assigned an economics class as a student teacher. "I fell in love with the course," he says.

After teaching government and world history for a few years, he took a job at Milton High School teaching AP Economics.

"Teaching economics at the AP level was something I wasn't fully prepared for," Green admits. He immersed himself in the curriculum and struggled to find answers to his students' questions. He eventually earned his master's degree in economics education, which gave him the understanding and confidence to teach economics at the AP level. He has also reinforced his knowledge and teaching strategies with GCEE workshops.

In all his classes, Green makes it a priority to incorporate activities, simulations and other things that help reinforce the content to enhance his students' understanding.

"I am always looking for ways to break thing up between lectures and make it interesting," he says.

He says one of the most rewarding things is seeing the number of his former students who have gone on to major in economics and who have told him "your class was the reason."

"Every single one of them found that economics just made sense, and they turned it into not just a degree or a career, but a passion," he says. "To me, that is the greatest reward."



GSA: A Longstanding Commitment to Economic Education

GCEE is proud to be honoring the [Georgia Securities Association](#) (GSA), a longtime supporter of the Georgia Council, with its 2023 William J. VanLandingham Commitment to Education Award.

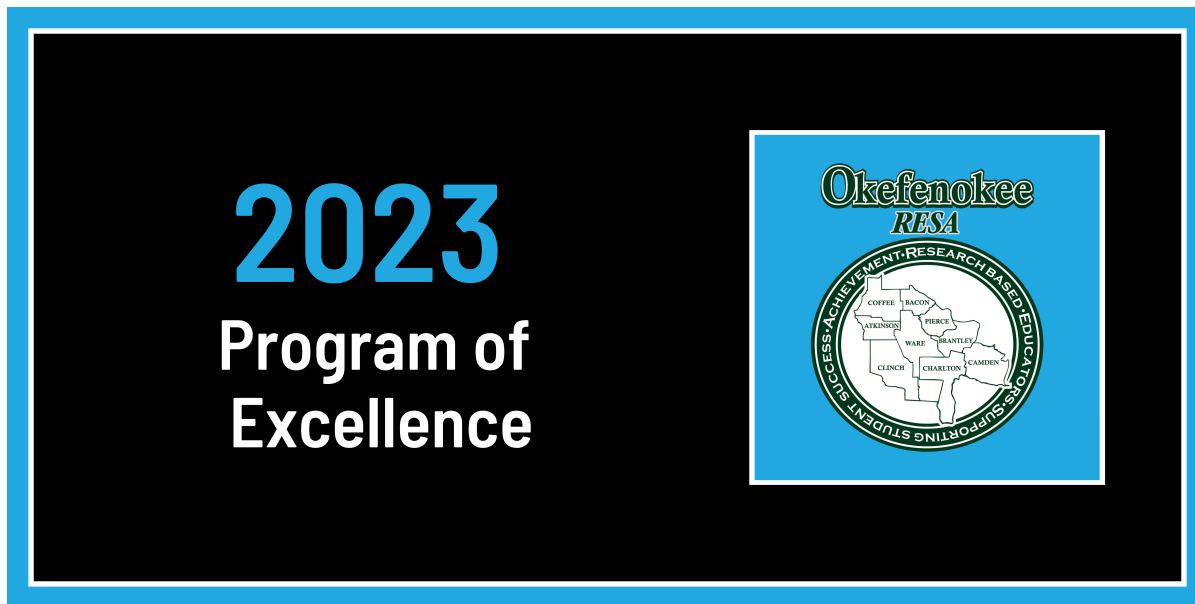
The Georgia Securities Association has fostered professional and social interaction among its members since 1935. As an affiliate of the Security Traders Association, the GSA takes an active role in shaping the forces that will change the securities industry and also believes in giving back to the community.

GCEE has been lucky enough to be one of the beneficiaries of its philanthropy for more than 40 years.

“The GSA has made a consistent commitment to supporting GCEE because past and present Board members believe in its mission and vision,” says Joe Roman, president of the GSA. “Educating Georgia’s students on basic economic principles provides exponential benefits by equipping them to make better financial decisions for the rest of their lives.”

The GSA targets its financial support to the Stock Market Game, a simulation that gives students in grades 4-12 the opportunity to invest a hypothetical \$100,000 for 10 weeks in real stocks, bonds and mutual funds. Additionally, several GSA-affiliated members have also served on various GCEE committees and the board over the years. And GSA-affiliated members regularly volunteer as judges for GCEE’s Personal Finance Challenge, a competition for high school students.

“The Georgia Securities Association has had a long partnership with GCEE to help us serve tens of thousands of Georgia students who have played the Stock Market Game,” says Mike Raymer, GCEE’s Executive Director. “The GSA’s support has been instrumental in helping us become a statewide leader in preparing teachers to teach key personal financial literacy concepts and standards.”



Okefenokee RESA: Promoting Economic Education in South Georgia

Every chance it gets, Okefenokee RESA (Regional Education Service Agency) hosts GCEE workshops to assist its K-12 teachers in acquiring new ideas for teaching economics and personal finance in fun and creative ways.

“The teachers love the workshops,” says Cindy Hitt, Okefenokee RESA’s ELA/SS Specialist. “They are always engaging, and the teachers get materials and resources they can use in class the next day.”

Based in Waycross, Okefenokee RESA consists of nine school districts. Most of these are small, rural districts that depend on RESA for professional learning.

“Most of our schools are small and don’t have staff dedicated to supporting teachers like larger districts might,” says Hitt. “GCEE is always willing to come to South Georgia, and we are so appreciative of their efforts.”

Hitt says that teacher participation in GCEE workshops continues to increase each year. With more teachers attending, a more concentrated instructional focus on the economics standards included in each grade level's social studies standards increases. And this is beneficial to students.

"Many of our students aren't exposed to economic concepts and personal finance at home," says Hitt. "What they are learning at school is critical for their success as productive adults."

While GCEE periodically recognizes exemplary economic programs that have a strong track record of hosting K-12 workshops, participating in GCEE events, and spreading the word about economic and personal finance education, this is the first time a RESA has been awarded the Program of Excellence Award.

"Okefenokee RESA has been an exemplary partner of the Georgia Council's for more than a decade," says Chris Cannon, GCEE Associate Director and Chief Program Officer. "They are always among the first to request new workshops and to recruit teachers to attend workshops. They make the entire trip an enjoyable experience."





Stock Market Game Luncheon Returns to the Fox

After a three year hiatus, the Stock Market Game Luncheon returned to an in-person format that was once again held at Atlanta's Fabulous Fox Theatre. Teams from both the fall and spring divisions were recognized. More than 250 students, teachers and guests enjoyed a fun, interactive format that celebrated their success.



Spring Statewide Winner: Woodville-Tompkins High School



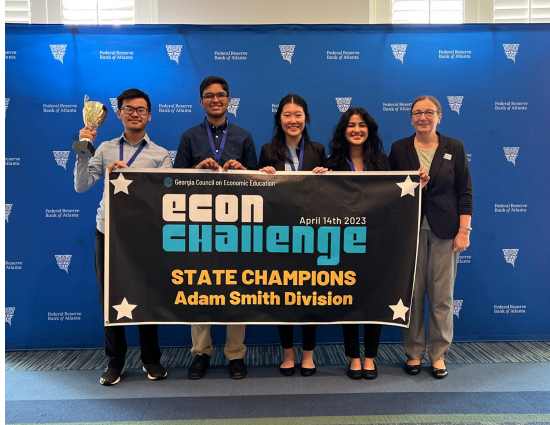
Testing Knowledge in Economics and Personal Finance

GCEE sponsors two competitions that showcase high school students' knowledge of economics and personal finance. In the **Economics Challenge**, students answer challenging questions where they demonstrate critical thinking in microeconomics, macroeconomics, international trade, and current events.

The Personal Finance Challenge has teams analyze a case study of a family's finances in order to make recommendations for how to improve or maintain the family's financial well-being. Students are given the case-study the day of the competition and have 90 minutes to analyze the study and prepare their presentation, which they present to financial industry experts.

Our 2023 spring winners include:

- **Personal Finance Challenge:** Dunwoody High School (DeKalb County) - pictured above
- **Georgia Economics Challenge:**
 - Adam Smith Division - Gwinnett School of Mathematics, Science, and Technology (Gwinnett County)
 - David Ricardo Division - The Walker School



Gwinnett School of Math, Science
and Techology



The Walker School

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COMPETITION

Fourth and Fifth Graders Shine in Econ Games

The Econ Games is a competitive event for fourth and fifth grade students. Over three rounds, the teams apply their knowledge of economics and personal finance by creating and participating in an assembly line, taking a critical thinking test, and developing and presenting an idea for a product that solves a real-world problem. In the spring competition, a team from The Lovett School took home top honors in the 4th grade division, while a determined team from Vanderlyn Elementary (DeKalb County) came out on top in the 5th grade division.



Vanderlyn Elementary

The
Lovett
School



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