

# Wisconsin Department of Financial Institutions: Thousands benefited from events during Money Smart Week Wisconsin

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MADISON - Thousands of Wisconsin residents throughout the state benefited from hundreds of free programs and workshops held during the recently completed Money Smart Week Wisconsin. The annual event, held this year from April 22-29, is a highlight of National Financial Literacy Awareness Month, a collaborative effort by state and federal agencies and private-sector groups to raise awareness about the importance of financial literacy. In 2006, Wisconsin was the first state in the nation to conduct a statewide Money Smart Week, which was launched by the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago in 2002.

"I'd like to thank Governor Walker's Council on Financial Literacy, Wisconsin's business community and dozens of other private-sector organizations for their participation in Money Smart Week Wisconsin and for their year-round support of financial literacy awareness efforts statewide," said Jay Risch, Secretary of the Department of Financial Institutions (DFI). "I was pleased to be able to participate in Money Smart Week events in Fond du Lac and Belleville and witness first-hand the positive impact these efforts have on our citizens."

Among the events held in dozens of communities throughout the state were:

- "The Big Read," a statewide event for children in Grades Pre-K-4, was held in 83 locations. Students learned about the importance of saving through the

reading of a book, “Little Critter: Just Saving My Money” by Mercer Mayer. Nearly 4,000 complimentary copies of the book were distributed to students and local libraries. The book giveaway was funded by DFI, its Office of Financial Literacy, and local sponsors.

- The Fox Cities Money Smart Week sponsored an essay contest that drew 73 entries, with the top three essay writers receiving cash prizes compliments of Edvest, Wisconsin’s 529 college savings program. The winners were:
  - o Mark Vandenberg, Appleton West High School, \$1,000 scholarship.
  - o Collin Haese, Neenah High School, \$500 Edvest gift card.
  - o Ben Willis, Kimberly High School, \$500 Edvest gift card.
- A coloring contest sponsored by the Fond du Lac Public Library garnered 64 entries in three age categories. Winners were:
  - o Teen category – Helen Conran
  - o School-age category – Maggie Serovy
  - o Young child category – Evelyn Pierce
- A youth financial literacy video contest sponsored by the United Way of Kenosha County drew eight entries. Winning videos can be found at [www.kenoshaunitedway.org](http://www.kenoshaunitedway.org).

Winners and their prizes were:

- o First place – Nathaniel Bowens and Joseph Kotten, \$700
- o Second place – Molinna Bui, \$500
- o Third place – Jeremiah Lunde, \$300
- Nearly two dozen people took part in a first-ever Student Loan Assistance Event at St. Marcus Lutheran School in Milwaukee. Financial counselors and servicers were on hand to give one-on-one advice to students about loan repayment and consolidation options.