

Absegami Students Earn Highest National Award in Financial Literacy

By Dawn Kosko

Net pay? Compound interest? Credit reports? Checkbook reconciliation? Identity theft? Collision insurance? These are not strange terms to students enrolled in Absegami High School's "Financial Literacy" course.

Absegami students enrolled in "Financial Literacy", a full-year elective taught by business education teacher Dawn Kosko, were among the over 84,000 students across the country who participated in the National Financial Capability Challenge, administered between March 7, 2011 and April 8, 2011, and organized by the U.S. Departments of the Treasury and Education.

Certainly, Absegami students proved that they were up to the "Challenge!" Of the 56 students who took the "Challenge" at Absegami, approximately half of them scored in the top 20% nationwide. The overall average score for Absegami students was an 82%, as compared to a 66% average score for New Jersey students, and a 69% average score for students nationally.

David Dunfee, an Absegami senior, scored a perfect 100% on the 40-question test, one of only 18 students to do so in New Jersey. Other top scorers at Absegami were seniors Ben Hubbard and Alyssa Weaver and junior Louis Pirrotta. Additional students scoring in the top 20th percentile of this prestigious national competition and those who received certificates of recognition from the U.S. Department of the Treasury were: Robert Bardenhagen, Danielle Baumann, Tatiana Bereznikova, Kara Burrows, Eva Cheung, Kawai Cheung, Dawn Coburn, Todd Ellis, Brandon Goldberg, Victoria Hillesheim, Wes Ingersoll, Daniel Lopez, Jeffrey Nguyen, Brielle Panter, Aakash Patel, Mina Salvatore, Anthony Scirrotto, Eder Solano, Tiffany Tang, Laura Turner, Joshua Ventura, Nathan Went and Erica Zerilli. It is hoped that these honors will inspire other students and teachers to focus on financial education.

Absegami has long been committed to providing students with the tools they need to make wise financial decisions in the future, and offers "Financial Literacy" as a full-year elective to juniors and seniors. The school is serving as 1 of 9 state pilot schools for Standard 9.2: Personal Financial Literacy: *All students will develop skills and strategies that promote personal and financial responsibility related to financial planning, savings, investment, and charitable giving in the global economy.* Beginning with the class of 2014, students must successfully complete at least a half year of financial, economic, business and entrepreneurial literacy as a NJ high school graduation requirement.

The "Challenge" was launched by the U.S. Department of the Treasury and the U.S. Department of Education to promote financial literacy among high school students and shine a valuable national spotlight on the importance of teaching youth about personal finance. Additionally, President Obama declared April "Financial Literacy Month."

For more information on the "National Financial Literacy Challenge", the President's Proclamation or the Absegami Financial Literacy Course visit <http://challenge.treas.gov>, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/03/31/presidential-proclamation-national-financial-literacy-month> or <http://www.absegami.net>.