

**For Immediate Release**  
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## ***2015 STEM Finance Learning Exchange Highlights Student Career Opportunities***

**CHICAGO** — Last fall, Econ Illinois teamed up with PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) to invite 40 high school accounting students and their teachers to participate in a career experience as part of the Illinois Pathways Finance Learning Exchange. Students attended an informational site visit to explore the variety of job opportunities from industry professionals within this big 4 accounting firm, helping students develop more in-depth knowledge on their career choices.



“I am passionate about financial literacy and youth education,” said Alper Ozgit, Tax Director, specializing in Transfer Pricing for PwC. “Students have an opportunity to talk to and learn about a variety of roles here at PwC. We also talk to them about what we look for in their resumes and how it helps to include more than work history when applying for finance related positions. It helps them to understand that in addition to accounting skills, they should demonstrate ways in which they have been resourceful and cite examples of situations when they have taken initiative.”

***Alper Ozgit, Econ Illinois Board Member and PwC Tax Director talks with high school accounting students about real-world career experiences.***

Teachers from five high schools within Illinois School District 211 participated, including Palatine, Fremd, Conant, Schaumburg and Hoffman Estates. They expressed appreciation for the opportunity to visit PwC, learn about the variety of finance-related jobs at the firm, hear from several employees about their job experiences at various levels of responsibility, and engage industry professionals in conversation about how to prepare for problems and solutions they might encounter when choosing finance related careers.

Econ Illinois is the Lead Entity for the Illinois Pathways Finance Learning Exchange (FLE) for the State of Illinois. Illinois Pathways are innovative public-private education partnerships organized to support local implementation of P-20 STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) Programs of Study. Learning Exchanges are designed to support the educational integration of programs and services around nine specific career areas. Each Exchange works to enhance college and career readiness by supporting students’ core academic, technical and employability skills; provide students the opportunity for continuous education, training; and direct students toward high-demand, high-opportunity jobs.

“The goals of the Finance Learning Exchange are to utilize existing resources and tools as well as to create support to provide educational and work-based learning opportunities for Illinois students, provide students the opportunity to apply what they have learned toward innovative solutions, and to showcase student competencies to future employers,” said Beth Metzler, VP of Programs & Partnerships at Econ Illinois. “The finance career cluster encompasses accounting, banking & financial services, economics, finance, insurance & risk management, property & real estate management, and securities & investments.”

Econ Illinois is a 501(c)3 charitable non-profit that has served the Illinois educational community for over 65 years, providing economic and financial literacy programs and services starting at the elementary level and extending throughout adulthood, enabling individuals to participate effectively in the economy. Located at Northern Illinois University, Econ Illinois is a unit of the NIU Division of Outreach, Engagement and Regional Development and is an affiliate of the national Council for Economic Education.

For more information about the Finance Learning Exchange, contact [bmetzler@niu.edu](mailto:bmetzler@niu.edu).