

Middle Tennessee State University Center for Economic Education 2010-2011 Annual Report

Dr. Robert B. Blair, Director

Ms. Maria L. Edlin, Assistant Director

Robert B. Blair, director, and Maria L. Edlin, assistant director, worked diligently to fulfill the CEE mission to promote economic education across Tennessee, emphasizing Rutherford and surrounding counties. Major funding for the CEE's programs is provided by the Jones College, Jennings and Rebecca Jones Foundation, First Tennessee National Corporation, and the Foundation for Teaching Economics. Over \$112,000 was contributed to the CEE through grant or matching grant sources during 2010-2011 to promote economic education.

The Tennessee Stock Market Game (SMG) stimulates learning about economics, finance, and the American economic system. In a 10-week simulation, participants invest a hypothetical \$100,000. State coordinator Maria Edlin conducts nine SMG workshops hosted by seven regional newspapers annually. The program is funded through a partnership with First Tennessee Bank, and Newspapers in Education's promotion of the SMG in grades 4-12. The Securities Industry Association Southern/South Central District Grant provided additional funding. In 2010-2011, a total of 1,527 teams (7,989 students) and 151 teachers from 139 schools across the state participated in the SMG.

The Foundation for Teaching Economics (FTE) provided a generous grant for the CEE to co-sponsor the HSBC Institute on the Environment & the Economy in January. The program incorporates a blend of practical learning activities, including hands-on classroom activities and simulations. Two hours of graduate credit in economic education was available for participants through Florida Gulf Coast University. Seventeen teachers participated in this institute.

FTE provided two grants during 2010-2011 for the CEE to co-sponsor The Right Start Institute. New high school economics teachers or those who teach economics and/or economics-related courses (marketing education, business education, family and consumer sciences, Virtual Enterprise International, etc.) for five or less years were invited to The Right Start Institutes held in Knoxville, Tennessee and Brentwood, Tennessee. The Institute is designed to help teachers identify and learn basic economic content and develop lesson plans for effectively teaching high school economics. A total of 64 participants were involved in the institutes this year. The Jennings and Rebecca Jones Foundation sponsored the closing session luncheons.

Personal Finance Teacher Employment Requirement: A two-day workshop series was conducted in partnership with Tennessee Jump\$Start Coalition members including the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta-Nashville Branch during July at the close of the Tennessee Career and Technical Education Conference. A total of 92 teachers participated in these workshop. The CEE also actively participated in the Tennessee Jump\$Start 2010 Annual Conference in Gatlinburg, providing financial and academic support.

Board Membership status was granted by the Tennessee Jump\$tart Coalition to the MTSU Center for Economic Education. This status allows the CEE voting rights within the coalition. Ms. Edlin represents the CEE at the quarterly meetings. She also holds the chair positions on the Train the Trainer, Research, and Social Media subcommittees. Ms. Edlin is also a member of the Financial Literacy Month subcommittee.

New Grants secured from the Council for Economic Education for the 2012 fiscal year thus far includes: (1) A two-day “Best Practices Advanced Level Economics Workshop.” (\$9,891) Teachers will be given the *AP Economics* materials that are published by the Council for Economic Education as well as the *Capstone* publication. (2) Five workshops (\$11,895) to demonstrate and distribute 120 copies (\$12,000) of the *Virtual Economics* CD containing 1,200 lessons.

BCEN 6650 Workshop in BE/ME: Innovations and Problems in Economic Education. Dr. Robert B. Blair and Ms. Maria Edlin team taught this graduate course (13 students) during June 2010. The primary focus of the course was to assist economics, business education, marketing education, and family and consumer science teachers to become highly qualified by meeting the mandates of the No Child Left Behind Act. Special emphasis was placed on a thorough review of basic economic concepts covered on the Economics Praxis exam. Teaching materials, methods/strategies, professional organizations, etc., were included as part of the course. A majority of those students seeking economics certification have achieved their highly qualified status to teach high school economics. This course will be offered again during June 6-10, 2011.

In keeping with MTSU’s mission, the CEE maintains active partnerships with the following organizations not previously mentioned: UT Extension, TVA Credit Union, Belmont University College of Business, Foundation for Investor Education, and the Tennessee Council for the Social Studies.