

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 24, 2019

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Sixteen Young Entrepreneurs Graduate as CEOs

Lubbock, Texas — The Lubbock Chamber Young Entrepreneurs Academy (YEA!) will graduate 16 local middle and high school students at 6 p.m. on Tues., May 14 at the TTU Innovation Hub, 3911 4th St.

After months of hard work, this year's program manager, Christine Allen, Director of Workforce Development & FTZ-260 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 28-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:

Ethan Carter, Ethan's Earthly Edibles
Joseph Diaz, Jojo's Flower Power
Jillian Franco, J Squats
Ashley Garza, The Cookie Jar
Alisa Gonzales, Lissa's Lash Serum
Ava Gutierrez, La Aroma
Daniel Jones, Fort In A Box
Leah Jones, My 4 Chair Feet
Diego Minjarez, Art & Soul
Natalia Minjarez, SavvySave
Alexus Moore, Baking With Love
Troy Nations, Lubbock Auto Detailing



Destiny Urrutia, Star's Pet Collars
Sergey West, Scantron Smart (Alternative Product Solutions)
London Williams, Thoughts & Things
Whyana Wilson, Scenttress

More information is available at www.lubbockchamber.com/yea or call Amy Marquez at (806) 761-7002 to learn more.

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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 almost 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.