



nfte!

Capital Region

YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP CHALLENGE 2024



**WEDNESDAY,
12 JUNE**



**06:00 PM -
08:30 PM**



**American University | Veloric
Center for Entrepreneurship
3501 Nebraska Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20016**

Presented by



**VELORIC CENTER *for*
ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY • WASHINGTON, DC

Welcome

Dear NFTE Family,

Welcome to the NFTE Capital Region Finals, part of our Youth Business Competition series. NFTE aims to ignite the entrepreneurial mindset with unique learning experiences that empower students to own their futures. Through all our courses, students work to put together their very first business plan. We offer our congratulations to our four student finalists who made it through to the finals and will compete tonight.

Beyond teaching practical business skills, NFTE ignites a passion for learning and re-engages students in school, preparing them for college, career, and the future of work. We enable students to own their futures by teaching them to think and act like entrepreneurs. The impact of a student's NFTE experience can last a lifetime. This evening, you'll have the opportunity to meet some of our talented local alumni who all credit NFTE as being the start of their success story.

This event also celebrates our many partners, from teachers and sponsors to volunteers and advisory board members, who help bring our programs to life. Thank you to each and every one of you who contributed to our programs this year. Your contribution helped us bring our programs to more schools across the region where we served over 2,600 students this year.

We encourage you to join us in our movement to build a diverse pipeline of young business leaders by volunteering or donating to our programs. Your time and donation can make a world of difference in the lives of one of our students. Now, sit back and enjoy the show!

Warm regards,

Meg Stewart, Executive Director
Jashae Johnson, Program Manager

NFTE Capital

Agenda

NFTE Capital Region Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge

Wednesday, June 12, 2024

hosted by:  **VELORIC CENTER for ENTREPRENEURSHIP**
AMERICAN UNIVERSITY • WASHINGTON, DC

Emcee	Rommie Hooper, Compel Comics , <i>NFTE Class of 2023</i>
Judges	Jan Baker, The Innovashion Group , <i>NFTE Class of 2000</i> Anthony Calderazzi, EY , <i>NFTE Capital Advisory Board</i> Andrew J. Sherman, Brown Rudnick LLP Danielle Vogel, American University Tim Wells, Wills Companies
Student Finalists	Story Crafters - Atman Patel - Francis Scott Key Elementary/ Middle School Table Top Pizza - Noah Blackston - Oxon Hill High School Earbud Buddy - Johns Williams - Francis Scott Key Elementary/ Middle School Tactful Tutors - Keith Harris - KIPP DC College Prep. School
Volunteer Awards	Meg Stewart, Executive Director, NFTE Capital <i>presented to:</i> Stephen Canaras, EY Citibank , <i>accepted by Lorraine Carrasco</i>
Teacher Awards	Jashae Johnson, Program Manager, NFTE Capital <i>presented to:</i> Deneen Moore McDonald Andrew Woodson
Keynote Address	Bryan Myers, President & CEO, [solidcore]
Winner Announcements and Closing	Dr. J. D. LaRock, President & CEO, NFTE

Whose tomorrow
will you change
today?

Proud to do our part to help bright
minds achieve bright futures.

NFTE is dedicated to empowering students
and giving them a chance at a brighter future.

An idea we can all get behind.

At the Citi Foundation, we commend NFTE on their efforts
and are pleased to support their invaluable work.

Citi Foundation



Master of Ceremonies

Rommie Hooper

Compel Comics

NFTE Class of 2023



Rommie Hooper attributes much of his personal success to comic books, and appreciates how they can connect him to people of different cultures and backgrounds. He founded Compel Comics, a publishing entity focused on character development in an ever-evolving world, with a goal of audience inclusion and relatable real-world adversities. Kids deal with gang activity, addiction, and poverty, and Compel Comics tackles these issues and more, to help empower them and give them a leg up on the systems influencing their lives.

Rommie was selected to travel to Cambodia for a month last summer with a group of other volunteers who then created and presented workshops for Cambodian children to learn English and about the environment. While they were also learning about the culture and history of Cambodia, he and the other volunteers took advantage of opportunity to travel to other cities and explore on the weekends. Since competing in the NFTE National Challenge in October 2023, Rommie has been developing his YouTube channel as well as his videography skills. After high school, he plans to focus on his business and continue building his visual skills.



Capital Region 2023 Challenge competitors (c) Exposurely Photography

Judges

Jan Baker

Founder

The Innovashion Group

Jan Baker is a speaker, entrepreneur and champion of business, tech, social innovation/impact and design. She is the founder of the Innovashion group, a consulting and design firm that puts cultural elements first in reaching customers through positive, emotional physical and digital/immersive experiences and services.



She is also the COO of Cybernetics Global, a technology firm focused on building next level solutions in software development, artificial intelligence, managed IT services and tech community development.

Born in The Bronx, NY, with proud Jamaican heritage, Jan is passionate about bridging the digital divide by leveling up minority businesses thus putting them on the path to success. She strategically advises entrepreneurs/ventures helping them navigate the harrowing process of capital readiness. Jan is a NFTE alum, having participated in the program in the year 2000 at Harry S. Truman High School in the Bronx and became a Certified Entrepreneurship NFTE Teacher with Babson College in 2004. She also won first place at the business plan competition during her NFTE program.

A true techie at heart, Jan was honored by Technical.ly's ReaLIST 2022, as one of the "Who's Who" that build bridges and grow the innovation economy for entrepreneurship and tech in the Washington, DC area. She is also a Tenant's Association President in NorthEast DC and in 2023, she was appointed by the Mayor of Washington, DC as a Commissioner for Caribbean Affairs representing Ward 6.

Jan received her Bachelor's Degree in Business Management from Marymount Manhattan College and a Dual MBA/Master in Technology Management from The University of Maryland.

Anthony Calderazzi

Assurance Partner

EY

Anthony is an audit partner at Ernst & Young LLP with over 25 years of experience serving high-growth companies primarily in the technology, software, media & entertainment, telecommunications and services industries. Previously, he led the firm's Northeast Technology Assurance practice and the Growth Markets practice in Greater Washington.



Anthony has advised numerous companies through the growth cycle from start-up to market-leading businesses. He has deep experience assisting companies through transformational change including significant acquisitions, international expansion and exit transactions to public and private markets. Through his years of client service and two years spent at the Securities and Exchange Commission, he has extensive experience with public reporting requirements and the initial public offering process.

For the past two years, Anthony has served as the Co-Program Director of EY's Entrepreneur of the Year program for the Mid-Atlantic region. Through this role, he has had the privilege of meeting the region's most ambitious and visionary leaders and celebrating the dynamic and successful businesses they have created. He is also a member of the NFTE Capital Region Advisory Board.

Anthony, his wife Kathrine, their four daughters and mini labradoodle reside in Ashburn, Virginia.

Judges, *continued*

Andrew J. Sherman

**Partner and Co-Chair, Venture Capital and
Emerging Growth Practice**

Brown Rudnick LLP



In addition to his work at Brown Rudnick, Andrew Sherman is the author of 26 books on business growth, capital formation and the leveraging of intellectual property, including his twenty-second book, *Harvesting Intangible Assets, Uncover Hidden Revenue in Your Company's Intellectual Property*, (Harper Collins) which was published in October of 2011. His latest book is *The Crisis of Disengagement* was published early 2017. His twenty-third book *Essays on Governance*, was published June of 2012 and in 2013, he was named by NACD as one of the Top 100 Leaders in Governance. In 2014, he was included in the global IAM 300, recognizing the world's leaders in managing intangible assets.

He has appeared as a guest and a commentator on all of the major television networks as well as CNBC's "Power Lunch," CNN's "Day Watch," CNNfn's "For Entrepreneurs Only," USA Network's "First Business," and Bloomberg's "Small Business Weekly." He has appeared on numerous regional and local television broadcasts as well as national and local radio interviews for National Public Radio (NPR), Business News Network (BNN), Bloomberg Radio, AP Radio Network, Voice of America, Talk America Radio Network and the USA Radio Network, as a resource on capital formation, entrepreneurship and technology development.

He has served as a top-rated Adjunct Professor in the Masters of Business Administration (MBA) programs at the University of Maryland for 31 years and at Georgetown University for 20 years in both the business school and the law school where he teaches courses on business growth strategy.

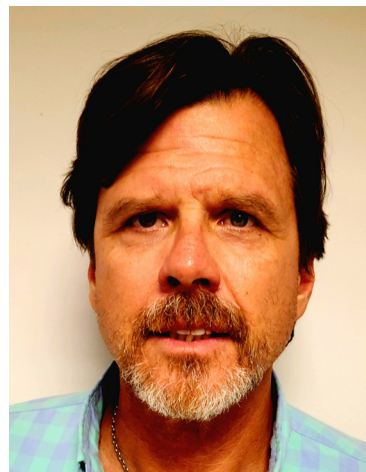
He has served as General Counsel to the Entrepreneurs' Organization (EO) since 1987. In 2003, *Fortune* magazine named him one of the Top Ten Minds in Entrepreneurship and in February of 2006, *Inc.* magazine named him one of the all-time champions and supporters of entrepreneurship and business growth.

Tim Wills

Principal

Wills Companies

Timothy B. Wills (“Tim”) is a third generation real estate executive with over 35 years of experience. He has handled the acquisition, financing, development, and tax planning activities for Wills Companies, and associated joint ventures, since 1992. Over the course of his career, they have been a key principal in the closing of real estate transactions well in excess of \$1 billion.



Wills Companies is a multi-faceted real estate development firm based in the Washington, D.C. area, and was named the #1 Fastest Growing Company in that area by *The Washington Business Journal* in 2005, and #2 in 2006. Having evolved through the years, Wills Companies has expanded nationally, reaching from Maine to the Florida Keys and as far west as Texas.

Tim has invested in many start-up businesses either directly or through private equity firms and funds. The Wills companies were early investors in Sweet Green, Squatty Potty, Hippeas, Flex, Zentility as well as other companies.

Judges, *continued*

Danielle Vogel

Assistant Director, Veloric Center for
Entrepreneurship
American University



Danielle Vogel joined American University's Management Department faculty in 2022. Her classes focus on the intersection between entrepreneurship and sustainability. She also serves as the Assistant Director of the Veloric Center for Entrepreneurship, where she helps run the AU Business Incubator.

Prior to joining the American University faculty, she founded and operated a climate change motivated grocery store called Glen's Garden Market in Dupont Circle. Glen's was beloved locally and recognized nationally as a leader in sustainability and innovation. She sold the business in 2021.



2023 Challenge speakers and judges (c) Exposure Photography

Keynote Speaker

Bryan Myers **President & CEO** **[solidcore]**

Bryan is the President & Chief Executive Officer for [solidcore] and is an active [solidcore] Coach. In his role as CEO, Bryan is responsible for all aspects of delivering business performance, including [solidcore]'s national footprint growth and building a strong, inclusive community of clients and employees.



Prior to joining the [solidcore] team in 2018, Bryan was a member of the leadership team of sweetgreen, the national leader in the healthy fast casual category. He joined sweetgreen in 2014 and, over the course of 4 years, wore many hats as he helped the company grow from a regional chain of 20 restaurants to almost 100 locations nationally. Bryan began his career as a consultant for The Boston Consulting Group, providing strategic advice on topics of growth, organizational design, and operational transformation.

When Bryan isn't sweating it out on [sweatlana], you can find him immersed in the performing arts and attending shows at the many, amazing performance venues in the DC area. Bryan is also passionate about finding ways to give back to the community and serves in several advisory and mentorship capacities – with a particular focus on traditionally marginalized communities.

In 2023, Bryan was recognized as an EY Entrepreneur of the Year Mid-Atlantic Award Winner. He has also been nominated for and won several awards from the Washington Business Journal, including the Growth Award as a part of its CEO of the Year celebration in 2023. Bryan has also been featured as a speaker at national events, on podcasts, on television, and was featured in the March 2023 issue of Essence Magazine.



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*We are pleased to support
NFTE's efforts to help activate
entrepreneurial mindsets
through volunteerism. We are
proud of our employee
volunteers who contribute
their time and skills to
advance NFTE's impact.*



Community
Impact

Finalist Businesses

Story Crafters - Atman Patel - Francis Scott Key Elementary/Middle School
Story Crafters makes digital custom books about the customer. Our books come in three different options and are 5 chapters long. Each chapter is around 1,000 words, meaning our books are 5,000 words long. My books also come in audiobook form. Our books are very special because there is a custom song all about you at the end. Our books use a bit of AI to ensure that there are no spelling errors. We aim to ignite a love of reading in all children!

Table Top Pizza - Noah Blackston - Oxon Hill High School
Table Top Pizza offers a unique, interactive, and memorable dining experience where customers can customize their own pizzas according to their preferences. Customers may choose their crust, sauce, and toppings, allowing them to create personalized culinary masterpieces. The pizzas are made using high-quality ingredients and baked to perfection in a brick oven, ensuring a delicious and flavorful dining experience. Additionally, Table Top Pizza caters to various dietary preferences, making it inclusive for all customers.

Earbud Buddy - Johns Williams - Francis Scott Key Elementary/Middle School
Earbud Buddy is a tool made to extract earwax out of earbuds. Earbud Buddy will make earbuds cleaner, last longer, and make it so it can't harm your ears. As a bonus, Earbud Buddy is easy to use, portable, reusable, and very effective. Earbud Buddy prevents people from cleaning earbuds with tissues or their shirts. Earbud Buddy wants its buyers to save themselves from pain in their ears and potential medical bills.

Tactful Tutors - Keith Harris - KIPP DC College Preparatory School
Tactful Tutors wishes to empower students to unlock their full potential by providing the tools and knowledge to foster and develop confidence, critical thinking, and academic excellence. Tutors/members both take detailed personality tests to guarantee the best match for them. Our wide variety of professionals give our members the chance to learn about any topic of their choice in the style that best works for them.

Volunteers of the Year

We are immensely grateful to all of our volunteers. This year, we are especially proud to celebrate our **Individual Volunteer of the Year, Stephen Canaras** of EY.

Steve has been a dedicated member of the NFTE Capital Advisory Board for 4 years. During the time he has helped to build volunteerism in the Baltimore area. He leads our partnership with the EY Baltimore office and has worked to support innovation days and coaching events throughout the region. We thank you, Steve, for your commitment and dedication to the promise of entrepreneurship education!



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



Citi has been a dedicated partner to the NFTE Capital Region. Citi staff members have volunteered to support coaching days and served as judges for both our quarter and semi-final rounds in our regional student business competition. Citi volunteers foster a culture of mentorship and support, enriching the NFTE community and nurturing the entrepreneurial spirit among its participants. We are proud to celebrate Citi and thank Lorraine Carrasco for accepting the award!

[JOIN OUR VOLUNTEER COMMUNITY! CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

NFTE Capital Region Advisory Board

Matt Aaron, CFP, LUX Wealth Planning

Anthony Calderazzi, EY

Stephen Canaras, EY

Keith James, Coalition Properties Group

Thank You Challenge Sponsors

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NFTE National Supporters

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+)



Citi Foundation



Equity Investors (\$500,000+)



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.



Network for Teaching
Entrepreneurship

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@NFTE

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please visit www.nfte.com.

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