

# 17TH ANNUAL BESSIE B. MOORE AWARDS LUNCHEON - TAKING THE “EEEK” OUT OF ECONOMICS!

by Claudia Utley, Economics Arkansas

On Nov. 8, Economics Arkansas said to an elite group of Arkansas public school teachers, “Bravo,” for a job well done! Twelve K-12 educators demonstrated to their students that there is nothing “eeek” about economics! These outstanding teachers were recognized for excellence in integrating economic concepts into the classroom during the 17th Annual Bessie B. Moore Awards luncheon.

The Arkansas Bankers Association was recognized during the luncheon for the generosity of bankers statewide who support the mission of Economics Arkansas (EA) through the Chairman’s Campaign, and other giving venues. Since the 1962 inception of Economics Arkansas (known at that time as the Arkansas State Council on Economic Education), the ABA has generously supported the organization in its mission to promote economic and personal finance literacy among Arkansas K-12 students. As bankers know best, economically literate students tend to become more responsible and productive citizens, consumers and customers—creating a better Arkansas for us all. The Bessie B. Moore Awards program offers cash awards and statewide recognition to stimulate creativity and innovation in economic education teaching practices.

The annual awards luncheon provides a first-hand impression how students and teachers benefit from the training and resources provided by Economics Arkansas.

## HONOREES INCLUDED:

- Rebekah Bilderback, Greenbrier Junior High School, Greenbrier School District
- Heather Grosze, Rogers Heritage High School, Rogers School District
- Valarie Harp, Hartford Elementary School, Hartford School District
- Jennifer Howald, Woods Elementary School, Fort Smith School District
- Sarah Jerry, Greenbrier Eastside Elementary School, Greenbrier School District
- Peggy Johnson, Harmony Grove Elementary School, Harmony Grove School District
- Natasha Jones, College Hill Elementary School, Texarkana School District
- Tamra Lambert, Bryant Middle School, Bryant School District
- Lynn Massey, Harp & Lee Elementary Schools, Springdale School District
- Deborah Shearer, Baker Elementary School, Pulaski County Special School District
- Lisa Twyford, Robinson Middle School, Pulaski County Special School District
- Shelina Warren, Jack Robey Junior High School, Pine Bluff School District



The 2012 event was a gala, held in the festively decorated Great Hall of the Clinton Presidential Center in Little Rock.

The program was opened by Bob Watson, superintendent of the El Dorado School District and long-time board member, who welcomed the almost 200 guests. Bob thanked the ABA and other sponsors for their support, and was followed by Executive Director Sue Owens to recognize other friends, partners, educators, and volunteers. Owens was followed by EA Vice-Chair, Ray Hobbs, President and CEO of Daisy Outdoor Products. Ray congratulated Economics Arkansas on its 50th anniversary and recognized 9 Lifetime Board Members who served on the board 25 years or longer.

As guests were finishing lunch, they turned their attention to the teacher presentations and the awards ceremony. Economics Arkansas Program Coordinator, Marsha Masters, invited two honorees and their students to discuss their projects with the audience. Shelina M. Warren from Jack Robey Junior High School/Pine Bluff School District described her project “College Tour 2012.” It was designed to decrease the high school dropout rate by providing intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to all students involved. Warren said she expected that once her students stepped on campus, they would never forget that feeling and strive to be a college student in three years. One of her students confirmed that with these words: “When I was little, I didn’t believe I would be going to college but now I believe I am. My college mentor has helped me see the importance of my GPA and I believe I am college material.” His comments practically brought the house down! This economics project delivered impact in the classroom!



Teacher Lynn Massey and students



Shelina Warren with Ray Hobbs, Dr. Tom Kimbrell, Ray Simon, and Bob Watson

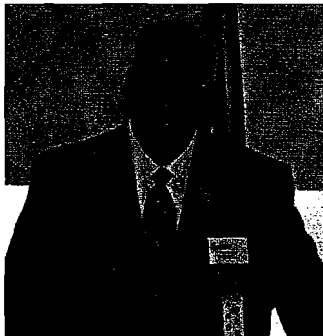


Teacher Shelina Warren and students

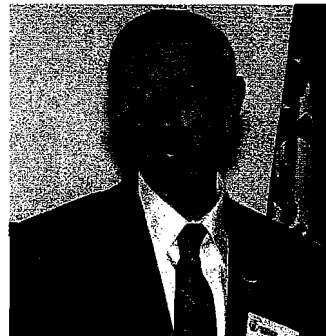


Left: Marsha Masters with student presenter from Springdale

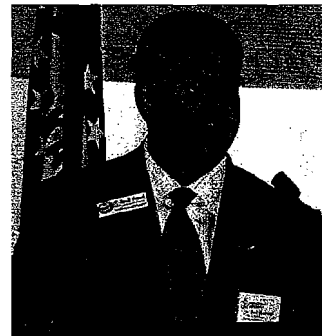
Below: Sue Owens



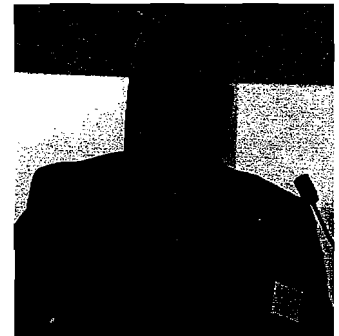
Board President Bob Watson



Ray Simon



Dr. Tom Kimbrell



Board Vice-Chair Ray Hobbs

Also presenting was Lynn Massey from Harp & Lee Elementary Schools/Springdale School District. Her project, "Masseychusetts: A Model City on the Economic Horizon," instructed students to set up and operate businesses such as the Massey-Mart. They learned about commercial loans, investment risks, marketing, customer service, credit, profits and loss and community involvement.

Warren, Massey and 10 other educators were then presented with the Bessie B. Moore Awards. They each received \$1,000 and an inscribed award.

Praising the teachers were Arkansas Department of Education Commissioner, Dr. Tom Kimbrell and keynote speaker, Ray Simon; longtime educator and former deputy secretary for the U.S. Department of Education. Simon stressed the importance of economic and personal finance literacy. He contrasted the "cookie jar" banking of the past with today's overuse of credit cards. Generations who lived in the early 20th century saved up for purchases by putting pennies and dollars in a cookie jar; if the jar was empty, the purchase was delayed, he said. In contrast, today's

consumers tend to buy and buy until the credit card is maxed out and then apply for another one, a behavior that can have dire financial consequences, Simon added. Teachers are in a unique position to teach economic and financial literacy as the "cookie jar of the 21st century," he pointed out. If teachers were securities, they would be considered high-investment grade bonds or growth stocks with high value because they are able to develop financially literate students while supporting effective teaching while stimulating economic growth, Simon said.

Economics Arkansas is very grateful for the generous support of the ABA and its member banks. You allow us to provide a crucial service to teachers who are educating your future customers! Please be watching for John Freeman's letter - if you are planning your end-of-year 2012 giving and your 2013 contributions, please consider Economics Arkansas. You may find more information on their website at [www.economicsarkansas.org](http://www.economicsarkansas.org) or by calling Sue Owens, 501-682-4349.