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**NEWS RELEASE**

**Meeting the Stars:  
Young Americans Center names top Colorado youth businesses**

**July 19, Denver** – A forerunner in providing youth entrepreneurship programming and resources for young people, Young Americans Center for Financial Education has named this year’s top youth businesses in Colorado. The announcement was made at a “Meet the Stars” celebration on Tuesday, July 16 at Young Americans Center.

An independent panel of judges evaluated applications of youth, ages 6-21, before selecting this year’s nine finalists:

**6-11 years old:**

1. Lightner Designs – Hayden Hopkins (age 11\*)
2. Ryder’s Riches – Ryder Matz (age 10)
3. Tuff’s Chickens – Tuff Glasmann (age 6)

**12-15 years old**

1. Gabe’s Bazaar – Gabriel Nagel (age 14)
2. HER Design Store - Hannah Reyes (age 12)
3. Sewing with Smiles, LLC – Maile McManis (age 12)

**16-21 years old**

1. Ebay Profits by The Teen Entrepreneur – Shouken Lopez (age 16)
2. THANKS BRAND LLC – Owen Johnson (age 19)
3. Yard Boyz – Jack Fleming (age 18)



Spotlight on YouthBiz Stars applicant Evan Hoing was recognized for his woodworking business at the Meet the Stars event.

In addition to announcing these YouthBiz Stars finalists, Meet the Stars recognized the remarkable achievements of all applicants into this year’s business competition. “I want to congratulate each and every one of you,” said Rich Martinez, President and CEO of Young Americans Center for Financial Education, at the event. “The caliber of this year’s applicant group was the most impressive we’ve seen, and our judges had an incredibly difficult decision to make. You all should be incredibly proud.”

Finalists will be honored at the 18<sup>th</sup> annual Spotlight on YouthBiz Stars awards and gala, sponsored by CoBank, held at the Seawell Grand Ballroom on Thursday, October 3. The event will also name a winning business in each of three age categories that receives a cash award and a pairing with an esteemed business leader as a mentor.

\*Business owner's age at time of application

### **About YouthBiz Stars and Young Americans Center**

YouthBiz Stars is a business competition and dinner event fundraiser that benefits the programs of Young Americans Center for Financial Education, a nonprofit charity that reaches nearly 70,000 youth every year through hands-on programs and real-life experiences to develop financial literacy in youth. For tickets (\$250 per person) and sponsored tables (\$2,500 and up) contact Betsy Sklar at 303-320-3245 or [bsklar@yacenter.org](mailto:bsklar@yacenter.org).

Visit [www.yacenter.org](http://www.yacenter.org) to learn more about Young Americans Center's resources for young business owners, as well as flagship programs Young AmeriTowne, International Towne, free Money Matters classes and Young Americans Bank in Denver, the only FDIC insured real bank in the world designed specifically for young people (age 21 and under).

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