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**Financial Literacy Work by Vermont Students Recognized by State Treasurer Pearce**

MONTPELIER, Vt.—Vermont students were challenged this school year to learn how to make thoughtful decisions regarding their money. Today, State Treasurer Beth Pearce recognized student accomplishments in the Reading is an Investment program and the Be Money Wise financial literacy poster contest at a noon ceremony in Montpelier. Both statewide programs are directed by the State Treasurer's Office.

Pearce was joined by Lt. Governor Phil Scott who presented a Gubernatorial proclamation declaring April as Financial Literacy month. The proclamation was presented to the Vermont Jump\$tart Coalition. The non-profit group was recognized for their work in promoting youth financial literacy.

"It's never too early to help our children learn about money," said Pearce. "Teaching money management concepts at a young age will allow Vermont youth to develop their skills as they grow older and make them better prepared for the financial challenges they will face as adults."

"When we teach our students how to properly manage their money, we're truly investing in their future success," explained Scott. "The importance of these life skills cannot be underestimated. The hope is that, by teaching our children the true value of a dollar, they will grow into fiscally responsible adults and pass those same values on to their own children."

The Reading is an Investment program was used in 130 Vermont elementary schools this year. The program is now in its fourth year. It promotes both financial literacy and reading literacy through classroom and library instruction and through a personal reading program. Twenty elementary school students were congratulated on winning \$250 college savings accounts. The winners were selected through a random drawing from more than 4,100 completed reading logs sent in by students throughout Vermont. Last year, 3,900 completed logs were submitted.

Students winning college savings accounts were: Izick Greenwood, Albany Community; Jaedon Beardsley, Barnard Academy; Jacob Gilman and Liam Shaw, Chelsea School; Griffin Larson and Isaac Wargo, Essex Elementary; Thane Gill, Gabe Kadric and Tori Scott, Ferrisburgh Central; Brandi Paradis and Maggie Rouleau, Franklin Central; Olivia Geoffroy, Lowell Graded School; Clare Monahan, Manchester Elementary; Chase Stokes and Alixis Williams, Mary Hogan School; Jacob Barnes, Montgomery Elementary; Lily McKitty, North Hero; Austin Bunn, Readsboro Central; Wyatt Jones, Tunbridge Central; and Jonas Keim, Williston Central.

In addition, Founders Memorial School in Essex Junction and Waterville Elementary in Waterville each received a 4-foot-tall teddy bear for their library from the Vermont Teddy Bear Company. These schools won the bears through a drawing from among those schools that submitted completed reading logs from one-third of their K-6<sup>th</sup> grade enrollment.

The program is underwritten by the TD Bank Charitable Foundation and the Windham Foundation. Additional support also comes from Comcast, with all prizes donated by the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation. Each fall, participating schools receive three hard-backed books teaching money management lessons and a financial literacy curriculum guide. The 2013-2014 personal finance theme was, "Choices Have Costs and Benefits."

For the seventh year in a row, the State Treasurer's Office, in partnership with the Vermont Bankers Association, has sponsored the Be Money Wise financial literacy poster competition. The contest is open to students in grades 3-12. The contest encourages adults to discuss the annual poster theme with students and provides a creative outlet for students to demonstrate their knowledge. The 2014 theme was, "Think . . . before you spend." There were 387 posters entered this year.

Students placing in the elementary division were: first place, Evan Forrest, Williston Central School; second place, Alan Rivers, Franklin Central; and third place, Isabella Gaffney, Robinson Elementary. Student placing in the middle school division were: first place, Esther Mackenzie, Middletown Springs Elementary; second place, Dakohta Sanderson, Windsor Jr/Sr High School; and third place, Adelle Woodcock, Grace Christian School in Bennington. High School division winners were: first place, Julian Kelly, Montpelier High School; second place, Jordan King, Milton High School; and third place, Brittany Savage, Fair Haven Union High School.

Students placing in the honorable mention category were: Emily Johnson, Bellows Free Academy; Elyssa Champagne, Bennington Elementary; Emerson Morse, Browns River Middle School; Emily VanBuren, Castleton Village School; Louis Berlind, Champlain Elementary; Kayley Boissonnault, Chester-Andover Elementary; Vincent Zhang, Fair Haven Union High School; Vincenza Orsi, Fair Haven Union High School; Madison Wilson, Good Shepherd Catholic School, St. Johnsbury; Rena Taylor, Leicester Central School; Peter Hobbs, Lothrop Elementary; TJ Euber, Lothrop Elementary; Mary-Ann Eastman, Mary Hogan School; Cathy Dyer, Mary Hogan School; Jackson Harris, Mater Christi School, Burlington; Oisin Harrington, Middletown Springs Elementary; Dahria Messina, Montpelier High School; Charlotte Brace, Montpelier High School; Cassidy Lewis, Newton School; Allison Babbitt, Rice Memorial High School; Zachary Gary, St. Johnsbury School; Sabine Webb, Vergennes Union Elementary; Amanda Cook, Vergennes Union Elementary; Charlotte DeSantos, Williston Central School; Kayla Cousino, Williston Central School; Hunter Grela, Windsor Jr/Sr High School; Nicole Laplante, Winooski Middle School; and Savannah Chism, Woodstock Middle/High School.

Students placing first in each division received a \$100 cash prize and their school a \$100 cash award in recognition of their support for financial literacy. More information on the poster competition is available on the State Treasurer's Office financial literacy web site at [www.MoneyEd.Vermont.gov](http://www.MoneyEd.Vermont.gov). Also viewable at this site are all lesson plans and activities for the Reading is an Investment program.