

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Young Entrepreneurs Graduate as CEOs

Lubbock, Texas — Sixteen local middle and high school students from the Lubbock Chamber Young Entrepreneurs Academy (YEA!) will graduate from the program at 6:30 p.m. on Tues., May 22 at the Science Spectrum, 2579 S Loop 289 STE 250.

After months of hard work, this year's program manager, Christine Allen, Director of Workforce Development & Foreign Trade Zone at [Lubbock Economic Development Alliance](#) (LEDA) and this year's presenting program sponsor, will award the class their diplomas alongside Amy Marquez, Director of Leadership Programs at the Lubbock Chamber.

"This is a unique program, where kids can actually launch real businesses or social movements," said Marquez. "I wish we had a program similar to this when I was their age."

YEA! is a groundbreaking 30-week program that guides students in grades 6-12 through the process of starting a real business, including business plan development, pitching an investor panel, obtaining funding, launching the venture, managing media campaigns, e-commerce and web development, sales events, and trade shows. Students, ages 11 to 18, are taught to recognize the power of their ideas and to develop the skills necessary to turn those ideas into meaningful companies. The following students make up the Lubbock Chamber YEA! class:

Aaron Ramos, 8th grade | Hutchinson Middle School (LISD)
Amrita Ramesh, 6th grade | Hutchinson (LISD)
Brooke Payne, 5th grade | Laura Bush Middle School (Lubbock-Cooper ISD)
Duncan Moore, 8th grade | Evans Middle School (LISD)
Evan Emery, 9th grade | Idalou High School
Jairon Foster, 9th grade | Estacado High School (LISD)
Kevin Bash, 8th grade | Southcrest Christian School
Lauren Lambert, 7th grade | Hutchinson Middle School (LISD)
Leyla Aguilar, 6th grade | Hutchinson Middle School (LISD)
Logan Sanders, 8th grade | Idalou Middle School
Peyton McCloud, 6th grade | Heritage Middle School (FISD)
Spencer Noall, 8th grade | Frenship Middle School
Sydney Locke, 8th grade | All Saints Episcopal School
Taylor Anderson, 10th grade | Coronado High School (LISD)
Vanessa Miller, 10th grade | Abernathy High School
William Watson, 11th grade | Estacado High School (LISD)

If interested in learning more about the YEA! program contact Amy Marquez at (806) 761-7002 or amy.marquez@lubbockbiz.org. Applications are now open for the 2018-2019 class. Early applications are given priority consideration and class size is limited. To apply visit www.lubbockchamber.com/yea.

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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.

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.

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.