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NEWS RELEASE

**A Head Start on Learning Life Lessons:
Young AmeriTowne Hosts State Bank and Financial Services Commissioner**

April 23, Denver – It is never too early to teach children about money—how to spend, how to save, and how to ensure it is safe for the future. A visit by State Bank and Financial Services Commissioner Patty Salazar to a group of Young AmeriTowne fourth graders helped bring this lesson to life.

AmeriTowne delivers a hands-on lesson in free enterprise to more than 34,000 young people a year across the state of Colorado.

During the program, students learn about free enterprise, civics, personal finance and workforce readiness. The culminating experience is a day running AmeriTowne, a real town that includes a Towne Hall, Medical Center, Newspaper and Snack Shop.

Young Americans Center for Financial Education, which runs Young AmeriTowne, has been providing youth with real-life, hands-on experiences in financial education since 1987. President and CEO, Richard E. Martinez, Jr., invited Ms. Salazar to speak to 118 students from Black Forest Hills Elementary, a Cherry Creek School located in Aurora in celebration of Financial Literacy Month. Ms. Salazar works for the Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA).



Patty Salazar and Rich Martinez with students from Black Forest Hills Elementary.

Addressing the students, Ms. Salazar said that her job is to make sure that banks and credit unions in the state follow the law because, “We want to keep your money safe.” After students shared their ideas about why following laws is important to them, Ms. Salazar concluded, “I am so excited that we get to partner with folks like Young Americans to make sure that all of you understand how important it is to use the banking system to both save your money now and manage your money as you get older.”

For 10-year-old Tate, an employee of the AmeriTowne College, Patty Salazar’s visit was, “Pretty cool because she helps protect our money.” Ian, a Doctor in the Medical Center, added that he was glad to, “Meet someone who works for the government.”

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About Young Americans Center

Young Americans Center for Financial Education is a nonprofit organization committed to developing the financial literacy of young people, up to age 22, through real life experiences and hands-on programs. The Center fulfills its mission by offering programs that complement and reinforce each other to build life skills, work skills and financial self-sufficiency. These include Young AmeriTowne, International Towne, YouthBiz, Money Matters classes, summer camps and more. In addition, Young Americans Center houses the only real bank in the world for young people, Young Americans Bank, which shares the same educational mission of teaching children to be financially responsible. Since 1987, more than 700,000 youth have participated in the programs or bank. For more information on the Young Americans Center for Financial Education, visit www.yacenter.org.

About the Department of Regulatory Agencies

The Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA) is dedicated to preserving the integrity of the marketplace and is committed to promoting a fair and competitive business environment in Colorado. Consumer protection is our mission. Visit www.dora.colorado.gov for more information or call 303-894-7855/toll free 1-800-886-7675.

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