

# Econ teacher Matt Pedlow wins John Morton Excellence in Teaching award

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**By Lisa Carolin**

Courtesy photo. Matt Pedlow.

Leading a high school team to the national championship of the Personal Finance Challenge is certainly a step in the right direction to be considered for the National Economics Educator of the Year award.

That's exactly what happened to **Chelsea High School** AP Economics teacher and coach **Matt Pedlow**, who led CHS's team to victory last spring.

Pedlow recently earned his own award – the John Morton Excellence in the Teaching of Economics Award.

Pedlow credits Derek D'Angelo, President of the Michigan Council on Economic Education, for encouraging him to apply for the award.

“It's very humbling to win this award,” he says. “Past recipients are some of the most well-known names in the world of AP Economics, like Jacob Clifford of AC/DC Economics who won in 2016. I really didn't think I had a chance but I guess the success of our students in the classroom, at the Economics Challenge, and at the Personal Finance Challenge made the difference.”

Pedlow gives his students the credit.

“I'm fortunate to teach some amazing students in Chelsea,” he says. “Without their dedication, I would certainly not be receiving any awards like this. They deserve all of the credit. I'm constantly amazed and surprised teaching such great kids.”

CHS Principal **Mike Kapolka** says, “Matt personifies instructional excellence. Given his track record for making economic education fun, relevant and accessible for all of his students, this national distinction is very much well deserved.”

In addition to winning the state and National Championship in the Personal Finance Challenge in 2018, CHS won the Econ Challenge State Championship in 2016 and 2017, finishing sixth in the U.S. in 2016.

“Hands down, the thing I like about teaching economics the most is getting students to recognize the relevance that learning these concepts has in their lives,” says Pedlow. “When kids realize that every choice has an opportunity cost, it hopefully begins to change the way they think about everyday decisions. Also, having students enjoy economics is always my number one goal.

“Econ is not exactly the most well-loved course in college, but I try and make kids have fun while learning, because getting the students engaged leads to better comprehension of all of the concepts,” he says.

Pedlow has been teaching economics since he was hired in 1999 at Jackson High School. The next year he was asked to teach AP Economics and despite being overwhelmed, he came to realize how much fun teaching economics was.

He is in his 13<sup>th</sup> year of teaching in Chelsea.

“Over the past 20 years I’ve truly loved teaching economics,” says Pedlow. “I’ve been very blessed to be able to teach such an important course.”

Pedlow will receive the John Morton Excellence in the Teaching of Economics Award at a ceremony in Atlanta on Oct. 5 at the National Financial Literacy and Economics Education Conference.