

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Janet Redwine
303-320-3241
jredwine@yacenter.org

NEWS RELEASE

Youth Business Owners Shine at Annual Awards Gala

October 9, Denver – Young Americans Center for Financial Education celebrated the accomplishments of nine Colorado youth business owners at the Spotlight on YouthBiz Stars award ceremony and gala, presented by CoBank. This annual event was held Thursday, October 4 at the Seawell Grand Ballroom, Denver Center for the Performing Arts.

Three winning businesses received \$1,000 and a year with a distinguished mentor, a leader from the Denver business community committed to encouraging the next generation of business owners in Colorado. Centennial resident Liam Lennon won the 6-11 Age Category with his business The Lucky Penny. Now 12, Liam was 11 years old when he applied. The Lucky Penny sells custom jewelry and keychains using pennies from specific years that are meaningful to his customers. Liam looks forward to working with his mentor Scott Wylie, Founder, Chairman, and CEO of First Western, throughout the next year.



Winner Liam Lennon and Finalist Hannah Reyes celebrate on stage at the 2018 Spotlight on YouthBiz Stars awards gala, which benefitted Young Americans Center for Financial Education.

Winning the 12-15 Age Category was 15-year-old Emily Rudnick's proprietary blend of spices which she sells as Rudspice and Rudrub. Emily created a business plan when she was an eighth grader at Aspen Academy. This Denver resident hopes to expand into retail stores this year with help from her mentor Margaret Kelly, retired CEO of RE/MAX.

Elevation Creations, a business created by Brenden Coney, age 18, that sells high-quality wood crafts and gifts, won the 16-21 Age Category. Brenden's mentor is Bahman Shafa, President of Focus Property Group. Over the next year, the pair will work to find a permanent home for Brenden's workshop, which currently resides in his parent's garage in Castle Rock.

Spotlight on YouthBiz Stars also recognized two finalists in each age category:

- 6-11 years old: HER Design Store – Hannah Reyes (age 11*)
The Porcelain Penguin – Owen Lennon (age 11*)
- 12-15 years old: Gabe's Bazaar – Gabriel Nagel (age 13)
Laney's Lipcare – Delaney Ryan (age 14)
- 16-21 years old: Luke Aden Photography – Luke Aden (age 17)
Yard Boyz – Jack Fleming (age 17)

*Age at time of application

“Young Americans is so proud of these incredible young people,” remarked Richard E. Martinez, Jr., President and CEO of Young Americans Center for Financial Education. “They are such an inspiration to their peers and to the adult business community.”

About Spotlight on YouthBiz Stars and Young Americans Center

Spotlight on YouthBiz Stars is a business competition and awards gala that benefits the programs of Young Americans Center for Financial Education, a nonprofit charity that reaches more than 67,300 youth every year through hands-on programs and real-life experiences to develop financial literacy in youth.

Visit www.yacenter.org to learn more about Young Americans’ resources for young business owners, as well as flagship programs Young AmeriTowne, International Towne, and Young Americans Bank in Denver, the only FDIC insured real bank in the world designed specifically for young people (age 21 and under).

####