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First Annual Statewide Finance and Investment Challenge Bowl®

Eight high school teams from across Wisconsin – winners of regional competitions earlier this school year - converged on the University of Wisconsin Madison campus at Grainger Hall School of Business to compete in the first annual Finance and Investment Challenge Bowl.

D. C. Everest and Phillips (Wausau Region); Pius XI and Wilmot Union (Milwaukee); Madison West and LaFollette (Madison Region); and Bowler (2 teams from Shawano/Menominee), had all been first or second place winners in their respective regional FICB competitions and they all brought their “A” games to Grainger Hall where the UW Small Business Development Center hosted the statewide finals on May 18th.

The team of Melanie Damask, Adam Gewiss, and Tyler Ebert represented D. C. Everest. The students were in Mrs. Meronek’s business classes and volunteered to compete as a team. To prepare for this event, they studied financial, economic, and entrepreneurial information on their own time, as well as, what they learned in their classes.

Wilmot High School in Kenosha County, Wisconsin place first and received a newly minted traveling trophy and a cash prize. Pius XI placed second, and D. C. Everest placed third. These teams received a plaque and a cash prize as recognition for representing their respective regions at the state level.

The Finance and Investment Challenge Bowl, a program of Madison based Asset Builders of America Inc., was designed as an interactive way to teach high school students personal finance, economics, entrepreneurship and investing subject matter. “The Finance and Investment Challenge Bowl, which is offered in cooperation with school districts around the state, is a great way to educate students and allow them to demonstrate their knowledge in a fun and competitive atmosphere,” Entenmann noted.

David Mancl, Financial Education Officer for the Wisconsin Department of Financial Institutions, served as the event’s celebrity “Challenge Master,” and he stressed that it is important that these key economic topics are presented in an entertaining and engaging way

in order to interest teenagers in the subject. That is why the FICB was created through a collaboration between Asset Builders, the Department of Financial Institutions and Educated Investor, a financial education website development firm. “The students really enjoyed competing against their regional peers, and we thought it would be fun and useful to have the statewide winners to meet and compete to establish a statewide champion,” Mancl continued.

Joan Gillman, Director of Special Industry Programs at the UW Business School, worked with Asset Builders to bring the first statewide event to Madison. “The knowledge that the students gain from preparing to compete in this game provides an excellent foundation for their future matriculation into college and adulthood,” Gillman asserted. “In fact, there are many mature adults who wish they better understood complex financial products which are marketed through the plethora of banks and financial services companies that have sprung up in recent years,” she continued.

M&I Bank, the Educated Investor, and the Department of Financial Institutions sponsored the Statewide Finance and Investment Challenge Bowl.

The FICB is an educational game that promotes financial literacy among teams of students using a quiz show format, testing students’ knowledge of credit, personal finance, investing, entrepreneurship and economics. Study materials for the competition, which were developed to complement the Department of Public Instructions Social Studies and Economics learning standards, may be found at the www.ficbonline.org website.

Asset Builders’ mission is to promote financial education and wealth-building strategies to enhance the quality of life of low and moderate-income youth, families, and communities. For more information, please contact Richard Entenmann of Asset Builders at 608.663.6332 or rentenmann@tds.net, or visit www.assetbuilders.org.

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