



For immediate release

Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE) Silver Anniversary Gala Celebrates 25 Years of Inspiration

Honoring NFTE founder, Steve Mariotti, social entrepreneur and renowned educator for 25 years of dedication to empowering at-risk youth through entrepreneurship education

NEW YORK, NY (April 15, 2013) – Social entrepreneur and renowned educator, Steve Mariotti, founder of Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE) will be honored at the organization’s 25th Anniversary Gala on Tuesday, April 23rd at the Waldorf Astoria in New York City. The event supported by MasterCard Worldwide and Goldman Sachs *10,000 Small Businesses* will also recognize thirty-seven outstanding young entrepreneurs from 10 different nations, alongside twenty-five entrepreneurial educators to celebrate Mr. Mariotti’s achievements over the years. Today, NFTE is an international non-profit organization committed to engaging and inspiring youth in low-income communities around the world to pursue educational opportunities, start their own businesses, and succeed in life.

In 1982, Mariotti was mugged on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. From that event, he decided to dedicate his life to help disadvantaged young people and left his own business to become a special education teacher in some of the poorest neighborhoods in New York City. Since the organization’s inception in 1987, NFTE has reached more than 500,000 inner-city youngsters and trained 5,000 teachers across 50 countries.

“Even after 25 years, I am continually amazed by the dedication, passion and creativity of these budding entrepreneurs,” comments Steve Mariotti, founder of NFTE. “With youth unemployment skyrocketing, it’s a privilege to be a part of the solution and to continually provide the tools to not only help youth recognize business opportunities but to ultimately create economically self-sufficient lives.”

This year, in commemoration of the Silver Anniversary and in honor of Steve Mariotti, many former NFTE alumni will tell their own personal stories alongside video vignettes highlighting the evolution of NFTE’s impact on entrepreneurship education and the global successes of the organization throughout the years.

The following entrepreneurs represent a couple of successful NFTE alumni who will be attending the Gala and paying homage to Steve Mariotti:

Jimmy McNeal - BDG Industries (NFTE Philadelphia, Class of 1989)

Jimmy “Mac” McNeal took NFTE as part of a summer BizCamp at University of Philadelphia’s Wharton Business School as a high school student in 1989. Today, as a savvy entrepreneur and in a business that follows trends and leaders, McNeal’s company, BDG Industries is an innovator. Jimmy has cultivated some of the hottest talent in world of BMX including: X-Games BMX Street superstar Brad Simms; Mountain Dew Tour champions TJ Ellis and Colton Satterfield; BMX Olympic racing champions Shanaze Reade, Jason Richardson and Ivo Lackas. He also continues to work extensively with the NFTE organization worldwide as a teacher and mentor.



Jasmine Lawrence – EDEN BodyWorks (NFTE New York City, Class of 2003)

When she was eleven years old, Jasmine Lawrence lost 90 percent of her hair after using a hair relaxer with harsh chemicals and vowed never to use chemical products again. Using techniques she learned from the NFTE Summer BizCamp as a high school student in 2003, Jasmine started EDEN BodyWorks, an all-natural line of hair care products including shampoo, conditioner, hair oil, temple balm, hair milk and hair wipes. Currently bringing in over \$100,000 annually and having past success with sales at Wal-Mart, she recently made a business decision to discontinue retail distribution and to focus primarily on online sales. Today her mother heads up operations so Jasmine can focus on her academic studies at Georgia Tech.

In addition to NFTE alumni acknowledging Mr. Mariotti's dedication to the empowerment of at-risk youth through entrepreneurship education, **The Global Enterprising Educator Awards**, presented by MasterCard Worldwide, will honor top teachers from NFTE's programs around the world. It is through their inspiration, encouragement and insights that many of these young people are able to succeed. In addition, NFTE will honor 37 recent program participants with the **Global Young Entrepreneur Awards**, presented by Goldman Sachs *10,000 Small Businesses*. This award recognizes young people for embracing the entrepreneurial mindset and displaying an exceptional commitment to their own ventures.

"Over the years our curriculum has linked the classroom with the real-world application of math, reading and writing and has empowered young people to develop an entrepreneurial mindset which increases their chance of building a better future. Our students, alumni and teachers around the world are our global ambassadors and a true testament to NFTE's achievements," said Amy Rosen, NFTE's President & CEO. "This year's Gala is particularly special as it's a time where we can celebrate and recognize NFTE founder, Steve Mariotti, for his achievements within entrepreneurship education for the past 25 years and the profound impact he has had on the lives of thousands of students."

About the Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship

Too many young people today drop out of school and struggle to break the cycle of poverty. Since 1987, the Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE) has been inspiring young people to pursue educational opportunities, start their own businesses, and succeed in life. By providing entrepreneurship education programs relevant to the real world, NFTE empowers students to own their educations in and out of the classroom and to find their own path to success. Hundreds of thousands of students have discovered opportunity all around them through entrepreneurship via thousands of certified educators worldwide. NFTE supports active programs in 19 U.S. locations and 13 countries around the world. Entrepreneurs are a powerful driver of economic growth and NFTE sows the seeds of innovation in students worldwide. To learn more visit www.nfte.com, like us on Facebook at [Facebook.com/NFTE](https://www.facebook.com/NFTE) or follow us on Twitter at @NFTE.

About Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses

Goldman Sachs *10,000 Small Businesses* is an investment to help small businesses create jobs and economic opportunity by providing greater access to business education, financial capital, and business support services. The program is based on the broadly held view of leading experts that



greater access to this combination of education, capital and support services best addresses barriers to growth. *10,000 Small Businesses* is funded by Goldman Sachs and The Goldman Sachs Foundation. For more information, please visit www.gs.com/10000smallbusinesses.

About MasterCard Worldwide

MasterCard is a global payments and technology company. It operates the world's fastest payments processing network, connecting consumers, financial institutions, merchants, governments and businesses in more than 210 countries and territories. MasterCard's products and solutions make everyday commerce activities—such as shopping, traveling, running a business and managing finances — easier, more secure and more efficient for everyone. Learn more at www.mastercard.com or follow us on Twitter @mastercardnews.

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