



**MARYLAND
COUNCIL ON
ECONOMIC
EDUCATION**

April 2025 Newsletter

Dear Friends -

I love April and May. It's not only the warmer weather and spring blossoms that inspire me with hope; it's also when I get to see Maryland students shine.

MCEE's work—and my daily interaction—is with educators. We help them explore creative ways to include personal finance and economics concepts into their classroom. We provide training and support to help them successfully guide their students to succeed in MCEE-coordinated competitions and programs. And we share practical and timely resources for them to engage children and families.

But in April and May, I spend more of my time with students. And it's a joy.

April is Financial Education Month and we've enjoyed the many special programs and events we host annually to celebrate student achievement and engage with teachers and the greater community. Earlier in April, MCEE hosted the state finals for the Personal Finance Challenge and Economics Challenge. I was impressed, as I always am, with how teams of high school students from around the state fully understand and wonderfully present what they've learned—and what they'll carry with them throughout their lives. The articles below celebrate these accomplishments.

Also in April, MCEE hosted dozens of high school girls and introduced them to the wide array of career options in business and finance. Their eagerness to connect with successful women in these professions was inspiring. Hopefully, you, too, will be inspired when you read about our Invest in Girls program in this newsletter.

Many teachers are sharing with me how excited students were to attend the Poster Contest winners' reception in late March hosted by Comptroller Brooke Lierman. Be sure to check out the details below about this wonderful event.

To culminate this season of student success, more than 300 students and their families will be honored in mid-May at our annual Student Achievement Awards event. I look forward to sharing stories from this exciting and meaningful ceremony with you next month.

On behalf of the 2,500 educators and 200,000 students that MCEE reaches each year, I thank you for your continued support and for creating opportunities for Maryland students to learn, grow, succeed, and shine.

With appreciation,

Julie Weaver

Executive Director

Poster Contest Winners Honored at Annapolis Reception



Over the past few months, hundreds of elementary and middle children used creative drawings to show their understanding of finance and economics in MCEE's Annual

Poster Contest. On March 27, the contest winners were honored at a special ceremony in Annapolis hosted by Maryland Comptroller Brooke Lierman.

Comptroller Lierman greeted winners and their families from around the state in the Louis L. Goldstein Treasury Building. Each of the 20 winning posters was on display—and remained available for public viewing throughout April in recognition of Financial Education Month.

In her remarks to the students, the Comptroller noted, “Financial education is such an important part of any real education. Learning from the earliest age what it means to just think of the concepts of money and saving is such an important part of building a successful life. These are important concepts for all of us to understand. Congratulations on your incredibly thoughtful and creative posters. It's so impressive.”

Read more about the reception, the competition, and the winners [here](#).

Mt. Hebron High Teams Win Economics Challenge



Adam Smith Division winners

Congratulations to two teams of students from Mt. Hebron High School in Howard County, winners of the Maryland Economics Challenge.

The team of Joseph Jeong, Mehin Pandya, Vishva Rao, and Aadarsh Shah bested teams from five other schools to win the Adam Smith Division for AP, International

Baccalaureate, and honors students, as well as returning competitors. Second place was awarded to a of team of students from River Hill High School.

In the David Ricardo Division (for first-time competitors who have taken no more than one economics course), the winning team included Tanvi Anand, Vitus Li, Daksh Mathapati, and Caleb Son. They competed against 18 other teams from around the state. The team of students from River Hill High School came in second place.

In the Maryland Economics Challenge, high school students learn and then demonstrate their knowledge and application of economics. It is the only program of its kind that tests micro- and macroeconomic principles as well as knowledge of the world economy.

Teams from Mt. Hebron High have won statewide Economics Challenge championships more than 20 times. Says Vann Prime, social studies teacher and team advisor at Mt. Hebron, “The Economics Challenge with MCEE’s support has been the greatest teaching tool I’ve had. It’s a motivational tool for kids and gives them an outlet to go above and beyond what they can otherwise do in an economics curriculum. And it’s multi-generational— our older kids teach the younger kids. They’re taught by people who they look up to— role models.

Our thanks to Johns Hopkins Federal Credit Union and Howard County Education Credit Union for sponsoring this competition.

Announcing the Personal Finance Challenge Champions



A team of students from Mt. Hebron High was also the statewide winner of the Maryland Personal Finance Challenge. Benjamin Fichter, Mehin Pandya, Joseph Phelps, and Nathaniel Ritter were state runners-up last year when they were juniors, and clinched the title as seniors this month.

“They were determined to take the championship,” said advisor Vann Prime. “They upped their game through experience and determination, working to better the things that they felt they weren't as strong on last year.”

In the first round of the Personal Finance Challenge, teams compete in a rigorous, online 40-question quiz. Eight teams from across the state with the highest scores are invited to the state finals. The team that wins the state championship moves to the National competition, where they use their knowledge to create a financial plan for a fictitious family scenario.

Other results of the Maryland competition included Applications Research Lab taking second place, Marriott's Ridge High school coming in third place, and Montgomery Blair High School in fourth.

Invest in Girls Introduces Students to Careers in Finance

What happens when you invite 25 Baltimore City high school students to spend the day with 10 women who work in finance? You nurture dreams, inspire aspiration, make connections, and create opportunities.

That's exactly what MCEE did in mid-April at the Invest in Girls Career Exploration Day.

The students, girls from seven City high schools, prepared for the much-anticipated program by participating in a series of workshops introducing them to personal finance concepts, such as budgeting, credit, taxes, and careers in finance. On April 14, they met at the Johns Hopkins Federal Credit Union Office—and met the inspiring women who “were the mirror, helping them see themselves in a career,” as MCEE Program Director Flo Falatko describes. The girls and the finance professionals spoke in small groups and had lunch together. The students were also able to learn from the adults in an industry panel discussion.

This “Be the Chief Financial Officer of Your Own Life” experience is part of MCEE's Invest in Girls program. Because women have historically been underrepresented in financial careers, the initiative focuses on providing financial literacy and mentorship opportunities specifically for high school girls and ultimately increasing the number of women working in finance. The program focuses on workshops to build foundational skills and culminates with a career exploration event.

The Career Exploration Day in April was just one of the Invest in Girls programs MCEE coordinated this year, including in Baltimore County and Prince George’s County, as well as an Industry Day event at Maryvale Preparatory School.

Educators: Time is Running out to Register for the Summit in June



Calling all teachers, school administrators, and content leaders! Registration is filling up for MCEE's annual SECU Financial and Economic Educator Summit, Tuesday, June 24, at the Hotel at Arundel Preserve in Hanover. You won't want to miss this full day of workshops, speakers, and interactive programs with practical and proven ways to improve classroom instruction. This is the only conference in Maryland exclusively for K-12 educators focused on personal finance and economics.

The 2025 Summit includes targeted tracks for elementary and secondary educators and topics of interest to students. Representatives from the Secret Service will share insights from the field on protection against fraud and scams, the Maryland Center for Problem Gambling will be lead a session on addressing high school student gambling, and a panel discussion will explore how to offer a reality fair experience at your school or school district. Workshops on behavioral economics and the economics of housing practices will be offered through MCEE's partnership with the Maryland Council on Social Studies.

Registration includes a \$50 stipend (all-day participation required), breakfast, and lunch—and a fantastic opportunity to share ideas with and learn from fellow educators.

[Click here for Summit details and registration](#)

The title sponsor for this year's Summit is SECU. Read below for more about SECU.

A few sponsorship opportunities are still available. Contact nuala@econed.org to talk about how your company can be part of this amazing experience.

Upcoming Programs and Events



The word "May" is written in a large, stylized font. The letters are filled with a vibrant, multi-colored floral pattern in shades of purple, yellow, and green. The word has a red outline and is centered on the page.

May 6: Pokenomics: Gotta TRADE 'Em All - This online webinar from 5:00 to 6:00 pm will show how the recently revitalized Pokemon craze can offer an amazing way to keep students engaged throughout a unit on trade. Experience the Pokeconomy by exploring comparative advantage, supply and demand, scarcity, and opportunity cost in an engaging, interactive way. Information and reservations [here](#).

May 14: Annual MCEE Student Achievement Awards - Teachers of winning students and sponsors: We're looking forward to seeing you to celebrate our amazing students.

May 15: Helping Students Use AI Thoughtfully - There *is* such a thing as a meaningful AI interaction; we just have to show our students what it looks like. Join this virtual session at 5:00 pm to understand how to model effective AI use. Information and registration [here](#).

No Surprise: National Study Reveals Lack of Financial Knowledge

A national study recently completed by the FINRA Investor Education Foundation reveals what MCEE knows—and works every day to overcome: there is a huge disparity in what Americans know about financial concepts. In Maryland, only 28% of

respondents could correctly answer at least five out of seven financial knowledge questions , and 55% could correctly answer the question describing inflation.

In the press release announcing the preliminary findings, Gerri Walsh, President of the FINRA Foundation said, “Overall, the findings show that knowledge of everyday financial concepts remains a challenge for many Americans. The wide disparities in financial knowledge across states demonstrate that more work is required to empower all Americans with the skills and tools to make informed financial decisions and safeguard their investments.”

Read the announcement of the survey findings [here](#).

Sponsor in Focus: SECU



We are honored that SECU is the title sponsor of MCEE’s annual Educator Summit in June and we’re grateful for their ongoing and unwavering support.

SECU believes that supporting educators is key to fostering financially confident communities. “Personal finance and economics are often overlooked in K–12 education, yet building strong financial habits early is essential to developing financially confident, engaged adults,” says Amy Basta, SECU’s SVP, Chief Marketing Officer. “MCEE plays a vital role in this effort, from empowering educators with the tools and language to teach financial literacy, to advocating for curriculum that reflects today’s evolving economy. Their work is perfectly aligned with SECU’s mission to promote financial wellness across Maryland.”

[Read more about SECU and their commitment to education—and to MCEE—here.](#)

OUR IMPACT

2023-2024



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