



## **The WIIT Charitable Trust**

### **Exposing High School Students to the Field of International Trade**

*By F. Amanda DeBusk, Miller & Chevalier Chartered,*

*and Marie DeForest, University of Richmond summer intern*

The WIIT Charitable Trust continues to enhance the learning experience of high school students in the field of international trade. Established in 2001, the Trust's mission is to promote public knowledge and understanding of international trade and international business by being a valued source of information and by globally sponsoring research, educational programs, and information-sharing activities. In 2002, the Trust created an Adopt-A-School program with disadvantaged Washington, D.C. area schools. In May, the Trust wrapped up its second year of programs with the Academy of Law and Public Issues at Largo High School in Upper Marlboro, Maryland. The Academy admits junior and senior students through a competitive application process and lottery.

The Adopt-A-School program has thrived since its inception. Trust members and others volunteer their time to support a range of activities that educate students about international trade concepts, effects of international trade on daily lives, and career opportunities within the field. The activities are held within the classroom and in Washington, D.C.

**Topics covered this school year included:**

- **Trade Negotiations and Trade Agreements.** The students solved problems showing the impact of trade agreements on various industries including agriculture, textiles and steel.
- **Legislation Concerning International Trade.** For this class, volunteers arranged a field trip to Capitol Hill. Students met with staff responsible for trade legislation.
- **Tariffs and Quotas and Their Impact on Market Access.** Volunteers led the students through a variety of problem-solving exercises to show the impact of tariffs and quotas on their daily lives.
- **Trade with Africa.** For this session, the focus was on the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act.
- **Trade Remedy Law and Implementing Trade Law.** The students divided into groups to debate the pros and cons of imposing trade remedies.
- **Export Controls.** The students looked at export controls with a focus on how they were important in the war in Iraq. Students engaged in role-playing to consider the impact of illegal chemical exports.

More detailed information concerning the Adopt-A-School program is available on the Trust's website: <http://www.wiitrust.org/projects.html>.

Both the Academy and the Trust feel the Adopt-A-School program is a success. Students enjoy working with Trust members who are leaders within the field of international trade saying, "All of [the Trust's] information was informative. We had a lot of fun with your activities," and "Thanks for visiting our class. [The Trust] is a true

inspiration”. The program not only educates but also helps the students broaden their horizons to consider careers in international trade.

Given the hard work that has gone into the Trust programs and their success, the Trust is taking steps to expand its programs to a national audience. The Trust has contracted with two teachers to develop formal lesson plans for use in any secondary school classroom. The Adopt-A-School lesson plans provide an excellent starting point for the teachers. The teachers’ professional lesson plans should be available at the end of the summer. In addition, as the Trust expands, the Trust is investigating the possibility of grants to aid the extension of its educational programs to a national audience.

For more information about the Trust, or to volunteer to help, please visit the Trust’s website <http://www.wiitrust.org/projects.html> and use the “Contact Us” feature.

The Trust would like to hear from you!