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Billings Central Students Win Big Sky Biz Sim by First Interstate Bank

Classroom Business Simulation Tests Business and Management Decisions in Statewide Competition

Helena, MT – The Montana Council for Economic Education (MCEE) hosted the Big Sky Biz Sim by First Interstate Bank this spring attracting over 200 teams from nearly 30 schools.

The Big Sky Biz Sim had operational support provided by the First Interstate BancSystem Foundation and first and second place teams were from Billings Central with third place representing Libby. Student teams from Skyview High School, Sidney High School, Bozeman High School, Whitefish High School, Glacier High School and Melstone High School finished first in their industry.

“First Interstate BancSystem Foundation is pleased to partner with the Montana Council for Economic Education to bring Big Sky Biz Sim to high schools across the state,” said Foundation Executive Director Amberly Pahut. “The hands-on learning that Big Sky Biz Sim provides is invaluable to Montana students. We've heard directly from students that the game 'helped me understand money and will benefit me in any future entrepreneurial opportunities'. That feedback shows the value of our partnership.”

The Big Sky Biz Sim is a 10-week program inviting student teams to serve as the executives of a publicly traded manufacturing plant with the goal to maximize return on equity. Students are put in the driver’s seat to manage a manufacturing company to make decisions on production, quality management and advertising to drive demand and maximize sales.

Decisions must incorporate how to maintain a healthy balance sheet and P&L to keep income and equity ahead of expenses and liabilities. But just like the business world, the competition is competing for market share so the winning strategy not only drives a profit, but creates returns ahead of other teams. Beyond the 10 decision inputs each quarter that drive business strategy, mini-cases are also introduced to navigate H.R., branding, and ethics questions.

“The mission at the Council is to improve economic and financial literacy for Montana’s youth and it takes partners like First Interstate Bank to meet this mission,” said Dax Schieffer, MCEE Executive Director. “We know that when we provide the foundation of knowledge in finance, students not only gain the tools for success for themselves and their families, but also contribute to the success of their communities and ultimately Montana.”

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**MONTANA COUNCIL
FOR ECONOMIC EDUCATION**

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www.econedmontana.org

PO Box 1306
Helena, MT 59624
406-624-6617
mcee@montana.edu