

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**NEWS RELEASE**

**Financial Literacy Education Program Returns to Durango**

**May 15, Durango** – Young Americans Center for Financial Education’s AmeriTowne On the Road program kicked off a two-week stay in Durango last week with students from Animas Valley Elementary and Juniper School. Housed in the Student Life Center at Fort Lewis College, On the Road is a hands-on lesson in free enterprise that is expected to reach 420 Durango fifth graders this year.

AmeriTowne On the Road replicates the award-winning Young AmeriTowne program that has existed in Denver since 1990. During the program, students learn about free enterprise, civics, personal finance and workforce readiness in a fun, hands-on way. The culminating experience is a day running AmeriTowne, a real town that includes a Towne Hall, Bank, Medical Center, Newspaper and Snack Shop.

Catering to classes of 25-55 students, the On the Road setup is ideal for connecting with smaller schools and those in rural settings that have found it challenging to reach Young Americans’ Denver locations. Stephanie Snitselaar, a teacher from Needham Elementary who attended with her students last year, said, “AmeriTowne On the Road ignited an enthusiasm for real-life skills that my students hadn't been exposed to within their regular classroom setting. Students were excited to challenge themselves, and scarcely realized they were learning.”

Community support, including presenting sponsor CoBank and local sponsors Alpine Bank and the Durango Education Foundation, helps keep program fees low for students and teachers, who receive a robust 6-8-week curriculum, training, a student workbook, a debit card, a check-book, and an interactive “day in Towne” experience.

“We are thrilled to return to the Durango community,” says Rich Martinez, President and CEO of Young Americans. “Helping youth learn about free enterprise, civics, personal finance, and workforce readiness in a fun, hands-on way will help prepare them for future financial success.”



Volunteers from Alpine Bank help students from Animas Valley Elementary and Juniper School in the AmeriTowne Bank.

### **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 750,000 youth have participated in the programs or bank. For more information on the Young Americans Center for Financial Education, visit [www.yacenter.org](http://www.yacenter.org).

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