



Teachers Honored for Outstanding Economics & Personal Finance Education

2017 Gala Introduces 'The Bessie'

Fifteen Arkansas teachers were honored for excellence in economic and personal finance teaching, including three who received the Economics Arkansas Lifetime Achievement Award, during the 21st Annual Bessie B. Moore Awards luncheon held on Nov. 17, 2016. The gala at the Great Hall of the Clinton Presidential Center was hosted by Economics Arkansas, a non-profit educational organization that promotes economic and personal finance literacy among Arkansas PreK-12 students.

The Arkansas Bankers Association and its members have been loyal supporters of Economics Arkansas for many years.

Representatives from the ABA, including Barry Jackson, Brenda Scarbrough, and Carla Brinkley attended the event and witnessed first-hand the high-quality education its support provides to teachers and students across Arkansas.

Debating during the event was "The Bessie," a 7-inch statue of 750 layers created on a 3-D printer by the Arkansas Innovation Hub. Designed to serve as the "Oscar" of excellence in economic and personal finance education, it was presented to the winners of the Bessie B. Moore Awards for their innovative, original classroom projects during the 2015-16 school year. The teachers also received a cash award.

As he recognized the recipients, Johnny Key, Commissioner of the Arkansas Department of Education, said: "There will be economic storms in all of our lives. Some are national storms, some are personal. The knowledge of economics and personal finance is key to weathering

these storms. Thank you for providing this knowledge to your students."

The 2016 Bessie B. Moore Awards winners and their projects include:

- Rebekah Bilderback, "Which Trade Route is For Me: Sahara, Silk or Spices?" Greenbrier High School, Greenbrier School District, Faulkner County
- Jaime Cavitt, "A Scholastic Journey into Economics," Walker Elementary School, Springdale School District, Washington County
- Nakesha Cunningham, "A Hat is Here, A Hat is There, An Economic Hat is Everywhere," Baker Elementary School, Pulaski County Special School District, Pulaski County
- Tracy Floyd, Sheila Humphrey and Kristina Thrift, "Patriot Pride Since '75—Economics in Our Lives," Woods Elementary School, Fort Smith School District, Sebastian County



Bessie B. Moore Award winners Tracy Floyd, Kristina Thrift and Sheila Humphrey of Woods Elementary School, Fort Smith School District, are flanked by Economics Arkansas board members Bob Hamilton, Ray Hobbs, John Ward and Johnny Key (from left).



Lifetime Achievement Award winner Jo Vanderspikken, Springdale School District, with Economics Arkansas board member Ray Hobbs



- Amy Gordon, "3-2-1 Economics," Barling Elementary School, Fort Smith School District, Sebastian County
- Amy Hardy, "The Dream Team Entrepreneur," East Hills Middle School, Greenwood School District, Sebastian County
- Valarie Harp, "Super Economists," Hartford Elementary School, Hackett School District, Sebastian County
- Jason Heath Hawkins, "The Economics of Entrepreneurship," Manila Middle School, Manila School District, Mississippi County
- Amy Mileham, "Take Me Out to the Ballgame," Grace Hill Elementary School, Rogers School District, Benton County
- Shelina Warren, "My Local Economic Trivia League," Scoggins-May-Hall GT Center, Pine Bluff School District, Jefferson County

Receiving the Lifetime Achievement Award were:

- Linda Haley, retired, Master Economics Teacher, Rogers School District, Benton County
- Deborah Shearer, retired, Master Economics Teacher, Pulaski County Special School District, Pulaski County
- Jo Vanderspikken, Master Economics Teacher, Springdale School District, Washington County

Economics Arkansas launched the Bessie B. Moore Awards program in 1995 to honor exemplary teachers for successfully integrating economic principles into the classroom. The program is open to educators PreK-12 from public and independent schools in Arkansas. To enter, teachers submit written descriptions of their projects, which are reviewed and judged by an independent panel of economic education specialists.



Amy Mileham and her fourth-grade students from Grace Hill Elementary School, Rogers School District, presented about their award-winning project, "Take Me Out to the Ballgame, Baseball Economics."

The winners receive cash awards and trophies.

Economics Arkansas (through the Arkansas Council on Economic Education) is a private, non-profit, non-partisan educational organization founded in 1962 by Dr. Arch Ford, with Dr. Bessie B. Moore as its first executive director, to promote economic literacy in Arkansas. Its mission is to equip PreK-12 schools with training and resources to teach economics and personal finance using practical, innovative and inspiring methods. Its vision is for Arkansas students to become economically and financially literate, allowing them to achieve their own American dream and thrive in a free-market economy.

Economics and personal finance education can have a life-changing impact on students, and generous support to Economics Arkansas will yield returns many times over. To make a donation, please visit www.economicsarkansas.org or call 501-682-3240.