



Everything Jersey

Somerville High School will go to Consumer Bowl semi-finals

By The Messenger-Gazette

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Courtesy Somerset County

Somerset County Consumer Protection Office Director Eileen Popovich, left, joins Mike Schmeltz, Somerville High School teacher and advisor, and the Somerville High School team after Somerville won the 2010 Consumer Bowl. Team members are, left to right, Andrew Pchola-captain, Kristal Mohammed, Greg Nobbs, standing, Kaitlin Brenn and Chris Wabuda. Popovich is holding the school's winning certificate.

Students from Bridgewater-Raritan, Montgomery, North Plainfield and Somerville high schools recently competed against one another for regional qualification in the "2010 New Jersey High School Consumer Bowl."

Somerville High School was named county champion for the eighth consecutive year and will represent Somerset County in the central region semi-finals April 13 in Freehold. The central region includes Hunterdon, Middlesex, Mercer, Monmouth, Somerset and Union counties. The state finals will be held in the spring.

Competition is open to all county high schools. The state provides competing schools with learning materials, students are mentored by teacher advisors and the county Consumer Protection Division oversees arrangements for the competition.

Students fielded consumer-related questions regarding advertising, buying insurance, banking and other

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marketplace topics in a game-show format, Freeholder Palmer said.

He added, "In light of our current economic environment, this program is a valuable and timely tool to help our young people become savvy consumers and avoid scams."

Somerset County Freeholder Director Jack M. Ciattarelli and Sheriff Frank J. Provenzano judged the competition. Eileen Popovich, director of the county Consumer Protection Division, served as referee and Virginia Mastrogiovanni, consumer protection investigator, and David Dombey, assistant weights and measures superintendent, were scorekeepers.

"We are thankful to the New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs who developed this fun and educational way of teaching consumer skills," Palmer said. "By preparing for this event, students have learned skills that will last them for a lifetime. We hope they will share their knowledge with friends and family."

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