

Proposal to [REDACTED]

“[REDACTED]”

A Teamwork-focused Economics and Personal Finance Academic Competition

Amount Requested: [REDACTED]

Date: [REDACTED]

Project Overview

An understanding of economics and personal finance is crucial to the success of future generations. Without an understanding of the importance of savings, careful investing and the necessity of maintaining hard-earned credit, young people are unlikely to become knowledgeable consumers, responsible citizens and effective participants in the global economy. Yet, all too often, students opt against classes in the “dismal science” of economics, diminishing not only their knowledgebase, but also their future participation in the global economy.

However, the [REDACTED] is working to reverse that trend. Through the five high-stakes Regional Economics Challenges, students are rewarded for taking economics classes with the opportunity to use their knowledge to compete for \$1,000 U.S. Savings Bonds and an all-expenses paid trip to the National Economics Challenge in New York City; the runner-up teams and their teachers receive \$500 U.S. Savings Bonds. The National Economics Challenge Champions and their teachers receive \$3,000 U.S. Savings Bonds; the runner-up teams and their teachers receive \$1,500 U.S. Savings Bonds.

Open to high school economics students, youth compete in one of two divisions: the Adam Smith division for students who have enrolled in Advanced Placement, honors, year-long or International Baccalaureate courses; and the David Ricardo Division, for students enrolled in a one-semester economics course.

Much like a marathon prompts people to improve their abilities through long-term planning and training, the Regional Economics challenge is a competition that does not allow for last minute cramming, but requires careful study and success in all rounds of the competition. Competing in the Regional Finals is limited to teams who have already won their respective state finals and is truly a competition for the best and brightest.

The Competition Format

The Economics Challenge program runs on a school year schedule. Publicizing the event begins in January after the winter vacation. States organize their local competitions into the spring and the Regional Challenges generally occur at the end of April.

For 2005, the regional divisions are as follows:

Region 1, Northeast: Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Vermont

Region 2, Southeast: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, West Virginia and Virginia

Region 3, Midwest: Arkansas, Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Texas

Region 4, Northwest: Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin and Wyoming

Region 5, West: Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah and Washington

The event itself offers a balanced mix of both teamwork and individual competition. Working individually, students compete through two rounds of written questions on macro and microeconomics and then work together in their teams to answer written multiple-choice questions on current events, financial literacy, and economic history and theory. Their hard work culminates in a teamwork-focused Quiz Bowl round with multiple-choice questions on current events, economic theory and personal economics.

Although teamwork is often emphasized in group sports, the less physically gifted and more academic students are generally left out of such lessons. The Economics Challenge teaches these youth the importance of teamwork in the quest for the correct answer and in the challenge of working with others to answer complex economics and personal finance questions.

Public Relations and Branding Strategy

We propose to work closely with [REDACTED] to determine ideal communities for hosting the five Regional Challenges. Each community will be chosen based on the strengths and capacity of the [REDACTED] State Councils and Centers; the diversity of its population, the extensiveness of its media outlets and proximity to local [REDACTED] offices or headquarters. Possible locations include:

Northeast: New York, Hartford, CT or West Chester, PA
Southeast: Atlanta, GA or Nashville, TN
Midwest: Denver, CO; Des Moines, IA or St. Louis, MO
Northwest: Minneapolis, MN or Detroit, MI
West: Scottsdale, AZ or Los Angeles, CA

With five branded Regional Challenges, the opportunities for publicity and branding are virtually limitless. The [REDACTED] will pursue an aggressive public relations strategy aimed at publicizing the Regional Challenge at the local, state and regional levels through a campaign of press releases and personal media contacts. Unlike one-shot events, having five Regional Challenges offers the impressive benefit of multiple market branding, ensuring the ability to obtain media attention in both small and large markets and receive national exposure. The Regional Challenge will be publicized in cities and towns as youth compete in their State competitions and again as State winners continue onto the Regional competition. Additionally, the [REDACTED]'s unique nationwide network of more than 200 affiliated State Councils and University-based Centers for Economic Education ensures that aggressive marketing can and will occur in otherwise difficult to approach markets.

With the approval of [REDACTED], the [REDACTED] would like to publicly announce and honor the Regional Economics Challenge partnership by hosting the inaugural [REDACTED] Regional Economics Challenge in Atlanta, possibly at the [REDACTED] Headquarters. "Kicking-off" the Regional Challenges with the Atlanta site will guarantee publicity not only for the announcement of the sponsorship in the media, but also attention to the actual event and [REDACTED]'s support of educational excellence. The [REDACTED] would ask that senior executives from [REDACTED] participate in the event either by

emceeding one of the Quiz-bowl rounds or by participating in the awarding of the Southeast Regional Championship.

In anticipation of the announcement, a detailed event strategy will be developed to generate as much local press coverage as possible, both in print and on television for all five regions. The [REDACTED] logo will be included on all printable materials related to the Regional Challenge, including the fliers, advertisements, press releases and all signs. At the Regional Challenges, [REDACTED] promotional items, including t-shirts and caps, can be offered as premiums to students and teachers who attend the competition.

For action photography of the quiz bowl aspect of the competition, the [REDACTED] will ensure the [REDACTED] logo is prominently displayed behind the emcee and participants. Mention of [REDACTED]'s support will also be highlighted in articles in the quarterly [REDACTED] newsletter as well as in our on-line annual report and links to the [REDACTED] website from the [REDACTED] webpage will also be posted.

In the past [REDACTED] has employed a very successful high-impact public relations campaign for the National Economics Challenge. Media coverage last year included CBS Marketwatch, CNNfn, PBS "Right on the Money;" and more than five dozen hits in local markets. For any and all press generated by the Regional Economics Challenges in 2005, [REDACTED] would be mentioned as a sponsor. Additionally, with a targeted media campaign, we only expect publicity to increase.

Volunteer opportunities for [REDACTED] employees are numerous with this event. Employees could offer to tutor or mentor competing students, help with the supervision of the participants on the day of the competition, assist with the judging and announce the award winners. Hosting the competitions in cities and towns with a strong [REDACTED] volunteer team presence can also be arranged in order to ensure active [REDACTED] involvement.

Evaluation & Impact

In the past four years, the Economics Challenge has grown and attracted increased media attention and student involvement. In 2001, 1400 students from 188 high schools in 22 states competed for the National Championship. By the 2003 competition, involvement had increased by more than 157% to 3600 students on over 900 teams from 28 states. As the competition enters its fifth year, more than 4500 youth from 35 states are expected to participate.

[REDACTED]: The Nation's Leading Service Provider and Advocate for Economic Literacy

The [REDACTED] was founded as an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization 55 years ago by business leaders and educators who saw the need to improve economic and personal finance education in the nation's schools. [REDACTED]'s mission is to help all students develop the real-life skills they need to succeed: to be able to think and choose as knowledgeable consumers, savers and investors, responsible citizens, productive members of the workforce, and effective participants in a global economy.

To this end, [REDACTED] conducts three core programs: [REDACTED] for the nation's schools; [REDACTED] for teacher training in other countries; and [REDACTED] for lifelong learning. Within its [REDACTED] program, [REDACTED]'s primary goal is to get sound economics and personal financial decision-making skills taught effectively and well throughout the K-12 curriculum. [REDACTED] develops and publishes print and Web-based, classroom-tested,

standards-based instructional materials for every grade level. The Economics Challenge competition allows students to show their mastery of the [REDACTED] material.

There are several key factors that differentiate [REDACTED] from most other economic and financial education organizations. The first and most important is our highly effective, nationwide network of affiliated State Councils and over 200 University-based Centers for Economic Education. This distribution system is the way we get our educational programs into the hands, and heads, of thousands of teachers and millions of students each year. This model is particularly effective for increasing the number of students who participate in the Economics Challenge each year and in offering members of the media easy access to local spokespeople.

The second key factor is our teacher training model. We strongly believe that the best way to educate students is by training the teachers to effectively teach the students. The emphasis on teacher training takes advantage of a powerful multiplier effect. Through each teacher trained, [REDACTED] programs reach an average of 150 students per year at the high school level. Again, by reaching out to teachers, the [REDACTED] is able to increase participation in the Economics Challenge and establish a large contingency of supporters for the program.

[REDACTED] is also an exceptional steward of both public and private resources, and has a strong track record in the area of administrative and financial soundness, as evidence by a strong governance structure at the Board of Directors level; a long record of receiving unqualified opinions from independent auditors; strong managerial and internal controls in terms of financial and administrative checks and balances; and a low administrative-and-fundraising/total expense ratio. In 2002 and 2001 (the most recent years for which audited results are available), this ratio stood at 17.6% and 20%, respectively, considerably below industry standards.

[REDACTED] benefits from stable and dynamic leadership, at the Board and Executive staff level. Serving as President and Chief Executive Officer for the [REDACTED] is [REDACTED], who came to [REDACTED] in the spring of 1995. Prior to joining [REDACTED], he was President of Pacific University in Oregon for twelve years. Under his strong and strategic leadership [REDACTED] has grown as the preeminent national organization promoting economic and financial literacy. Under [REDACTED]'s direction, revenues for [REDACTED]'s pace-setting programs in economic and financial literacy have increased 300% from 1995 to 2003. [REDACTED] has become a national, and international, spokesman for the cause of improving economic and financial education, as a core component of the K-12 curriculum. Since 1995, he has represented the interests of [REDACTED] and our corporate partners eloquently and enthusiastically. [REDACTED] is always personally involved in the Economics Challenge and attends both State, Regional and National competitions.