



nfte!

Network for Teaching
Entrepreneurship

2026

FOUNDERS FORUM PITCH COMPETITION



Presented by





Emcee



Indiraliz Gracia Camacho

HR Professional
NFTE Class of 2020

Indiraliz Gracia Camacho is a proud NFTE alumna whose entrepreneurial journey began in the NFTE classroom and has continued to shape her personal and professional path.

A member of the NFTE Class of 2020 and the 2022–23 Founders Forum Cohort, she co-founded Sana Vita, a venture focused on bringing fresh, eco friendly greens to food insecure communities while empowering families to grow their own produce. Her work with Sana Vita took her to the global stage at YouthStart in Kitzbühel, Austria—an experience she describes as transformative and perspective shifting.

Today, Indiraliz brings that same entrepreneurial mindset to her role as an HR Professional supporting 12 small businesses. She is also a 2022 NFTE Southeast Fellow, proudly part of the “Why Tribe,” continually driven by purpose, community impact, and the belief that once you enter an NFTE classroom, you never truly leave.

Agenda

NFTE Founders Forum Pitch Competition March 9, 2026

- NFTE Welcome** Arnie Abram, Sr. Manager, Postsecondary Programs
Dr. J.D. LaRock, President & CEO
- Emcee** Indiraliz Gracia Camacho
NFTE Class of 2020
- Finalists** Amylah Charles, Curly Crownz
Herman Remy, Walker Industries
Inesh Tickoo, Oper.AI
- Judge Panel** Jevon Howell
ShopHowell
NFTE Class of 2012

Logan Jones
ticker

Jaxson Love
PayPal

Dr. J. Alexander Martin
For Us By Us Network

Danielle Ullner
Ernst & Young, LLP (EY US)
- Guest Speaker** Vanessa Matthew
Founder
Messaging Oracle™

Winner Announcement & Thanks

2025-26 Founders Cohort

Finalist Founders

Mohammad AbuZetun



Solonia Allen, Almndmlk



Amylah Charles, CurlyCrownz



Taisya Ivanchikova, FestBelts



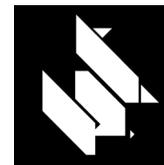
Cameron Marshall, Street Cents



Demi McKinley, OhMyEczema



Herman Remy, Walker Industries



Inesh Tickoo, Opef.AI



Arlina Yang, CareerNow



Amylah Charles

Curly Crownz Hair Care

Amylah Charles is a fourth-year Broadcasting Electronic Communication Arts major at San Francisco State University. She launched Curly Crownz at 16 to empower Black and Latinx communities to embrace the full diversity of their natural hair. A driven entrepreneur, Amylah is focused on expanding Curly Crownz through pop-up experiences, stronger product consistency, and renewed retail partnerships. Through the Founders Forum Program, she hopes to gain mentorship, industry connections, and the tools to scale her brand.



Herman Remy

Walker Industries

Herman Remy, NFTE class of 2022, is the founder of Walker Industries and a software development student at Charter Oak College. He will soon pursue a Master's in Media Design at Future University Hakodate. A lifelong technologist, Herman treats development as second nature and is driven by a belief that rapid advancements can create a more humane world. Through Walker Industries, he focuses on immersive computing, secure systems, and next-generation XR platforms, aiming to turn experimental ideas into real-world solutions.



Inesh Tickoo

Opef.AI

Inesh Tickoo is a senior at Ohio Wesleyan University pursuing a B.A. in Computer Science and Business with a minor in Psychology. He builds AI-powered and data-driven products at the intersection of climate, compliance, and human-centered design—ranging from environmental permitting tools to music-tech and cognitive research prototypes. Inesh has experience across product, UX, analytics, and engineering, and focuses on creating systems that make complex work clearer, faster, and more actionable.



Panel of Judges



Jevon Howell
Founder and CEO,
ShopHowell

As ShopHowell's Founder and CEO, Jevon is the architect and most prominent supporter of the company's mission to "make e-commerce easy" and helping businesses succeed online.

Since their pivot to offering services, ShopHowell has been pleased to see that 100% of their client base and referrals have been to minority-owned brands and companies, with a whopping 94% being black women-owned brands and businesses. These businesses represent various industries, including Hospitality, HealthCare, Grocery & Gourmet Food, Books, Kids Supplies, Clothing, Non-Profit, and more.

As a result, Jevon and his team have sought to be intentional, tailoring their services to empower the unique needs of minority-owned businesses. For us, "making e-commerce easy for small minority-owned brands" has meant tackling two fundamental limitations: lack of funding and experience.

Jevon is a proud alumnus of the NFTE class of 2012, and was a member of the Founders Forum cohort in 2021-2022.



Jevon displays his business at NFTE's 2022 Entrepreneurial Spirit Awards Gala, (c) Margaret Fox Photography



Logan Jones
Founder,
ticker

Logan Jones is the Founder and CEO of ticker, a social investing platform helping the next generation turn hesitation into confident participation in the stock market. A barred attorney and former Chief of Staff at an acquired legal AI startup, she combines regulatory insight with startup execution experience. As a first-generation investor, Logan built ticker to replace hype and misinformation with verified investing behavior, personalized AI insights, and community-driven learning.



Jaxon Love
Director, Social Impact &
Sustainability, PayPal

Jaxon is responsible for PayPal's enterprise-wide environmental sustainability strategy, including climate risk management, environmental impact measurement and management, and sustainability partnerships. Jaxon is also responsible for PayPal's social impact and sustainability operations. He chairs PayPal's environmental working group, a cross-functional team tasked with developing programs, setting goals, measuring performance, engaging employees, and advancing sustainable fintech innovation.

Jaxon joined the company in 2018. Prior to PayPal, he spent seven years building the sustainability program at Shorenstein Properties, a commercial real estate owner and operator based in San Francisco, CA, where he oversaw a 20% reduction in energy use across the company's 20+ million square foot property portfolio. Prior to that, he worked in international education and development in France and Jordan. Jaxon holds BA degrees in International Relations and French as well as an MBA from the University of Oregon. He is a LEED Accredited Professional.

Panel of Judges, continued



J. Alexander Martin

Founder
For Us By Us Network

J. Alexander Martin, a Hollis, Queens native, discovered his passion for fashion early in life and pursued it with entrepreneurial focus.

After serving in the U.S. Navy during Desert Storm, he attended the Fashion Institute of Technology and went on to co-found FUBU (“For Us By Us”), the globally recognized urban fashion brand. As co-founder and Vice President, he helped shape FUBU into an influential force at the intersection of fashion, music, and urban culture, contributing to more than \$6 billion in sales over the brand’s lifetime.

Martin also founded a nonprofit organization and a consulting firm, and is known for his ability to anticipate fashion trends and drive cultural relevance. His work has earned support from major artists such as LL Cool J, Mary J. Blige, and TLC, and he continues to expand into new apparel categories and lifestyle ventures. He currently serves as President of the New York State Black Chamber of Commerce, promoting economic development and social responsibility.

Most recently, Martin co-founded the For Us By Us Network, a digital streaming platform focused on culturally driven content rooted in hip-hop lifestyle and designed for African American audiences.

An honorary member of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, he has received multiple honors, including Ernst & Young’s Entrepreneur of the Year (2003), Crain’s 40 Under 40 (2002), the Essence Achievement Award (2004), and the Fashion Icon of the Year Award (2016). Martin is also the author of two books: Money Makes Me Crazy and Building an Empire: Your Portable Business Consultant.



Danielle Ullner

Partner,
Ernst & Young, LLP

Danielle Ullner is a Partner at EY with 20+ years of experience leading business, product, and tech driven innovation across energy and industrials. She has a strong track record of building and scaling high growth businesses, including serving as COO and founding operator for multiple startups generating substantial revenue streams.

Danielle has deep expertise in product strategy, GTM design, digital transformation, and securing high impact partnerships with global technology leaders. She is recognized for orchestrating cross functional teams, shaping scalable operating models, and driving alignment across executive stakeholders—bringing a

venture builder mindset.

Danielle holds an MBA from Harvard Business School and a BS from Cornell University. She previously worked at BCG and Morgan Stanley. She and her husband have 2 teenage daughters and reside in Northern Virginia with their French bulldog.

Thank You to our Business Advisors & Speakers

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Ricardo Tafur, Citi
Navdeep Uppal, Fidelity
Vikrant Satish Vaidya, EY

Guest Speaker



Vanessa Matthew
Founder
Messaging Oracle™

Vanessa Matthew is a NFTE alumna, brand strategist, performance marketer, and founder of Messaging Oracle™, a platform designed to help marketing professionals and business leaders build strong brands more efficiently. Messaging Oracle™ combines artificial intelligence with proven brand strategy

methods to quickly create tools such as brand strategies, audience profiles, and brand voice guidelines—allowing businesses to save time, grow faster, and operate at a higher level.

With more than 20 years of professional experience, Vanessa has helped nonprofits raise over \$40 million and has contributed to global market research projects for more than 70 clients at Ketchum PR. Her client work has included well-known organizations such as Procter & Gamble, Mastercard, PepsiCo, Frito-Lay, Dr Pepper, IKEA, AAA, and Gillette.

Originally from Harlem, New York, Vanessa finished her NFTE program in 1998 and is a graduate of Federick Douglas Academy. She graduated summa cum laude with a master's degree in Integrated Marketing Communications from West Virginia University, where she also taught graduate courses in market research analytics and brand equity management. She earned her bachelor's degree in Political Science from Tufts University and holds additional certifications in brand strategy and media management.

Vanessa is passionate about helping professionals and organizations communicate more effectively, strengthen their brands, and achieve lasting success.

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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.

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