

For the second year in a row, Mid American Credit Union has won the state-level Desjardins Youth Financial Education Award, the Kansas Credit Union Association announced Tuesday, April 24.

As the first place winner, Mid American will go on to compete in the national credit union competition, sponsored by the Credit Union National Association.

Mid American won the award for expanding the reach of a financial literacy course it started offering in 2010 as part of a summer youth program in Wichita's most culturally diverse and economically disadvantaged neighborhoods. In 2010, Mid American piloted the program to 200 students in two summer camps; in 2011, it offered the program in all five of the PACK camp sites in Wichita, reaching more than 500 students.

Every week during the seven-week camp, Mid American staff members, assisted by staff of the local Consumers Credit Counseling Service, taught the youth about various aspects of money — its history, how it's used and how it's earned and saved —during one-hour sessions.

To emphasize the importance of earning and saving money, participants were given Mid-American-imprinted piggy banks to take home to begin saving. The kids were asked to consider ways to earn money, with some doing extra chores around the house, running lemonade stands and mowing lawns. One child went to "work" for his father, helping separate hardware that his father needed for the job.

The most anticipated day of the camp was on the final day, when the children brought back their savings, some of which had overrun the flesh-colored piggy banks, for final tallies. Mid American provided cash prizes to the top earners at each camp, ranging from \$20-50. The prize "earnings" represented the interest-earning concept of savings.

"This program has not only helped us make community partnerships but allows us to teach young kids, and maybe even their families, about the importance of saving money and other financial choices," said Sarah Meehan, marketing manager, employer partnerships and advocacy. Meehan was the impetus behind coordinating the financial literacy course. When she

was asked if Mid American would make a financial donation to the program by one of the sponsors, she suggested taking part in the camp activities.

The summer PACK youth program is sponsored by the Wichita Police Department, the Park and Recreation Department, and the city manager's Community Education Section, and is offered in five Wichita neighborhoods.