

Texas Department of Banking

Press Release

Bankers Inspired to Promote Financial Literacy Programs in Their Communities

Date: June 13, 2007

Financial Education Workshops offered statewide in Texas during April and May were well received by bankers who were looking to place a greater emphasis on financial literacy efforts in their communities.

Although Texas enjoys great economic prosperity, as well as population growth, there are fundamental aspects directly related to Texas' financial literacy that do not bode well for the future of our state:

- Texas has the lowest average credit score of any state in the nation at 651 (national average – 678). *Source: April 2006 Experian Report.*
- Texas is one of five states to rate an “F” in assets and opportunities for families and a “D” in financial security. *Source: The Corporation for Enterprise Development, 1999.*
- Texas ranked 48th among states for average household net worth, and nearly one out of five Texans has no net worth. *Source: July 2005 Ft. Worth Star-Telegram.*
- Texas spent the least in the nation on adult education literacy at \$5.05 per capita (national average is \$46.65). *Source: U. S. Department of Education, 2004.*

The workshops provided innovative ideas along with the tools to establish improve and promote financial literacy to Texas communities. A diverse audience of approximately 335 individuals attended the financial education workshops which primarily consisted of banks, non-profit organizations and other government agencies. In addition to learning about financial literacy programs that are available, the workshops offered a favorable setting for networking opportunities.

Texas Banking Commissioner Randall S. James was pleased with the success of the Department's efforts stating, “We are now following up with bankers who are motivated to take financial literacy to a higher level. One bank expressed an interest in starting an in-school branch. Another bank is eager to bring Exchange City to their hometown.”

Exchange City is Junior Achievement's youth financial literacy field trip program which educates thousands of fifth graders every year on how to run their own businesses in a virtual city setting. The main goal is for students to manage a profitable business so that they can eventually pay off their bank loans.

Ms. Leilani Lim-Villegas, the Department's Financial Education Coordinator, assists banks with aligning financial education programs and materials that best suit each bank's community needs.