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***Commonwealth of Virginia****Office of Governor Terry McAuliffe*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 14, 2016

**Office of the Governor**

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**Governor McAuliffe Announces 2016 Governor’s Challenge**

**Champions in Economics and Personal Finance**

*Three Virginia High School Teams Crowned State Champions*

 *at Competition of Economics and Financial Skill*

**Richmond** – Governor Terry McAuliffe today announced the winners of the 2016 Governor’s Challenge in Economics and Personal Finance. Preliminary online rounds attracted a record number of participants, over 3,350 high school students from across Virginia. 176 students qualified for the day-long championship competition at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) on April 14th.

“Equipping students with real-world financial skills is crucial to their future success,” **said Governor McAuliffe.** “The Governor’s Challenge highlights the excellent job that teachers are doing to prepare our students to make informed financial decisions, and it highlights how education in economics and personal finance can lead to a stronger workforce and a revitalized new Virginia economy.”

The winners were:

**Adam Smith Division** (advanced economics)

 1st place: Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, Fairfax County; teacher: Jay Wickliff

 Runner up: Maggie Walker Governor’s School, Multi-divisions-Richmond area; teacher: Julius Oreska

**David Ricardo Division** (economics)

 1st Place: Freedom High School, Loudoun County; teacher: Michelle Plasri

 Runner up: Riverbend High School, Spotsylvania County; teacher: Melissa Daly

**Personal Finance Division**

 1st Place: Glen Allen High School, Henrico County; teacher: Patricia Adams

 Runner up: Woodbridge Senior High School, Prince William County; teacher: Susan McNamara

The Governor’s Challenge is conducted in partnership with the Virginia Council on Economic Education (VCEE), a nonprofit public-private partnership focused on enhancing K-12 economics and financial education.

“Thanks to the Governor’s Challenge and the economics and personal finance requirement, our students are gaining skills they will use for the rest of their lives,” **said Virginia Secretary of Education Anne Holton.** “Because Virginia took the initiative, our graduates now leave high school better prepared to be smarter consumers and more thoughtful citizens.”

Virginia leads the way in requiring its students to earn a credit in economics and personal finance in order to graduate from high school. VCEE has been a key partner in providing professional development and creative classroom resources to assist teachers who are teaching this course. The Governor’s Challenge is one of many programs which enhance classroom learning and help build on economic concepts to equip students with skills needed for more informed decision making.

“The Governor’s Challenge provides students with terrific opportunities to apply their learning and gain deeper insights into economic literacy. I am pleased to join so many others in congratulating the winners and applauding all who participated in this noteworthy event,” **said Superintendent of Public Instruction Dr. Steven R. Staples**.

Thanks go to lead sponsor Capital One, and to the Virginia Credit Union who provided financial support to make the Governor’s Challenge possible.

Visit <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/economics_personal_finance/index.shtml> and [www.vcee.org](http://www.vcee.org) to learn more about the Governor’s Challenge and other efforts to promote economic and financial education for Virginia’s students.

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