

Oregon Council on Economic Education  
Annual Review and Accomplishments  
Academic Year 2023 – 2024

## OCEE's Mission

To empower and equip economics and personal finance teachers of K-12 students in the public and independent schools of Oregon.

## OCEE's Vision

To become the primary resource for Oregon teachers to enable them to equip students with the knowledge and tools to be prepared for their roles in the global economy.

## 2023-2024 Activities Highlights

- Invest in Girls; For the first full year of Invest in Girls we had 24 female students participate in this new program.
- We continue to reach more students. In 2023 – 24 we impacted a total of 5039 students in all of our programs versus 4872 in 2022 – 23 (3.4% increase).
- We saw a 14.5 % increase in students participating in the Stock Market Game in 2023 - 24. We experienced a decline in student participation in the Econ Challenge year over year, going from 68 students to 48 in 2023 - 24. The Personal Finance Challenge Team from West View High School placed 2nd nationally in the National Qualifier competition.
- A middle school student from McKenzie River Community School placed 5th nationally in the Fall InvestWrite writing competition, a companion competition to the Stock Market Game.

### **Stock Market Game and InvestWrite competition**

Our goal in offering the Stock Market Game (SMG) is to help students develop an understanding of key economic concepts related to market forces, focusing on the role of financial markets in the financial system. The game aims to improve financial literacy, and thereby help students secure their financial future. As a part of this, students also learn about



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financial risk (and risk tolerance) and the impact global and domestic events can have on their finances. Students employ math skills as well as analytical skills in learning to be successful investors. At the end of the SMG, students have an opportunity to participate in InvestWrite, a supplemental writing competition. This capstone activity aims to capture student experiences and growth through SMG participation and improve writing skills.

We measure our success with the SMG by the number of students we are reaching and the observations of teachers as evidenced by the comments they share.

<u>School Year</u>	<u>Students Participating</u>	<u>Percentage increase (decrease), compared to prior academic year</u>
2019 - 20	3718	3%
2020 - 21	1267	(65%)
2021 - 22	3871	305%
2022 - 23	3899	0.7%
2023 – 24	4467	15%

With the implementation of Senate Bill 3 (SB3), which requires a half-credit of Personal Finance as a graduation requirement, OCEE expects SMG participation to rise across the state. This will create a financial need as we seek to continue providing the game to all students in Oregon.

Teachers using the SMG tell us it is an engaging activity that helps students connect classroom activities to current events in real time. The competition holds their attention and creates active learning opportunities. The game provides a low-stakes environment for students to observe the wealth-building potential of financial investments. This is especially important for economically disadvantaged students who may not have access or exposure to wealth building tools. Below are some comments we received from teachers and students;

"The Stock Market game was, and still is a very interesting learning opportunity. I enjoyed how realistic it was. It really made me think about important decisions that would impact my investments. I had to take information into consideration that I typically wouldn't think about. It was a bit challenging at first, as it was a new environment. However, once I got the hang of it, it was quite enjoyable. I was very encouraged by my teacher as I learned from her. I had a lot of support throughout the whole process. Developing my portfolio was a big deal to me. I wanted to make sure that I took everything into consideration as the markets are always changing, I needed to make sure I picked a stock that everyone was still into and could potentially always invest more."



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Student of Cynthia Lofts  
Oregon Charter Academy, Mill City  
August 2024

“The stock market game has served as a first step in learning about the difference in banking entities and how one can build wealth outside of a regular 9-5 job. They learn the basics of the equity markets and how to operate within them. By the end of the experience their conversational skills around financial markets and vocabulary expand from a point of knowing practically nothing up to being literate in understanding the daily nuances of market behavior and the relationship with the greater world around us”.

Isaac Bass  
Newport High School, Newport  
August 2024

“My students thoroughly enjoyed participating in the Stock Market Game last year. Three of them even won the game and were thrilled to receive medals and certificates, which was a huge boost to their confidence and interest in finance. We love using this game in our class because there’s nothing better than real-world practice to help students grasp complex concepts like investing and the stock market. The experience they gain from this game is invaluable, and I’m grateful for the opportunity to offer it to them at no cost”.

Shelah Kelso  
Grant High School, Portland  
August 2024

## **InVest Write**

InVest Write competition is focused on students in middle school through high school. Students are asked to write an essay about what they learned playing the Stock Market Game. The essays are graded by the SIFMA Foundation. Scoring is based on 1) rationale, 2) understanding the subject matter and 3) writing style. This past academic year a McKenzie River Community School middle school student place 5<sup>th</sup> place in the National competition and a high school student from the school took first place in Oregon.



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## The Econ Challenge

The Econ Challenge is a national competition between high school students, testing their knowledge of economic concepts. This is an opportunity for students to shine and demonstrate their knowledge of economics and how it relates to the real world. Students from across the state compete in preliminary rounds by taking an online exam. There are two divisions based upon how many economics classes they have taken. The top teams in each division compete head-to-head in a live, quiz-bowl style competition. The state champion in each division goes on to compete in a regional competition against other teams from West Coast schools. The top regional teams advance to the National finals competition.

We saw a 30% decline this academic year in the number of students participating in the Econ Challenge. Below is a table illustrating participation over the last several years.

<u>School Year</u>	<u>Students Participating</u>	<u>Percentage increase (decrease), compared to prior academic year</u>
2019 - 20	152	85%
2020 - 21	56	(63%)
2021 - 22	52	(7%)
2022 - 23	68	31%
2023 - 24	48	(30%)

OCEE hopes to vastly improve student participation in the Econ Challenge in the coming year. Additionally, we will be adding a companion competition, the Personal Finance Challenge competition, to provide an additional resource for teachers as Oregon schools implement the Oregon Senate Bill 3 requirement for Personal Finance as a graduation requirement. (This requirement becomes effective with the graduating class of 2027).

We measure success for the Econ Challenge by the number of students participating, comments from teachers, and the pass rate of students taking the IB/AP tests.

“Participating in the Econ Challenge required me to understand how the economic principles I learned before apply to the real world and how real data can reflect them. I enjoyed the process of encountering a difficult problem and struggling with my teammates. Competing as a team gave me the opportunity to see how others interpret questions and learn from each other”.

Ella, a student of CT Henry



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“Participating in the Econ Challenge allows me to go through a lot of economic questions that I normally won’t think of. It also enhanced my understanding of many economics concepts that I learned years ago and have forgotten. Competing with other teammates also gives me the chance to connect with people as we help out each other”.

Irene, a student of C.T. Henry Jr.  
Oregon Episcopal School  
July 2024

“Westview had 4 teams enter the competition last year and the students very much enjoyed the opportunity to utilize what they had learned in their AP Microeconomics and AP Macroeconomics courses. They were energized after taking the online test and then competing against other teams to test their knowledge. I think the experience helped to bring about a real-life context to what they were learning in class.

I can further support their enthusiasm because several of the participating students created Westview's Economics Club this year and they meet every couple of weeks and are dedicated to advocating for more student involvement in economic issues and development, and public policy. It is an impressive group of kids.

I do think the Economics Challenge helped to motivate and inspire many of these students. They became more aware of the importance of economics and the critical role it plays in our daily lives”.

Tom Lefor  
Westview High School  
March 2023

## **Invest in Girls**

The Invest in Girls program is a national Council on Economic Education initiative designed in two parts. The first part is an 8-week course, Exploring Finance, which features professional woman in investment banking, corporate finance, portfolio management, venture capital and more finance areas. For the second portion of the program students are paired with woman in finance for monthly conversations. The conversations may cover topics such as how they got



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their start in financial services, their course of study, early career experiences, how to build a network, advice on applying for internships and jobs as well as entry level opportunities.

This program is new for us. We had two schools using the program and impacted 24 high school ladies. OCEE will transition away from the Invest in Girls program in the upcoming academic year. In its place, we intend to implement a program with a broader appeal, which targeting students from various background who may not traditionally gravitate to studies and careers in economics, financial management, or economic analysis. OCEE has engaged a program coordinator to grow the initiative.

One of the teachers who used the program had this to say about it;

“Our high school is new, and we have the most economically diverse student population in our area. Invest in Girls was an opportunity to bring financial awareness to our school, where many students have no financial foundation due to the socio-economic needs being faced at home. This club experience was an approachable way for students from all walks of life to gain knowledge that will instantly impact their future. The most significant part was when students began sharing their ideas and aspirations with one another and began checking in with one another each week about their progress. It built a community where students have a shared passion for financial understanding, regardless of their diverse backgrounds, generation wealth and lack thereof. If we can do this year one, I cannot wait to see how this can grow and impact our greater community”.

Bekki Tucker  
Caldera High School, Bend  
July 2024

## **Professional Development**

In partnership with Oregon Business Education Association, one of our board members has offered Monthly Pop-up professional development opportunities for economics and personal finance educators. The focus of these workshops is to provide continued training and resources. This work to create a community of practice and professional development will continue for the 2024-2025 school year.

## **Teacher of the Year Award**



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Each year we award one economics teacher in Oregon the Teacher of the Year Award. The award was established several years ago. The award is designed to recognize those economics and personal finance teachers who go above and beyond what is asked of them in teaching economics and personal finance to their students. All teachers (grades 1 – 12, both public and private schools) are eligible. The award comes with a \$500 cash award, recognition on OCEE’s website, an invitation to present at teacher workshops as well as an invitation to join the OCEE board for a two-year term, and an automatic nomination for the national John Morton award for Excellence in Teaching of Economics Award. Bekki Tucker from Caldera High School in Bend, OR is our 2024 Economics Teacher of the Year.

## **Demographics & Geographic Diversity**

We offer our programs throughout the state of Oregon. Thanks to the generous support of our sponsors, OCEE programs are offered at no cost to the teachers, school districts or students. Of the 5039 students we reached in 2023 – 24 we estimate 49.3% of the students came from families of low to moderate income backgrounds. The ethnic backgrounds of the students were 3% Black; 30.3% Hispanic; 1.4% Asian and Pacific Islander; 4.8% Native American / Alaska Native, 6.7% from multi-ethnic backgrounds and 53.7 % White. (These estimates are based on data from the Oregon Department of Education website.<sup>1</sup>) Importantly, our programs are reaching a significantly higher percentage of racial and ethnic minorities population (47%) as compared to the overall makeup of racial and ethnic minorities population in Oregon (26%).

## **Fundraising**

We depend on the generous financial support of individuals and businesses to give us the ability to offer these resources and activities to teachers and students in Oregon at **NO COST** to them. We recognize the generosity of the following supporters during 2023 - 2024;

### **Adam Smith Supporter (\$5000 +)**

State Farm  
OnPoint Community Credit Union

### **John Maynard Keynes Supporter (\$2500 – 4999)**

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<sup>1</sup> See <https://www.ode.state.or.us/data/reportcard/reports.aspx> and <https://www.oregon.gov/ode/reports-and-data/students/Pages/default.aspx>.

<sup>2</sup> See <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/OR/PST045222>



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