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GEORGIA COUNCIL ON ECONOMIC EDUCATION

GCEE Newsletter - December 2020

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Finding the Silver Linings

Looking back on all we've been through in 2020, it would be easy to focus on the many challenges everyone has faced since first hearing the word "coronavirus" in late January. Instead of rehashing these challenges, I'd like to highlight a few of the silver linings giving me hope for 2021 and beyond.

Silver lining #1: The Georgia Council is more flexible and adaptable than I'd ever imagined. It took our amazing program staff all of two weeks to completely revamp our workshop delivery method, deftly transitioning from a 100% in-person model to a 100% virtual model after learning of school closures in March. We saw a need for new workshop delivery methods and expertly answered the call with a series of outstanding online workshop offerings that have proven popular with thousands of teachers across the state.

Silver lining #2: The Georgia Council was given the opportunity to work with hundreds of new teachers from school systems we've not served in quite some time. Our friends at Zoom helped us reach more than 2,332 teachers virtually, bringing our total count to 3,247 for the year. Additionally, we served teachers from 126 of the 181 public school systems in Georgia. Just typing these numbers makes me smile. Quite an accomplishment for an organization comprised of four full-time employees!



Silver lining #3: The Georgia Council was given the opportunity to work with so many amazing people who share our passion for helping teachers. We partnered with a soccer legend/gold medalist/World Cup champion, a rising-star city councilman, an amazing Counsel General, numerous forward-thinking business leaders, our dream team friends at the Atlanta Fed, and more than a few teacher all-stars to deliver timely and informative online workshops.

Silver lining #4: The Georgia Council was able to showcase many of the amazing teachers we are fortunate to serve each year through our monthly “Featured Teacher” award (see below for the latest winners) and “Teaching During the Pandemic” [video](#). We also had the opportunity to help raise awareness of just how important teachers are in all of our lives, something we’ve been saying for years. We should be erecting monuments to these amazing people to honor their commitment and never-ending dedication to students.

No matter what comes our way in 2021, all of us at the Georgia Council will remain committed to creating and delivering the absolute best workshops, lesson plans, and classroom materials. We will also stay laser focused on our important mission of helping teachers teach economics and personal finance in the public and independent schools of Georgia. You have our word.

To better days ahead.

- Mike Raymer

NEW RESOURCE FOR TEACHERS

Econ Express on Track for 2021 Release

In the last newsletter, we announced the development of Econ Express, a new web-based resource for teachers. The interactive website will allow students and teachers to learn, practice and assess economic concepts in creative ways. The “**learning**” component will feature concise reading passages at the beginner, intermediate and advanced level. Students will have the ability to “**practice**” what they’ve learned through a variety of interactives including drag and drop activities, manipulatable graphs, data-entry tables and real-time decision-making grids. Students will also be able to “**assess**” themselves through a series of multiple-choice items of



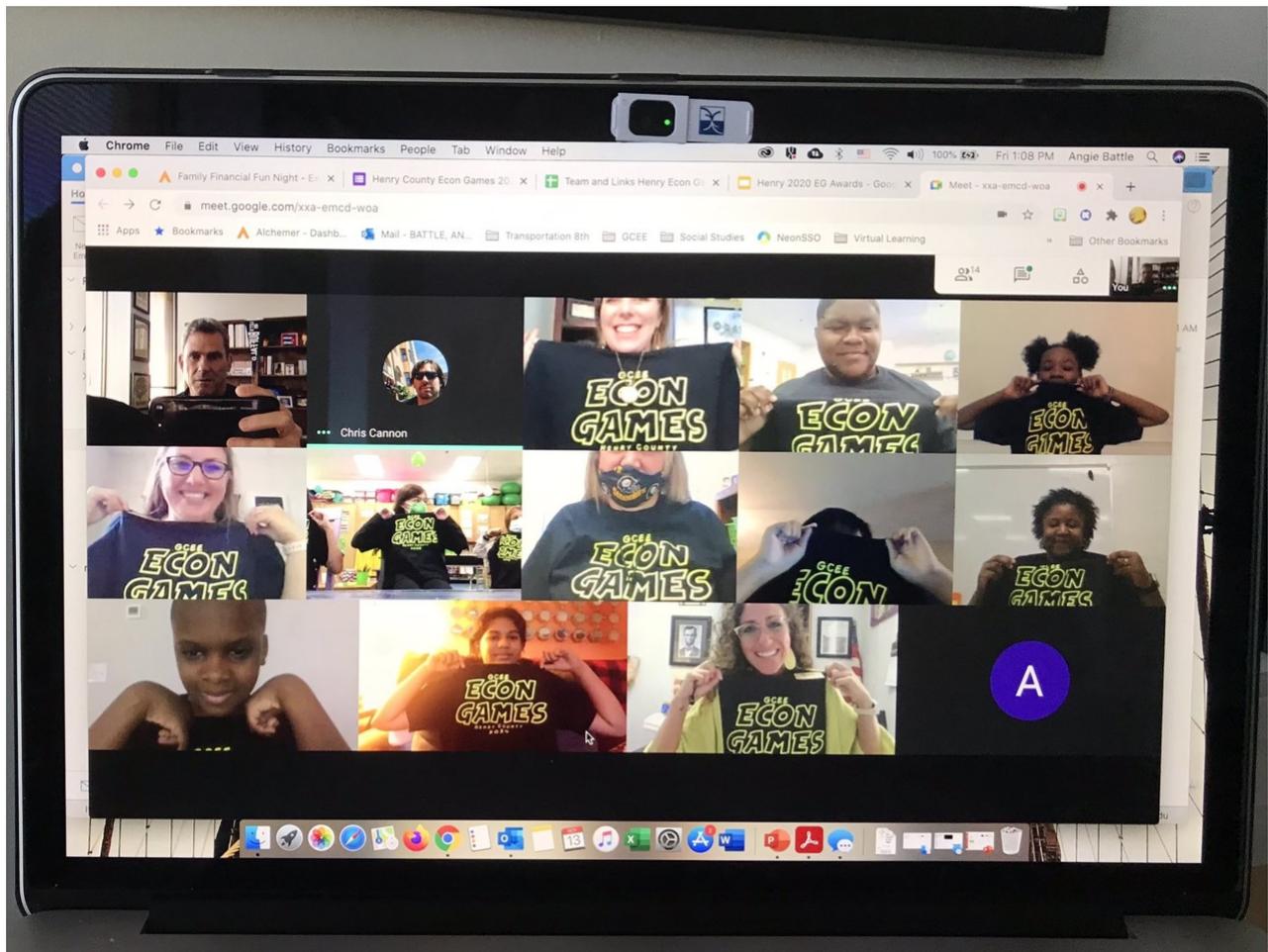
various levels of rigor. For teachers, the site will link to lesson plans, resources and teaching strategies designed to help students apply and use economics and personal finance standards in meaningful ways. A companion workbook is also in the early stages of development.

The site will debut in August 2021 with 51 topics covering all domains found in the Georgia Standards of Excellence. As of this newsletter, the content summaries are near completion and work has begun in earnest on the interactives and layout of the site. GCEE will be assembling a team of volunteer teachers to help test the site in the spring of 2021. If you would like to be a member of that team, please contact [Chris Cannon](#), GCEE's Associate Director and let him know.

A project of this scope requires great partners and GCEE is pleased to once again be working with Georgia Public Broadcasting and Digits In Motion to bring this powerful resource to teachers. Follow us on Twitter @Georgiaecon for updates on this exciting new project!

ELEMENTARY COMPETITION

The Econ Games Go Virtual



Since 2017, the Georgia Council on Economic Education has sponsored the Econ Games, a highly engaging competitive event designed to inspire fourth and fifth grade students to develop a stronger interest in economics, entrepreneurship and personal finance. This year, the Second Annual Henry County Econ Games was conducted virtually over a few weeks.

Round One consisted of two parts. First, each of the 39 teams took an online test with questions related to the economics standards for their grade level. Second, each team developed their own idea for a good or service and produced a 60-second video of their pitch which they sent to the GCEE staff to score. The combination of the test score and the video score determined the team's ranking in Round One.

The top six teams in each grade level became the Super Six! Those finalists were given the task of preparing a pitch for a product to solve a pre-determined problem: come up with an idea for the hottest toy of the holiday season made with no plastic. Some of the creative ideas they came up with included "Sky Runners" - shoes made of all biodegradable materials, "Light Works" - a kid-friendly non-flammable fireworks set that completely disintegrates in the sky and "Envira Doll" - a doll made of all natural biodegradable materials.

On November 13, the Super Six presented their plans via Google Meet to a panel of judges consisting of education leaders from around the state. Scores were tallied and winners were announced in a virtual award ceremony that afternoon. Alicia Loughner's Rock Springs Elementary team captured first place for fourth grade while Laticia White's Oakland Elementary team won the top spot for fifth grade.

COMPETITIONS

Fall Winners Announced

Along with the Econ Games (see story above), the Georgia Council also ran two other competitions this fall: Lights, Camera, Budget! and the fall Stock Market Game. Fall winners are highlighted below.

Each semester GCEE sponsors a contest that corresponds with their Lights, Camera, Budget resource. Students attempt to get a perfect score on a series of personal finance questions AND make a 5-star movie. If they succeed and upload their movie poster, they get entered into a drawing where one middle school winner and one high school winner (and their teachers) get Lights, Camera, Budget t-shirts and \$100 gift cards. The fall 2020 contest had a record 323 entries! The winners were



High School - Lanier Career and College Academy (Hall County)

Student - Joshua Adams

Teacher - Alexandria Cordell

Middle School - Veterans Memorial Middle School (Muscogee County)

Student - Brooklyn Adams

Teacher - Vanessa Ellis (2017 GCEE Teacher of the Year)

Interested in playing the game? Check it out [here](#).

The statewide winner of the Fall Stock Market Game was Hahira Middle School in Lowndes County. Under the direction of teacher Mica Brooks, the team turned their hypothetical \$100,000 into a winning portfolio of \$153,166.57. The team, along with all the other Congressional District winners, will be recognized on Wednesday, December 16th at



6:30pm. This one-hour awards ceremony is open to everyone. If you would like to attend, [please RSVP here](#).

TEACHER RECOGNITION

Featuring Excellence in Teaching

Each month of the school year, GCEE's "Featured Teacher" program spotlights the incredible work of Georgia teachers who are using effective and engaging methods to teach economics and personal finance. Winners this fall included **Katrena Taylor-Springs** from Butler High School in Augusta (Richmond County), **Lonnie Wannum** from Livingston Elementary School in Covington (Newton County), and **Laura Perry** from Rehoboth Middle School in Griffin (Spalding County).

Winning teachers received Amazon gift cards and signed certificates to acknowledge their fantastic work. To nominate an outstanding K-12 teacher of economics and personal finance for this honor, please contact GCEE Program Manager [Angie Battle](#).



Katrena Taylor-Springs



Lonnie Wannum



Laura Perry



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