Hello NFTE Students, Teachers, Volunteers, Staff and Supporters,

Thank you for joining us for NFTE South’s Annual Regional Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge!

NFTE activates the entrepreneurial mindset and builds startup skills in youth from under-resourced communities to ensure their success and to create a more vibrant society. The team at NFTE South has done a fantastic job this year in delivering the transformative power of entrepreneurship to over 5800 students across the region!

Today, we are proud to showcase the top five NFTE South teams and celebrate all our NFTE students across Texas. The teams that will be presenting have been selected from 130 teams across 32 schools, and we will represent our region in the National Competition being held in New York City. To have made it this far is a remarkable accomplishment, so we want to congratulate all presenting teams. Your clarity of vision, and your confidence in presenting your businesses, is a demonstration of your commitment to the bright future you are creating for yourselves. We are thrilled to be celebrating YOU today and we will be cheering you on as you continue to the National Competition.

To our guests, please get to know our students who are presenting today. Visit the Expo booths, strike up a conversation with our teachers and volunteers who bring this program to life. Find a NFTE staff member and ask how you can get involved as a volunteer, mentor, or judge. Please also consider donating to support the NFTE program. Join us as we help students realize that they can create their own futures, maximize their potential, and become whatever they choose for themselves.

We could not do what we do without the support of our NFTE community. Thank you to our NFTE teachers, administrators, volunteers, mentors, judges, and guest speakers. It is because of their generosity of time, energy, and expertise that our students continue to thrive in the NFTE curriculum. We would also like to express our thanks to the NFTE South Advisory Board, whose leadership and commitment to NFTE endure year after year.

Thank you for joining us today and thank you for believing in NFTE.

Your NFTE South Team,

Trish McKeel, Brian White, Jenn Lunt, and Cheyanne Ornelas
NFTE South Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge
Friday, May 10, 2024

Emcee
Zachary Moskowitz, Founder, E-Z Form
NFTE Class of 2023

Judges
Alberto Arroyo, TKicks, NFTE Class of 2022
Lincoln Cohoon, EY
Shawn Cross, Bank of America
John Steinmetz, Vista Bank
Pushkala Venkataraman, Fidelity Brokerage Technology

Student Finalists
Bra Physics - Brihana Herrera and Danamari Martinez
Reyes - Career Institute North
Detect-A-Ray - Abril Cardona - Nimitz High School
Peyton’s Pastries - Peyton Bernstein - Hillcrest High School
Style Selector - Lodias Martinet - Grand Prairie School for the Highly Gifted
UniDesign - Angel Alvarez - Price Career Institute South

Volunteer of the Year Awards
Trish McKeel, Regional Director, NFTE South

Special Guest
Meshell Baker
Founder & CEO, Meshell Baker Enterprises, LLC

Winner Announcements and Closing
Dr. J. D. LaRock, President & CEO, NFTE
Whose tomorrow will you change today?

We are committed to helping underserved students develop the entrepreneurial mindsets and skills needed to thrive in the working world of tomorrow.

Learn more at ey.com/us/cr
Zachary Moskowitz  
NFTE Class of 2023  
Founder, E-Z Form and Chef Z’s Café

Doctor’s offices request a lot of forms. Often, it’s the same form, or asks for the same information. Watching his parents fill out form after form, Zachary Moskowitz knew there had to be a way to save time and make doctor appointments quicker and easier. He created E-Z Form, a form-filling software and app that revolutionizes the way patients/clients make appointments. Information is stored securely in the app, and can be transferred from form to form, allowing patients to edit only the data that may have changed since their last visit. No stranger to entrepreneurship; this is Zachary’s fourth endeavor, and he currently sells and ships desserts as “Chef Z’s Café.” He plans to study criminal justice after college and pursue a career in federal law enforcement.

Zachary was a participant in the 2023 South Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge and went on to represent the region at the National Challenge last October.

Youth Business Expo  
featuring students from the Grand Prairie School for the Highly Gifted

Food Secure – John Gaines and Nathan Gagakuma
S(h)e Defense – Paisley Lansdown
Biralux – Oluwafunmilayo Johnson
We-Cycle – Bronson Cook and Kyson Yi
GLOW – Andrea Delgado and Elissa Rose England
HomeGarden – Rafi Razzaqi
Lace Up – Dahlia Nguyen, Zane DeFoggy and Zachary Gandy
Finalist Businesses

**Bra Physics** Brihana Herrera & Danamari Martinez Reyes - Career Institute North  
Our mission is to create a business where teens and women will experience what it feels like to be pampered, have no worries about being uncomfortable, feel better mentally and confident through being empowered by finding their ideal bra size.

**Detect-A-Ray**  
Abril Cardona - Nimitz High School  
Detect-a-ray’s mission is to detect, secure, and protect school environments by bringing back ease to parents and school administrators by ensuring no more schools become the next victim of a school shooting, by ensuring no guns are being unchecked and that no more lives are being lost due to lack of better school security.

**Peyton’s Pastries** - Peyton Bernstein - Hillcrest High School  
Peyton’s Pastries strives to provide customers with the best quality pastries for the best prices and to do the most for not only the community, but for the environment. Peyton’s Pastries offers a variety of baked goods like cookies, cakes, and cupcakes.

**Style Selector** - Lodias Martinet - Grand Prairie School for the Highly Gifted  
The Style Selector App is a service with the main purpose of generating outfits for those who don’t know what to wear. It utilizes the components of Tiny-DB, Images, a Camera, and Buttons on MIT App Inventor 2.

**UniDesign** - Angel Alvarez - Price Career Institute South  
At UniDesign, we are fueled by the passion for creativity and the drive to make premium branding accessible to all. We specialize in crafting high-caliber, attention-grabbing designs that empower businesses to stand out in today’s competitive market. We create affordable, yet premium-quality designs for various needs, including thumbnails, logos, and beyond.
Alberto Arroyo
SVP, Retail Risk Management and Market Operations Director
NFTE Class of 2022

Alberto Arroyo was the winner of NFTE South’s 2022 Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge and competed in the 2022 National Challenge in New York City. He was also the recipient of the EY Young Entrepreneur Of the Year® scholarship for the South Region in 2022. Alberto is the Founder of TKicks, an online sneaker marketplace that lets sneaker-heads buy, sell, and trade sneakers from the palm of their hand. Alberto is a 2024 high school graduate who plans to attend college for business administration. He wishes to expand TKicks to the App Store and eventually open physical locations globally.

Lincoln Cohoon
Senior Manager
Indirect Tax Services - State and Local Tax
EY

Lincoln Cohoon is a senior manager in EY’s Dallas practice. In his nearly 15 years of experience he has served a wide variety of clients from new manufacturing clients to large international technology leaders and private equity backed real estate investment trusts. Lincoln is the leader of the Dallas income-franchise tax practice and is also extremely active with EY’s Entrepreneur of the Year (EOY) Program in Dallas. The EOY Program recognizes achievements and contributions of the best high-growth entrepreneurs in the world.

Lincoln is a licensed attorney in Massachusetts, Michigan, and Texas. He earned his JD/MBA at Suffolk University and his undergraduate degree from Roger Williams University. He regularly speaks and teaches at internal and industry events on developments in state and local taxes.
Shawn Cross
Small Business Community Banking & Lending Production Manager
*Bank of America*

Shawn Cross is a Small Business Community Banking & Lending Production Manager and has been with Bank of America for 12 years. Shawn has been in the financial industry for 28 years where she has held several different roles.

A graduate of University of Alabama, Shawn has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Marketing and an MBA in Finance from University of Alabama Birmingham. Shawn is a past recipient of the YMCA Black Achievers Award. She has served on the board of Collin County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce as Secretary. She has been a member of the African American Leadership Program, Dallas Black Chamber of Commerce, Dallas Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and Frisco Chamber of Commerce. Shawn was featured in Eclipse Magazine where she was asked to share views on Customer Service.

Shawn currently resides in Frisco Texas and is actively involved in the community.
John Steinmetz  
President & CEO  
Vista Bank  
Vice-Chairman  
Vista Bancshares

Named Vice-Chairman of the holding company Vista Bancshares in 2018, John D. Steinmetz is laser-focused on continually increasing shareholder value.

Serving as the President & Chief Executive Officer of Vista Bank, he oversees all commercial and retail functions. The 112-year-old company was focused primarily on agricultural lending when Steinmetz took the helm. Leading the charge on a rebrand to encourage urban market expansion with small business and middle-market companies, he grew the Bank’s capital and influence, raising $40mm and expanding the footprint into the Dallas, Fort Worth, Austin and Palm Beach, Florida markets.

Since taking the helm, Steinmetz has ensured responsible, disciplined organic growth surpassing 700% in the last decade, breaking the top 100 Banks in Texas by asset size list in 2018. In the wake of the global pandemic, Steinmetz made certain the Bank was on the front lines of the CARES Act, participating in an exclusive community bank DC roundtable with U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and rising to Mark Cuban’s challenge helping minority-owned businesses better access the Paycheck Protection Program.

A proud graduate of the Texas Tech University Rawls College of Business, Steinmetz was appointed to the Texas Tech University System Board of Regents in 2011 and 2017. Chairman of the Finance and Audit Committee of the two-billion-dollar university for two terms, Steinmetz fought to keep higher education attainable while serving the students of his alma mater.


He is a past member of the Dallas Citizens Council’s Board of Directors and Dallas Museum of Art’s Finance Committee, member of the Young Professionals Organization (YPO) Dallas and Aspen chapters, and serves on the Cotton Bowl Board of Directors.
Pushkala Venkataraman
Product Area Lead
Fidelity Brokerage Technology

Pushkala Venkataraman has more than 22 years of experience in the software technology industry with more than 18 years directly working in the financial domain. She has played various roles from Marketing executive to product analyst to software engineering and development, delivery lead and technology leadership. Pushkala currently plays the role of a Product Area Lead for Fidelity Brokerage Technology based out of Westlake, TX.

Pushkala has a master’s degree in information systems and has a published paper on Decision Support Systems. She has worked with Telcordia Technologies (NJ) and Goldman Sachs (NY) in software development and technology leadership roles.

At Fidelity, Pushkala’s core responsibilities include modernizing the Brokerage Platform. She has also played the role of National Lead for Women in Technology Special Interest group, and she is part of the Westlake Regional Leadership team for Fidelity.

Pushkala enjoys working in teams, collaborating and driving delivery and product strategy. She thrives in an atmosphere of good vibes and strong relationships, and strives to achieve that atmosphere wherever she works. In her spare time she enjoys creative writing, community service, playing the violin, and is a voracious reader. She lives with her husband and teen son.
Meshell Baker, the *Chief Confidence Igniter*, possesses a unique and powerful ability to guide and encourage her audiences and clients to unleash their full potential and become their most authentic selves. Described as “a breath of fresh air,” Meshell’s passion and enthusiasm, combined with the power of her own story, leave a lasting impact on all who have the privilege of hearing her speak.

Her presentations have inspired countless individuals, teams, and organizations to reimagine their capacity for excellence and embrace radical responsibility, leading to high-performance resilience and unstoppable confidence. Meshell has phenomenal results and an incredible track record of raving recommendations from esteemed clients such as UPS, Wabtec, Dell, Dorman Products, Microsoft, Salesforce, Johnson & Johnson, Accenture, Women In Automotive, and Women In Trucking, spanning over 25+ years, testify to her remarkable impact.

Meshell Baker’s credentials and accolades are equally impressive as an Award-winning international keynote speaker and her leadership roles with organizations like the International Association of Women, eWomen Network, the National Association of Sales Professionals, and Women SalesPros demonstrate Meshell’s commitment to excellence. With an MBA in Organizational Leadership from Long Island University and a BBA in Finance from Howard University, Meshell is a member of the NFTE South Advisory Board.

She brings knowledge, experience, and expertise to every engagement.
NFTE South Advisory Board

Lisette Mendez, (Chair) AT&T Finance

Meshell Baker, Meshell Baker Enterprises, LLC

Lincoln Cohoon, EY

Michael Dominguez, Associated Luxury Hotels International

Judy Jandera, CFGI

Bill Kling, Benova RX

Evelyn Solorzano, Bank of America

James Walsh, Goldman Sachs
We are immensely grateful to all of our volunteers. This year, we are especially proud to celebrate our Individual Volunteer of the Year, Evelyn Solorzano of Bank of America.

Evelyn has been a staple volunteer in the NFTE South region the past 3 years. She is always willing and eager to serve as a mentor, jump in to judge a competition, or just show up in support of the region at NFTE events. She has acted as a conduit to other volunteers and is always the first to raise her hand to do the work of adding great value to our programs. Evelyn shares her own personal story with our young entrepreneurs, telling them about facing the challenges that life put in her way as a young person, and how she approached and overcame each of them. She is an inspiration to us all, and as a fiercely energetic and loyal supporter of all that NFTE does, we are honored to recognize her today.

We are also proud to honor our Corporate Volunteer of the Year, UWorld.

UWorld and their supportive programs have added great value to NFTE South this past year. Not only have they been a source of volunteers and connections for our staff, students, and teachers, but they have also offered services in the form of free test prep for our NFTE South students. UWorld staff have attended our online Professional Development sessions for teachers, and offered assistance to the teachers as well as connecting them to various tools UWorld offers. We are proud to be able to honor UWorld for their commitment to NFTE’s youth.

JOIN OUR VOLUNTEER COMMUNITY! CLICK HERE TO REGISTER
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Thanks to the commitment of NFTE’s national donors, an increasing number of young people are prepared with the entrepreneurial mindset and startup skills required to succeed in today’s innovation economy.

Entrepreneurial Leaders ($1,000,000+)

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Learn more about NFTE

Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE) ignites the entrepreneurial mindset with unique learning experiences that empower students to own their futures. A global nonprofit founded in 1987, NFTE provides high-quality entrepreneurship education to middle school, high school, and postsecondary students.

NFTE brings the power of entrepreneurship to students, regardless of family income, community resources, special needs, gender identity, race, or ethnicity. NFTE has educated more than a million students, delivering our programs in school, out of school, in-person, online, or through hybrid models. To learn more, visit www.nfte.com.
For more information about NFTE, please visit www.nfte.com.