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LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## A Case for Testing at the AP and IB levels

All of us at GCEE were disappointed to learn recently of the decision by the Georgia Department of Education to remove Georgia Milestones End of Course testing for those students who will be taking select Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) courses, which include AP Macro, AP Micro, and IB Economics.



The Georgia Council works with hundreds of AP and IB Economics teachers every year and the overwhelming majority have indicated that their students perform well on the Georgia Milestones End of Course economics assessment and are typically the highest scoring students on this test.

The AP economics courses offered in Georgia are divided into AP Macro and AP Micro. Having a state-mandated Milestones exam ensures that no matter which course is offered, teachers and students are held accountable to the same minimum standards required by the state curriculum. Without a required Georgia Milestones End of Course assessment in economics, there is reduced incentive to include the remainder of the course for these teachers.

More importantly, the AP Macro, AP Micro, and IB Economics curricula does not include any personal finance instruction. We believe that many teachers will decide to forgo or minimize personal finance instruction in order to spend more time on their AP or IB curriculum. Coming at a time when Georgia remains among the top three states in the nation for [personal bankruptcy filings](#), this decision clearly goes against GCEE's attempts to help teachers and students make sound economic and financial decisions that will better prepare them for life.

A 2015 Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) study of Georgia's curriculum

indicated that students who went through Georgia’s mandated economics classes and took the state-mandated end of course assessment in economics displayed more positive financial behaviors after high school graduation compared with students from states where an economics course was not tested.

Georgia has an extremely strong economics curriculum that is the envy of many states nationwide. The fact that the course was created with state-mandated testing indicated that the state of Georgia was serious about its economics and personal finance education standards and requirements.

The decision by the Georgia Department of Education to exempt thousands of AP and IB students from the Georgia Milestones End of Course assessment in economics reduces the impact of the existing economics curriculum and will allow these students to leave school ill-prepared to make sound economic and personal finance decisions.

- Mike Raymer

#### TEACHER SPOTLIGHT

## Bringing Economics to Life

Heather Brindle, social studies teacher and chair of the ESOL department at Mountain View High School in Gwinnett County, has attended more than 20 Georgia Council on Economic Education (GCEE) workshops during her teaching career. She’s also participated in multiple GCEE summer Manufacturing Bus Tours and has taken what she’s learned from those experiences back to her classroom.



Ironically, she doesn’t teach the required high school Economics course but economics is woven through the curriculum in the subjects she does teach – World Geography and Contemporary Issues – and she is determined to show her students the importance of economics and personal finance.

“I try to stress that economics is real life,” she says. “It affects my students’ lives in so many important ways.”

Brindle has spent 15 years in education, mostly in testing. Five years ago, she made the transition into the classroom, mainly teaching special education classes. Now she teaches regular education, dual enrollment, and ESOL classes.

As a new social studies teacher, the first thing she did was enroll in a general economics workshop from GCEE. “I got hooked right away,” she says. “I’ve been attending GCEE workshops regularly ever since.”

She says she likes the hands on activities and lesson plans she is exposed to at each GCEE workshop because she can take them back to her classroom to use right away.

“The workshops give me ‘real life’ applications that kids can relate to,” she says. “If they can touch, see and feel it they are more likely to understand it and use it.”

On the Manufacturing Bus Tours, Brindle has come away with a wealth of information that she has shared with her students. Knowing she couldn’t bring students to all of the companies visited on the tours, she brought the companies to them by organizing the first ever “Career Day” held at Mountain View High School last February. A total of 25 companies sent representatives to Mountain View High and more than 200 students were given opportunities to meet with these individuals. Brindle says a number of students were even offered internships as a result of the event.

“I wanted to show those students who may not be on a college track what career opportunities are available to them in Georgia,” she says. “We also offered students a workshop on essential job seeking skills such as resume building to better prepare them for future employment searches.” She plans to hold another Career Day in February and hopes to include even more Georgia companies.

In whatever she does – whether it’s teaching, attending workshops or seeking out new partnership opportunities – it’s clear that Heather Brindle always has the needs of her students in mind.

“I want my students to be successful in whatever they do,” she says. “If I can open their eyes to many different career opportunities available to them, then I’ve successfully done my job.”

## WORKSHOPS

# Register Now for Spring Workshops

Registration is now open for GCEE workshops that are being offered for the spring semester starting in January. See our latest offerings designed to help K-12 teachers teach economics and personal finance in creative ways. Visit our website to [register](#) today!



MANUFACTURING IN GEORGIA

## Beyond Workshops: Field Trips for Teachers

UPS, MAGNA International, and the Georgia Poultry Lab were three organizations teachers had the opportunity to visit recently on “field trips” sponsored by GCEE. These interactive visits gave teachers an opportunity to learn more about manufacturing processes, strategies and business successes from each organization, as well as the economic impact these companies and their industries have on Georgia. Teachers also learned what skills and attributes each organization is looking for in future employees, something they can share with all of their students.

GCEE took a group of teachers to the UPS SMART Hub (pictured above) in late October for a tour of one of the most technologically advanced sorting facilities in the world. The teachers learned that more than 100,000 packages are processed every hour in the 1.2 million sq. ft. facility located in Fulton County. They also learned about the company’s commitment to environmental sustainability and its energy saving practices that are cornerstones to their approach to business.

Middle and high school teachers visited the Georgia Poultry Lab in Gainesville in early November to learn more about the poultry industry's impact on Georgia's economy. They learned these fun facts: The poultry industry comprises 50 percent of Georgia's overall agriculture sector; Georgia leads the nation in broiler production; and the state's Georgia poultry farmers produce 31 million pounds of chicken and more than seven million table eggs on an average day!

Later in November, GCEE and the Center for Economic Education and Financial Literacy at the University of West Georgia brought a group of teachers to MAGNA International in Carrollton. Teachers learned how MAGNA uses innovative strategies to produce millions of auto parts that end up on BMW, Chrysler, EZ GO, Hyundai, KIA, and Nissan vehicles sold all over North America.

"We do these visits so that teachers can learn about businesses that impact Georgia's overall economy," says Mike Raymer, GCEE's Executive Director. "They also hear about the skills and attributes companies are looking for in future employees. These teachers can now share this helpful information with their students who may one day find employment at UPS, MAGNA, or somewhere in the thriving poultry industry."



## INTERNATIONAL ECONOMICS

# Georgia High School Students Visit Japan

Over Thanksgiving break, GCEE was part of a multi-organization effort that took 19 high school students to Japan as part of a cultural exchange. The trip, funded by the Japan Foundation and organized by the Japan-America Society of Georgia, was designed to give students experiences with modern Japan that would inspire them to actively promote Japan and consider Japan as a study abroad location. Participating schools included Americus-Sumter High School in Sumter County, Islands High School from Savannah-Chatham County Public Schools, and Milton and Roswell High Schools in Fulton County.

The nine-day adventure included visits to multiple areas of Tokyo, Yokohama and Hiroshima. “The whole experience was inspiring on so many levels, especially the way the students were open to and accepting of Japanese culture,” said Chris Cannon, Associate Director of the Georgia Council. “Our Japanese tour guide was nearly moved to tears as she explained to the students on the last day that she had not had a group of young people so engaged and excited about Japanese culture in a long time. She said it made her excited about the future of US-Japan relations.”

The students are now preparing a variety of presentations and cultural experiences they will be bringing to their local boards of education, schools and businesses in their districts.

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STOCK MARKET GAME

## Redan High School Wins Fall Stock Market Game

Congratulations to the team of students from Redan High School in DeKalb County who are the winners of the 2019 Fall Stock Market Game! The team finished the 10-week competition with a portfolio total of \$135,873.04! These students, and their teacher, will be celebrated at GCEE's Stock Market Game Luncheon at the Fox Theatre in May.



IN MEMORIAM

## Frank Troutman, Jr., and Warren Jobe

Frank Troutman, Jr., former President of Castleberry Foods in Augusta, died on August 10, 2019 at the age of 84.

Warren Jobe, longtime CEO of Georgia Power, died on October 19, 2019, at the age of 78.

Both men served as Chair of the Georgia Council Board of Trustees and were longtime supporters of the Council's work.

Troutman served as the Georgia Council's third Chair from 1976 to 1981, following C&S Bank leaders Mills B. Lane, Jr. and Bennett Brown. No one has served as the organization's chairman longer (before two-year limits were established in 1984), and Troutman remained on the board until 2016, when he was named Trustee Emeritus. He was also awarded the

Council's William J. VanLandingham Commitment to Education Award in 2010.

"He was the Council's most dedicated fundraiser," says Dr. David Martin, former Executive Director of the Georgia Council on Economic Education. "And in that way he was unique. Most people don't relish fundraising, but he enjoyed raising money for causes he believed in. He was very willing to reach out to his networks for the sake of the Council."



Troutman earned his law degree from the University of Georgia, but never practiced law. Instead, he held leadership positions at several companies in various industries during his long career. He was a member of several boards and was Chairman of the Concessions Committee for the Masters Golf Tournament at Augusta National for over 30 years.



Warren Jobe, a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, was a member of the Georgia Council's Board of Trustees from 1989 until 2001, serving on various committees as well as Chair from 1994 - 1996. He was named a Trustee Emeritus in 2001.

"The Council has received tremendous support from Georgia Power over the years, and that was thanks to Warren Jobe paving the way," says Martin. "The company has given financial support, in kind contributions of printing and video services, and we have also benefitted from the leadership and expertise of many Georgia Power employees who served and continue to serve on the Board and various committees."

Jobe began his career at Georgia Power in 1971, rising through the ranks to become Vice President and Chief Financial Officer from 1982 - 1998. He then served as Executive Vice President of the Southern Company from 1998 until his retirement in 2000. Even in retirement he remained active - serving on several corporate and nonprofit boards.

"It was an honor to know and work with both of these great leaders," says Martin, "and I will always be grateful for their contributions to the Georgia Council."



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