



## News Release

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For Immediate Release

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### **Merrill Lynch Supports Economic Literacy for South Carolina Youth**

Merrill Lynch announces a \$75,000 commitment to advance economic and personal financial literacy among youth in South Carolina. Working in partnership with the South Carolina Council on Economic Education (SCCEE), the funding will be used to promote participation in the stock market simulation, a hands-on learning experience for students in grades 4-12.

“At Merrill Lynch, we are committed to helping our next generation reach their full potential,” said Mary Kennemur, Regional Managing Director of the Merrill Lynch Southeast Region. “Our primary philanthropic focus is serving youth through educational programs, and we are thrilled to work with the South Carolina Council on Economic Education to further this goal.”

The funding also supports the *Merrill Lynch Young Entrepreneur Award*, which honors middle and high school students who demonstrate a keen entrepreneurial spirit. Each year five students will be selected for this award and will be featured in the ETV Stock Market Program that is broadcast in conjunction with the simulation.

The *Merrill Lynch Distinguished Advisor Award* honors one full-time teacher advisor for outstanding classroom use of the simulation and creative integration into South Carolina educational standards. The winning teacher will receive a \$750 cash prize and an all expense-paid trip to attend the New York Stock Exchange's Teacher Workshop Program during the summer.

Helen Meyers, SCCEE president said, "We are honored to form a partnership with Merrill Lynch and eager to work with the team of Merrill Lynch employees throughout South Carolina to help young people learn effective economic and personal financial decision-making skills. Together, we can build awareness of the need to improve economic literacy and the resources that are available to help our teachers teach these important concepts."

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**About Merrill Lynch Presents...The South Carolina Stock Market Simulation**

The stock market simulation is a classroom-based teaching tool designed to promote a better understanding of the U.S. economic system while stressing math, social studies and reading as they relate to the simulation. Teams of three to five students compete by investing a hypothetical \$100,000 in common stocks over a ten-week period in fall or spring semester. Teams review their portfolios at any time on-line and compete with their peers across the state in the elementary, middle or high school division. Since 1989, more than 196,000 students have participated in the simulation. During the 2003-2004 school year, nearly 6,000 students in 1,000 teams advised by 110 teachers participated in the competition. For more information about the simulation go to [www.scarolinams.com](http://www.scarolinams.com).

**About Merrill Lynch's Philanthropy**

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Merrill Lynch was founded on the idea that the world is full of opportunity.

Opening the door to that opportunity for underserved children and youth is the focus of our global philanthropy. In 2003, Merrill Lynch giving totaled more than \$30 million, with education receiving nearly half of that support. Merrill Lynch's flagship program Investing Pays Off<sup>®</sup>--or IPO<sup>®</sup>--helps create a level playing field for youngsters of all backgrounds through financial literacy and business savvy. The program strength lies in a free curriculum, the involvement of Merrill Lynch volunteers and online educational resources at <http://volunteer.ml.com>.

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