



PRESS RELEASE

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ARKANSAS FIRST TO MAKE *MONEY SMART* CURRICULUM AVAILABLE TO PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS STATEWIDE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) today announced the signing of a *Money Smart* Alliance Program agreement that will make its *Money Smart* financial education curriculum available to all 11th and 12th grade students in Arkansas public high schools. Arkansas is the first state to promote a statewide financial education program in its school system. In the 2002 – 2003 school year, there were more than 60,000 11th and 12th graders in Arkansas public high schools.

Under the terms of the agreement, the Center for Financial Training (CFT) and the Arkansas Community Bankers (ACB) will work with the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education to teach *Money Smart* in high schools that request it. The FDIC and the CFT will provide Train-the-Trainer sessions for ACB members and others before they enter the classroom to teach *Money Smart*.

Our young people are the hope and future of our nation, said FDIC Chairman Don Powell. Unfortunately, too many of them lack an understanding of basic financial concepts and the principles of handling money. As a result, many of those just starting out quickly find themselves with bad or no credit and overburdened with high-interest debt. These young adults often lack banking relationships that can help them build assets and a more secure future for themselves and ultimately their families.

I applaud the State of Arkansas, the CFT, and the ACB for joining forces to address the need for financial education for Arkansas students, and for giving them the tools they need to begin building secure financial futures, Powell said.



Congress created the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation in 1933 to restore public confidence in the nation's banking system. It promotes the safety and soundness of these institutions by identifying, monitoring and addressing risks to which they are exposed. The FDIC receives no federal tax dollars — insured financial institutions fund its operations.

FDIC press releases and other information are available on the Internet at www.fdic.gov, by subscription electronically (go to www.fdic.gov/about/subscriptions/index.html) and may also be obtained through the FDIC's Public Information Center (877-275-3342 or 703-562-2200). PR-108-2003

The CFT already provides a Banking on the Future program for Arkansas public high school students who are enrolled in career and technical education courses through the Department of Workforce Education's Business and Marketing Technology career path. The *Money Smart* financial education program will be incorporated into existing high school curriculum for 11th and 12th graders and will be taught by representatives of member banks in the Arkansas Community Bankers network.

As we prepare today's students for the workplace of the future, we must also prepare them for life, said Dr. Steve Franks, Director of the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education. The *Money Smart* curriculum will prepare them to be better employees, consumers, and citizens by increasing their knowledge of financial services and teaching responsible financial management.

The FDIC developed the award-winning *Money Smart* curriculum to help adults develop their money management skills, understand basic financial services, and build confidence about effectively using banking services. However, the curriculum is designed to be flexible enough to meet different levels of need, including high school students. Among the topics that are covered are basics of borrowing, how to save effectively, consumer rights, keeping track of your money, and how credit histories affect your credit future. One of the most popular modules teaches students how to calculate interest rates so that they will understand exactly how much they will end up paying for items bought on credit. *Money Smart* is available in English, Spanish, Chinese, and Korean; a Vietnamese version will be released in early 2004.

Arkansas high schools wishing to offer the *Money Smart* curriculum should contact Jane Garner, Office of School Improvement, Career and Technical Education, Arkansas Department of Workforce Education. She can be reached at (501) 682-1535 or via e-mail at jane.garner@mail.state.ar.us.

To learn more about *Money Smart*, visit the *Money Smart* page on the FDIC website at: <http://www.fdic.gov/consumers/consumer/moneysmart/index.html>. In the two years since *Money Smart* was released, more than 100,000 adults have completed the course and more than 14,000 new bank accounts have been opened by *Money Smart* graduates, many of whom had no prior banking relationships, relying instead on high-cost nonbank alternatives such as check-cashing outlets and payday lenders. *Money Smart* was recently awarded a Service to America medal for this work by the Partnership for Public Service.

This is a great program for people of all ages, said Arthur Morris, Chairman of the Board of CFT. We are glad to join the *Money Smart* Alliance Program, and look forward to working with the Arkansas Community Bankers to help educate more of our citizens about financial security.

The lack of fundamental personal financial education in the high school curriculum has been a concern of community bankers for some time, said Richard G. Trammel, Executive Director of ACB. We welcome the opportunity to work with the FDIC, the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education, and CFT in getting the *Money Smart* program into the schools and Arkansas communities.

The *Money Smart* Alliance Program partnership agreement was signed in Little Rock in the historic former Supreme Court chambers in the State Capitol building. FDIC Regional Director John F. Carter, who signed on behalf of the agency, said: This is another fine day for the *Money Smart* program. This alliance will provide young adults throughout the Arkansas public high school system to establish a sound personal financial foundation that will carry them throughout their adult lives. We at the FDIC are very proud to be a part of this unprecedented partnership which will make *Money Smart* available to an entire state school system. We truly appreciate the vision and commitment of the CFT, the ACB and the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education, which together have made this alliance possible.