

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## LOCAL TEENS FIND THEIR NICHE IN BUSINESS

**Lubbock, Texas**—Middle and high school students from the Lubbock Chamber Young Entrepreneurs Academy (YEA!) were introduced to Michael Lambert owner of Feed and Thangs Farm Store, who helped the class to understand what a niche market is as well as the pros and cons of operating within a niche market.

“The opportunity to speak with young adults about the opportunities they have through the YEA program and hopefully provide advice and guidance that can help them become successful was something that I could not pass up” said Lambert. This is such an amazing opportunity for young adults in our community to learn valuable skills and gain tremendous insight that they can utilize regardless of the career choices they may make moving forward.”

As part of the YEA! program, students are introduced to all facets of the business world including, but not limited to, advertising, insurance, graphic design and web development. Over the course of this year’s YEA! program, 21 students will launch 20 businesses, which include The Shoe Doctors that specialize in shoe cleaners and Aquavitam which focuses on irrigation technology.

As a non-profit organization, YEA! relies on the generosity of the community and of sponsors; people who identify with entrepreneurship and want to help pave the way for the future business leaders of tomorrow. “YEA! strengthens the community, and the community strengthens YEA!,” said Gayle Jagel, the Founder and CEO of the Young Entrepreneurs Academy. “Our program managers and instructors seek out people in the business community to help students’ dreams become reality.”

During the course of the 30-week program, more than 80 local businesses become involved with YEA! at various levels. Students work in close cooperation with local business leaders, community leaders and educators who use their personal experiences to demonstrate how to transform their ideas into tangible businesses that create economic and social value.

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### **The Young Entrepreneurs Academy**

The Young Entrepreneurs Academy (YEA!) is a 501(C) 3 offering groundbreaking year-long classes that teach middle and high school students how to start and run their own businesses. Throughout the class, students develop business ideas, write business plans, conduct market research, pitch their plans to a panel of investors for startup funds, and launch and run their own, fully formed companies and social movements. The project-based program empowers students to take charge of their futures.

Founded in 2004 at the University of Rochester with support from the Kauffman Foundation, YEA! today serves thousands of students nationwide. In 2011, the United States Chamber of Commerce Foundation became a national sponsor and partner of the Academy to help celebrate the spirit of enterprise among today's youth and tomorrow's future leaders.

YEA! bridges the business and educational communities to fulfill its mission of teaching more students how to make a job, not just take a job. YEA! is made possible by The Kauffman Foundation, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation and the E. Philip Saunders Foundation. For more information, visit [yeausa.org](http://yeausa.org).

### **U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation**

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation is dedicated to strengthening America's long-term competitiveness and educating the public on how the free enterprise system improves society and the economy.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce is the world's largest business federation representing the interests of more than 3 million businesses of all sizes, sectors, and regions, as well as state and local chambers and industry associations.

### **Sam's Club**

Sam's Club®, a division of Walmart Stores, Inc. (NYSE: WMT), is a leading membership warehouse club offering savings and services to millions of members in 651 clubs in the U.S. and Puerto Rico. Sam's Club offers affordable access to innovative services for families and small business owner, including travel, payroll and HR services, protection plans, legal solutions, cash rewards and more. To learn more about time and money with Sam's Club visit

[www.SamsClub.com/services](http://www.SamsClub.com/services).

### **Lubbock Chamber of Commerce**

The Lubbock Chamber of Commerce represents more than 1,900 businesses and over 79,000 employees on the South Plains which accounts for over \$2 billion in annual household earnings in Lubbock and West Texas. Since 1913 the Chamber, as a catalyst for business growth; a convener of leaders and influencers; and a champion for a stronger community, has served as a unified voice of business by actively advocating for a pro-jobs, pro-growth, pro-business climate.

### **Texas Tech Innovation Hub**

The Texas Tech University Innovation Hub at Research Park (the Hub) opened in 2015 to assist in the formation of startup companies relevant to today's local, regional and global economy. Texas Tech is experimenting with new approaches to economic and sustainable development focusing on commercializing and translating research, creating and growing jobs and developing a complete entrepreneurial eco-system with its community, state, and federal partners. Intended as the first of a series of facilities, the Hub, a 40,000 square foot state of the art platinum LEED building equipped with office and wet laboratory facilities is home to robust programs to advance the impact of the region's economic development efforts. The Hub programs support faculty, students, and local entrepreneurs in early and growth stage companies.