St. Louis Metro Teen Entrepreneurs in Business Pitch Competition

Finalists in the NFTE St. Louis Metro Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge vied for seed capital and a chance to represent the St. Louis region in national competition

ST. LOUIS (PRWEB) May 13, 2019 -- Four young entrepreneurs from St. Louis area high schools won top honors in the NFTE (Network For Teaching Entrepreneurship) St. Louis Metro Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge held at the St. Louis Science Center on May 7.

The students pitched their business ideas to a panel of expert judges, competing for cash prizes and a free trip to New York City this fall to represent the St. Louis region in the next round of nationwide competition. The first and second place winners at the St. Louis regional finals now advance to the quarterfinal rounds of NFTE’s National Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge, where they’ll go head-to-head with other top young entrepreneurs from across the U.S. and vie for seed capital to grow their businesses.

The results of the St Louis Metro regional finals:

• Nayla Nava and Maya McGregory from the Youth Exploring Science (YES) program at the St. Louis Science Center took first place with their pitch for Afrospanic Atmosphere, a lifestyle brand offering accessories that celebrate Latino and African-American individuals in STEAM disciplines.
• Arie H. from Normandy High School took second place with a pitch for Knock It Out, a nonprofit drop-in center designed to provide community supports for teens in the foster system.
• Jada Pittman from McCluer North High School took third place with her pitch for Bow’d Out, a musical instrument service that offers custom-wrapped bows for string players.

Student business pitches were judged by a panel of experts that included:
• Tamara Keefe of Clementine’s Naughty and Nice Creamery
• Harrison Luval of CitiMortgage
• Jeff Mazur of LaunchCode
• Gary VonderHaar of Mastercard
• Mary Jo Gorman of Golden Seeds and Advanced ICU Care

Two special awards were presented during the evening event. Ernst & Young, LLP (EY) was honored with the NFTE St. Louis Metro Corporate Volunteer of the Year Award and Jason Shupp, President and CEO of Ferguson Roofing, was honored with NFTE St. Louis Metro Volunteer of the Year Award.

The NFTE St. Louis Metro Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge was presented by EY and Mastercard, with additional support from Citi Foundation and Microsoft. The evening event was emceed by NFTE alumna Destiny Davis, the founder and CEO of DestinTees, a custom-printed apparel and accessories business. The keynote speaker was Khalia Collier, owner and general manager of the St. Louis Surge, St. Louis’ professional women’s basketball team.

About NFTE
NFTE is the leading educational nonprofit focused on teaching startup skills and activating the entrepreneurial mindset in young people from under-resourced communities. Research shows the entrepreneurial mindset—skills including problem-solving, adaptability, initiative, and self-reliance—leads to lifelong success.
Equipped with the business and academic skills NFTE teaches and empowered by the entrepreneurial mindset, NFTE alumni are prepared to thrive. NFTE works with schools and community partners across the country through its nationwide network of program offices. Alliances with global youth development organizations bring NFTE programs to additional students internationally. NFTE reaches more than 100,000 young people annually and has served well over a million students since its founding. Learn more at [www.nfte.com](http://www.nfte.com).

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