



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 23, 2024

LAUREL HIGHLANDS FINANCE STUDENTS WIN NATIONAL CHALLENGE

Uniontown, PA – Laurel Highlands High School finance teacher Jeremy Bryson is always looking for new ways and implementing new programs to teach his students about the importance of financial literacy, even spearheading the creation of a credit union inside the high school.

Bryson's efforts are paying off, and he and his students are being recognized after winning first place among medium-size schools in the national Intuit Hour of Finance Challenge. Laurel Highlands defeated 273 other schools across the country to win the challenge, which was sponsored as part of software company Intuit's financial literacy program, Intuit for Education.

"This was brand new. Mr. Bryson, our finance teacher, piloted the Intuit curriculum, and then, part of that curriculum was the finance challenge," Laurel Highlands Director of Curriculum Randy Miller said. "As I understand it, they scored more points than any other school participating. That's pretty exciting news."

"I could not be any more proud," Miller continued. "The students did an amazing job. We know how important financial literacy is in life."

Laurel Highlands High School Principal John Diamond called the accomplishment "amazing." "It really shows you that if they put their minds to it and work hard, they can accomplish their goals," he said.

Bryson explained the challenge was held throughout April, which is Financial Literacy Month. "Intuit launched a curriculum, and along with the curriculum, they launched a financial literacy game."

That game, Intuit Prosperity Quest, offered an interactive online challenge during which students made real-life financial decisions in a futuristic simulated world. They completed jobs and managed savings, credit, debit and investment. During the challenge, students also were given tasks to complete and financial questions to answer between levels of play.

Laurel Highlands competed in the challenge last school year for the first time, with their win announced recently. A trophy presentation and celebration was held last week at the high school, with local dignitaries on hand to offer congratulations. John Frick, representing Sen. Pat Stefano's office, as well as Tammy Nedrow, chief of staff for Fayette County Commissioner Chair Scott Dunn, and Mary Over, chief of staff for Fayette County Commissioner Vince Vicites, presented citations.

Rep. Charity Grimm Krupa praised the students' hard work and dedication and said they are doing well to learn financial skills early in life.

“By mastering these skills now, you are positioning yourself to make informed choices, avoid debt and take advantage of opportunities that can lead to a better future,” she said. “You are all ahead of the curve, and that’s something to be incredibly proud of.”

Fayette County Commissioner Chair Scott Dunn lauded the achievement as more evidence of the positive aspects of Fayette County.

“Too often, our area focuses on the negative. Today celebrates the positive Fayette County has to offer and highlights the achievement of our public school curriculum, Laurel Highlands teacher Jeremy Bryson, and of course, the success of these wonderful students,” he said.

As both a resident of the county and a former Mustang, Commissioner Vince Vicites acknowledged the outstanding achievement.

“Congratulations to the Laurel Highlands Finance Team for winning the national Intuit Hour of Finance Challenge. As a Laurel Highlands graduate, I am very proud of their accomplishments. As a commissioner, I am Fayette County proud,” he said.

Commissioner Dave Lohr offered his “heartfelt congratulations to Laurel Highlands and to the students who participated to make this happen.”

“Too many of our young people leave school without basic life skills essential to navigating adulthood. Financial literacy is just one of those areas. From managing bank accounts and understanding taxes, to repaying loans, building credit, and even investing, we need to actively teach these skills to equip the next generation,” Lohr said. “I am excited to see the Intuit program offered at Laurel Highlands and applaud the innovative thinking that brought this about. I am proud of all the students who are taking advantage of this program and strongly encourage others to do so as well.

Intuit Vice President of Corporate Responsibility Dave Zasada was on hand to offer his congratulations, and Bryson said he looks forward to continuing to teach the curriculum put forth by the company – which he pointed out is free.

“They’re fully committed, and we are committed to using their curriculum,” Bryson noted. “This is a great day. I’m honored that everyone came out to make this happen, and I couldn’t be more proud of my students.”

To learn more about the Intuit Hour of Finance Challenge, visit www.intuit.com/solutions/education/hour-of-finance/challenge/#winners. To learn more about Fayette County, visit www.fayettedcountypa.org.

###

This communication is part of the Fayette County PR Initiative, which is funded through the Fayette County Local Share Account (LSA) and Hotel Tax Grants in cooperation with the Fayette County Board of Commissioners, Fayette Chamber of Commerce, The Redevelopment Authority of the County of Fayette, The Redstone Foundation and other partners. This funding has been designated for the continued promotion and marketing of Fayette County, PA.

For more information, contact Kristi Kassimer Harper, Public Relations Specialist, at 724-437-4571, kkassimer@fayettecountypa.info or Jamie Rankin, Journalist, at 724-437-4571, jamierankin13@gmail.com.