 For more information, contact:

 Marsha Masters, Associate Director

 marsha@economicsarkansas.org

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For Immediate Release

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ARKANSAS STUDENT WINS NATIONAL INVESTMENT COMPETITION

Jacksonville Middle-Schooler is a 1st Place InvestWrite Winner

**LITTLE ROCK–**On Monday, April 19, Riley Becker, age 12, received some pretty exciting news during what he thought was just a quick visit to the Jacksonville City Hall with his mother. Instead of running an errand, he found out that an essay he had written during the Fall 2020 semester won 1st Place in the National InvestWrite™ Competition.

InvestWrite™ is offered as a complimentary writing component to the Stock Market Game™, an investment simulation for 4-12 grade students. Both programs are owned by the Securities Industry Financial Markets Association (SIFMA) Foundation; the Stock Market Game™ has been franchised to Economics Arkansas since 1999.

Becker received the news he had won 1st Place in both the State and National competitions via Zoom from SIFMA Foundation President, Melanie Mortimer. He was joined by his family, former and current teachers from Bobby G. Lester Elementary and Flightline Upper Academy, as well as Jacksonville Mayor Bob Johnson.

Becker wasn’t the only winner from Jacksonville this year. Micah Bray, age 11, from Bobby G. Lester Elementary, won 1st Place in the Elementary Division of the State competition. Bray and his teacher Rick Kron were honored during a Jacksonville North Pulaski School District Board Meeting on April 5, 2021.

This year’s essay prompt asked students to write about overcoming change or obstacles and relate their personal experience to a publicly traded company who has also had to adapt to change.

Economics Arkansas, a nonprofit educational organization that trains teachers how to integrate economics and personal finance concepts into their classroom curriculum, hosts the Stock Market Game™ each school year. The investment competition allows students to grow a virtual $100,000 stock portfolio over the course of a semester or school year session. The average annual participation in Arkansas is more than 15,000 students.

InvestWrite™ offers an opportunity for students to apply their investment experience during the Stock Market Game™ and showcase their financial literacy. Both programs help students improve their math, business, language, social studies, economics, technology, and critical-thinking skills.

Marsha Masters, Associate Director of Economics Arkansas, says, “Helping Arkansas students better understand our economy, our markets, the role of investors, and how to make good investment choices will pay dividends for the students, their education, and the Arkansas economy.”

Both essays written by Becker and Bray can be found on Economics Arkansas’ website.

**About Economics Arkansas:** Economics Arkansas (through the Arkansas Council on Economic Education) is a private, non-profit, non-partisan, educational organization founded in 1962 by Dr. Arch Ford and led by Dr. Bessie B. Moore to promote economic literacy in Arkansas. Its mission is to equip PreK-12 schools with standards-based resources and professional development to teach economics, personal finance and the free-enterprise system using practical, innovative and inspiring methods so that Arkansas students may master an understanding of economics and personal finance and apply that knowledge for success in the free-enterprise system. For more information, visit [www.economicsarkansas.org](http://www.economicsarkansas.org).

**About the SIFMA Foundation for Investor Education:** The SIFMA Foundation is dedicated to fostering knowledge and understanding of the financial markets for individuals of all backgrounds, with a focus on youth. Drawing on the involvement and expertise of educators and the financial industry, the SIFMA Foundation provides financial education programs and tools that strengthen economic opportunities across communities and increase individuals’ access to the benefits of the global marketplace. For more information on the work of the SIFMA Foundation, visit [www.sifma.org/foundation](http://www.sifma.org/foundation).

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