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Beebe students awarded for being investment savvy

By Angela Spencer

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Ashley Courson, from left, Derrek Nawell and Shannon Anderson were part of the Beebe High School teams that received cash awards and trophies for winning first and second place during the spring 2014 session of the Stock Market Game, a project-based investment simulation that teaches the importance of saving and investing for the future.

Many investors have ridden the stock market wave, their dollars going up and down at the behest of the market. In Beebe, six students proved their investment know-how during the Spring 2014 Stock Market Game.

Beebe High School teacher Justin Moore had two award-winning teams in the project-based investment simulation.

Ninth-graders Denek Newell, Rachel Howton and Dakota Yarbro won first place, and Allie Lane, Ashley Courson and

Shannon Anderson — also in ninth grade — won second place in the junior high division in their region.

The students were judged on their efforts to grow a hypothetical stock portfolio over a 10-week period. Nearly 5,500 Arkansas students participated, and the winners received cash awards and trophies. The awards were presented at an awards luncheon at Verizon Arena on April 30.

Shannon said he could see himself playing the stock market in real life at some point in the future.

"I honestly want to invest in something," he said. "Probably a cheap stock — like 15 cents — but it's all about the profit."

Derrek, despite being on the first-place winning team, did not share the same sentiment.

"I don't think I'll invest," he said. "I just don't think it's a good idea."

The participating groups worked with a virtual \$100,000 stock portfolio over the 10-week period. In the end, Derrek, Rachel and Dakota's group had \$117,000, and Shannon, Allie and Ashley's group had \$113,000.

Ashley said knowing when to buy and sell was key to the group's second-place win.

"Our stock just went up, and we sold at the right time," she said.

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Part of knowing when to sell was tracking the shares and keeping up with how the company was doing in the real world. Shannon said some businesses were more popular with consumers, and Ashley added that keeping track of their business value was key to choosing which stocks to buy and when to sell.

"Some of them did better in business," Ashley said. "Those stocks usually did good."

Team members divided the work among themselves. Some looked up good stocks to buy while others tracked current stocks and trends in the market. Ashley said she followed the NASDAQ more while participating in the program.

The Stock Market Game is owned by the Securities Industry Financial Markets Association and has been franchised to Economics Arkansas since 1999. Teams of one to five students participate over 10 weeks in the fall and spring. Annually, participation averages more than 9,000 students.

Economics Arkansas is a private education organization aimed at promoting economic literacy in the state. It was founded in 1962 and helps educators teach students about real-life economics, including investment in human capital; decision-making skills and the costs associated with each decision; financial skills to manage the students' resources; and the global market and their roles as producers and consumers.

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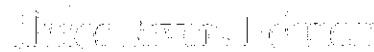
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