



**For Immediate Release**  
**\*\*Interviews Available\*\***

## 18 year old from Charleston, SC wins \$10,000 Grand Prize in nation's top student entrepreneur competition

Jasmine Adams and her business *Smudgies* tops NFTE National Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge presented by the Citi Foundation

New York, NY...Jasmine Adams from Charleston, SC won the 2017 NFTE National Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge on October 12, 2017 in New York City, presented by the Citi Foundation.

Jasmine, who participated in NFTE through a program partner, YEScarolina, was one of 41 regional NFTE competition winners from across the country to battle it out for the top prize of \$10,000 in startup capital. The two runners-up and other competitors shared additional prizes totaling \$25,000 to support their educational goals, career paths and businesses.

Jasmine won for her business plan for *Smudgies*, reusable fabric cloths that can remove makeup without the addition of water. "Starting the business required a lot of self-direction," said Jasmine. "Because most people didn't have much faith in the idea until I actually started making *Smudgies* and selling them." The goal of her business is "to revolutionize the makeup industry by turning makeup application and removal into a more convenient process."

Jasmine and *Smudgies* rose to the top of NFTE's National Challenge that started with over 17,000 NFTE students across the nation who created business plans with hundreds moving on to regional competitions. Last evening's top three young entrepreneurs demonstrated the entrepreneurial mindset as they presented and defended their business plans both in earlier rounds of competition during the day and again to a distinguished panel of judges while competing for funds to help grow their businesses and advance their education and careers.

"Today was such an inspiration to me. Each and every young entrepreneur who competed today – and every NFTE student – shows me that developing an entrepreneurial mindset has the power to set on a path to unlimited success." said Shawn Osborne, CEO of NFTE. "NFTE's goal is to activate the entrepreneurial mindset of the next generation and by doing that change individual lives for the better, improve communities and help create a strong economy. Today proved to me that this is possible. These young people are our future and we are in good hands."

NFTE's Entrepreneurship Pathway program prepares students in under-resourced communities for long-term academic and economic success in the 21st Century innovation economy, by activating their entrepreneurial mindset and teaching startup skills. NFTE students perform better in school, enroll in and complete higher education at increased rates, and outpace national averages in employment, business startup, and income.

"If you're looking for a glimpse into where the future of work is headed, look no further than the NFTE National Challenge," said Brandee McHale, President of the Citi Foundation. "These budding entrepreneurs—full of confidence, ingenuity, and talent—make up the next generation of business, civic,

and cultural leaders. That should excite anyone dedicated to investing today in the world we want to live in tomorrow. NFTE's impactful programming is helping young people build the networks and skills that employers are looking for—from problem-solving to communications to adaptability."

Judging the final round of the National Challenge were Paul Appelbaum, Co-Founder, GrubHub Seamless, Early Stage Investor and Advisor; Jason Feifer, Editor-in-Chief, *Entrepreneur Magazine*; Courtney Hall, Managing Director, Hillcrest Venture Partners; Angela Ivana, Founder, CosmoSafe and NFTE Class of 2006; John Froese, Head of Program and Partner Management, Citi FinTech. The Master of Ceremonies was Lauren Maillian, Speaker and Best-Selling Author.

Student photos, detailed biographies and information about their businesses are available on request for all the competitors. Last night's runners-up included:

- Clifton Jackson, 17, *CWC Pliers*, from Irving, TX.
- Nathanael Wheadon, 18, *Fudged UP!*, student at St. Charles Community College, from St. Peters, MO.

NFTE will be featured this Saturday, October 14, 2017 on **American Graduate Day**, a live public television broadcast and outreach event dedicated to engaging our country around the dropout crisis and *helping students graduate high school and look toward their next chapter: achieving career success*. Like last year, **American Graduate Day** will ask viewers to "Be a Mentor" and impact real change on a young person's life just like the 3,000 volunteers and mentors who worked with NFTE students last year.

## About NFTE (Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship)

NFTE's National Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge in New York City is presented by the Citi Foundation. The young competitors all won their NFTE Regional Youth Entrepreneurship Challenges that took place in cities across the country supported by the Citi Foundation as part of its *Pathways to Progress* global expansion to prepare urban youth for today's competitive job market. Thousands of students participate in this initiative led by the Citi Foundation designed to help young people become career-ready through first jobs, internships and leadership and entrepreneurship training.

NFTE (Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship) is an internationally recognized nonprofit that activates the entrepreneurial mindset in young people. Research shows that the entrepreneurial mindset—skills including innovation, self-reliance, comfort with risk, communication, and problem-solving—prepares young people for lifelong success. Equipped with the mindset, as well as with the business and academic skills that NFTE teaches, NFTE students are ready to thrive in the innovation economy no matter what path they choose. NFTE focuses its work on under-resourced communities, with programs in 19 locations in 9 countries.

For more information, please visit [nfte.com](http://nfte.com), like NFTE on Facebook at [Facebook.com/NFTE](https://www.facebook.com/NFTE), and follow NFTE on Twitter at [@NFTE](https://twitter.com/NFTE)

*Jasmine Adams participated in NFTE through a program partner, YEScarolina.*

## About YESCAROLINA

Youth Entrepreneurship South Carolina, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, is the leading organization in South Carolina dedicated to teaching youth the principles of entrepreneurship and free enterprise. Recognizing that South Carolina's future is dependent upon a vibrant entrepreneurial economy, YEScarolina is preparing today's youth to be tomorrow's business owners and business leaders. Since 2004 when it was founded by Jimmy Bailey, YEScarolina has helped thousands of young people from communities statewide build business skills and fuel their entrepreneurial spirit. To date, YEScarolina has trained and certified over 925 South Carolina teachers on the subject of entrepreneurship. These educators in turn have touched and inspired tens of thousands of young South Carolinians with a thirst for entrepreneurship. YEScarolina offers entrepreneurship training to public school teachers statewide without charge. YEScarolina is based in Charleston, SC. Learn more about YEScarolina on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/YEScarolina), [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/yescarolina/), and [yescarolina.com](http://yescarolina.com)

## **About Citi Foundation**

The Citi Foundation works to promote economic progress and improve the lives of people in low-income communities around the world. We invest in efforts that increase financial inclusion, catalyze job opportunities for youth, and reimagine approaches to building economically vibrant cities. The Citi Foundation's "More than Philanthropy" approach leverages the enormous expertise of Citi and its people to fulfill our mission and drive thought leadership and innovation. For more information, visit [www.citifoundation.com](http://www.citifoundation.com).

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