



Winners included Tempe Elementary's Michelle Barton, third from left, Middle School Teacher of the Year. Others attending were, from left, Ardie Sturdivant, principal of Ward Traditional Academy; Greg Pratt, director of Center for Economic Education; and John Balentine, director of K-12 Social Studies.

MCC honors go to Tempe teacher

Michelle Barton, a teacher at Ward Traditional Academy in the Tempe Elementary School District, has been named 2012 Middle School Teacher of the Year by Mesa Community College's Center for Economic Education.

Barton is a graduate of Arizona State University and has taught pre-algebra, algebra and geometry at Ward since 2009.

She is recognized for integrating

the standards-based Stock Market Game into her math curriculum and sponsoring Ward's Economics Club.

She is one of a small number of math instructors who has attended training MCC's Center for Economic Education and is using this programming to address the emergence of common core requirements in the middle school curriculum.

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Teacher

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Beyond her creativity in applying a social studies-based activity to mathematics instruction, she models collaboration and community building through her work with language arts and social studies colleagues.

"Integrating economics into my curriculum has allowed me to bring math to life," said Barton. "Students always used to ask me, 'When will I ever use this?' Introducing concepts like slope, graphing and linear equations using the Stock Market Game allowed me to show students a real-life application before they even thought to ask."

The outcomes of Barton's mentoring are reflected in the results of the Fall 2012 Arizona Stock Market Game: Ward student teams captured first and second place in the elementary division and swept first, second and third places in the middle school division. The first-place elementary team and first- and second-place middle school teams were comprised entirely of females.

The Center for Economic Education supports innovation in economics instruction across the curriculum and across grade levels in Arizona.

John Balentine, director of K-12 Social Studies at the Arizona Department of Education, said: "Today's employers are seeking graduates that have key skills of critical thinking, problem-solving and collaboration."

"Arizona's teachers and students are fortunate to have a cross-curricular resource. The Stock Market Game, hosted by the Arizona Council on Economic Education, develops these skills and helps ensure all of our students are prepared for college, career and civic life."

— By Angela Askey

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