

Details draw masters to competition



“We make fun of all the wrong answers,” explained Nicole Friedman, one of the KnowledgeMasters teammates, “so we just have fun together. The learning comes with it as we talk about choices.”

Friedman referred to the team practice of discussing wrong answers during afternoon drill sessions. One example concerned a question about water-borne pathogens that caused devastation in Europe. The correct answer was “cholera,” but one of the choices was “syphilis.” Friedman joked, “We had a good time with that question and really laughed about the wrong answer.”

Knowledge Masters, a competitive team coached by media specialist Colin Neenan, pitted academic knowledge against the expertise of groups from other schools in December and April. Both times the Trumbull kids claimed third place in the state.

A small turnout of regulars practiced Mondays after

school. A few of them especially enjoyed analyzing the multiple choice questions and figuring out why particular answers were correct.

The Jeopardy-style subjects ranged from geography to math, and students were rewarded for quickness. The fastest team with the correct answer won the competition.

Completed on computer, the actual competitions in December and April included 200 multiple choice questions, answered by each team as quickly as possible. About 800 schools nationwide competed on the same day for the most correct answers in the shortest amount of time.

“We thrive on the details,” said Friedman, explaining that knowledge of trivia contributed to overall success but that most questions could be reasoned through with an appropriate amount of time.

“It’s fun to work with kids who really enjoy thinking,” added Neenan.



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE, sitting at the computer in the Media Center Seminar Room, sophomore Shruti Kuzhippat flashes drill questions on the Interactive White Board for fellow academicians to solve. Sophomore Nicole Friedman solves a math problem during the rapid-fire April competition. Team members Friedman, left, Stefanie Walker, Kuzhippat, William Dunne and Emily Wu check out some of the Jeopardy-type questions available for practice rounds. Knowledge Masters regulars gather in the Media Center for the December competition; they placed third in the state. Excited and ready, Wu, a junior, volunteers the correct multiple choice answer as fast as the question appears on the screen. Pointing out a wrong answer to a geography question about Harpers Ferry, Walker, a junior, argues why she knows “Imperial” is not correct. In April competition, Dunne, a sophomore, nails a grammar question with his knowledge about gerunds. ADJOINING PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM, Fed Challenge team members Michael Heeks, left, Lisa Kasiewicz, Omar Elmaghrabi, Daniel Connolly and Lauren Dahlin present their economic plan at the Trumbull Mall in a spring practice session. Ishani Dhaon, left, and Kasiewicz discuss the effects of productivity as they prepare for the presentation at the Federal Reserve Bank in New York City. Posing for the traditional team picture in front of the Merrill Lynch bull on Wall Street, Dahlin, left, Heeks, Dhaon, Elmaghrabi, Connolly and Kasiewicz are bullish about their success in Federal Reserve competition. After the April competition on Wall Street, team members Dhaon, Dahlin, Kasiewicz, Connolly and Elmaghrabi share experiences over dinner at Carmine’s restaurant near Time Square. The group devoured a “Titanic” sundae in celebration of their record THS victory. Elmaghrabi, left, and Heeks research the business sector and put together the statistics before the Trumbull Mall rehearsal session. Adviser and coach Gerald McCloghry sorts through packets of economics statistics for team members.

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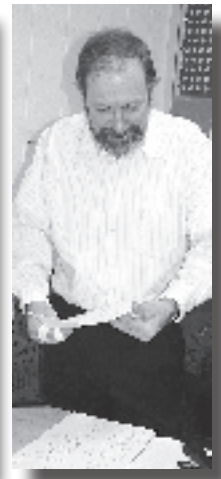
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As the U.S. economy tumbled downward and talk of recession dominated the airwaves, selected THS Fed Challenge team members prepared their recommended solutions for economic well-being.

Under the guidance of economics teacher Gerald McCloghry and with help from Dr. Philip Lane of Fairfield University, the six panelists including Power Point editor Lauren Dahlin researched business profiles and economic trends, brainstormed economic directions and prepared a Power Point demonstration of how they felt the fluctuations in the country's economy should be handled.

With a script and slide show perfected during April vacation, the team headed to the Federal Reserve Bank of New York on April 10 for the opening show-down. They per-

formed a mock meeting of the Federal Open Market Committee, stating the risks they were projecting in the economy and offering expert recommendations for monetary policy.

Commenting on the first day of competition, junior Lauren Dahlin said, "The gorgeous spring weather definitely pumped us up for the competition. It certainly foreshadowed our success that moved us on to semi-finals."

The group scored a total of 39 points out of 40, first place in their bracket, allowing them to advance to the semi-finals. Unfortunately, the team did not qualify for the national competition in Washington, D.C., but McCloghry remains hopeful. He stated, "With four of my strong juniors returning, there's always another chance next year for the win."

"Nothing prepares a person better for the real world of economics." ~Lisa Kasiewicz



Recession challenges econ specialists

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