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EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

SMITH COLUMN A SUCCESS

CHARLESTON, IL--Eleven months after publishing his first column in a 6,000-circulation thrice weekly newspaper in Salem, Illinois, Eastern Illinois University Professor of Economics Allen Smith of Charleston has expanded his coverage to include 15 newspapers in six states, surpassing the one million circulation mark.

What started out as a modest crusade to teach the American public the fundamentals of economics has turned out to be a tremendous success for the economist.

"In my opinion, millions of Americans have suffered in the past and will continue to suffer because we've had poor economic policy," he said. "I want the American people to become aware of what's going on and become involved."

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SMITH COLUMN

Smith is helping many Americans become aware of national economics through his column, which is carried locally in the Charleston Times-Courier, Mattoon Journal-Gazette, Decatur Herald and Review, Terre Haute Tribune-Star and Springfield State Journal-Register. It is also published in newspapers beyond the Midwest to Portland, Ore., and Huntsville, Ala.

"I never dreamed I'd have this many editors interested in my column. I am very pleased with the progress and hope to continue adding more papers to my list," Smith said.

He contends that his column is successful because it has a "news peg," a suggestion made by a Birmingham editor. "I hook my readers by tying in economic issues to weekly news events."

Smith's column has covered many subjects and is designed to acquaint people with the fiscal realities of spending, saving, taxes, inflation and deficits, among other things.

His first attempt at teaching the public about economics came in 1976 when he wrote the book, "Understanding Inflation and Unemployment," which became an alternate selection of Fortune Book Club. However, he did not receive wide acclaim until 1986 when he wrote a high school textbook called "Understanding Economics," used in more than 600 schools nationwide. A new second edition of "Understanding Economics," with a 1991 copyright, has been released.

Smith, who earned his doctorate in economics from Indiana University, said, "Whether it's through my column, textbook, classroom teaching, or guest lecturing, I feel like I'm doing more good than I've ever done before in my career."