



**News Release**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**May 20, 2010**

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## **Students Recognized for Business Savvy in the Classroom**

*Youth Entrepreneurs Kansas awards nearly \$70,000 in  
scholarships and venture capital grants*

WICHITA, Kan. – Youth Entrepreneurs Kansas (YEK) recently awarded a total of \$69,700 to high school students across the state of Kansas. The scholarships and grants were given at YEK’s regional Dreams to Dividends Awards Ceremonies, which celebrate outstanding work in the YEK program.

YEK is a not-for-profit organization that offers a high school curriculum about entrepreneurship and market-based management principles.

“It is a thrill to honor these deserving students each year,” said YEK executive director Kylie Stupka. “Our donors afford us the opportunity to reward YEK students’ hard work. Their extreme generosity and the students’ dedication to their own futures should be commended.”

Scholarships ranging from \$500-\$3,000 were awarded to 80 YEK students. These scholarships, made available by individual and corporate donors, provide students with the opportunity to pursue higher education. An independent panel of judges reviewed scholarship applications. The prestigious Shelter Scholar, Sterling Varner Scholar and Newman Scholar awards went to:

- Robyn Davis, Wichita High School Northwest, Shelter Scholar - \$1,000
- Charles Beck, Newton High School, Sterling Varner Scholar - \$2,000
- Katherine Prieksat, Campus High School, Newman Scholar - \$3,000
- Kristen McCurdy, Newton High School, Newman Scholar - \$3,000

YEK students also participated in business plan competitions throughout the year. The students with the best plans at the classroom level advanced to the regional competition where winners were awarded \$1,000 venture capital grants to help them start their businesses. Winners also have the opportunity to participate at the National Business Plan Competition. Regional winners include:

- Tiffany Krause, Bishop Ward High School
- Kayla Claphan, Campus High School
- Emily Henning, Wichita High School Northwest

The Steward of the Year awards, went to Vornado, U Inc., and Rick LeJuerrne, for their strong support of YEK.

“Without supporters championing the YEK program, we could not be here today,” said Stupka. “This year’s Steward of the Year recipients have gone above and beyond to help YEK outside the classroom, and we are truly grateful for their generosity.”

Other awards presented at the ceremonies were Business Plan Advisor of the Year and Best Program Performance. These awards recognize the tremendous efforts of YEK volunteers and teachers. The regional recipients were:

Business Plan Advisor of the Year

- Tina Garris, Wichita High School East
- Paul Wemmer, Clearwater High School
- Joseph Rosenberger, Washington High School
- Joseph Tongish, Topeka High School

Best Program Performance

- Brandon Reith, Wichita High School East
- Cheryl Batchellor, Clearwater High School
- Ross Newell, Bishop Ward High School
- Murray Moore, Topeka High School

*For a full listing of all YEK award winners please see the accompanying scholarship list.*

**About Youth Entrepreneurs Kansas (YEK)**

Founded in 1991 by the Charles G. Koch Charitable Foundation, YEK teaches free enterprise fundamentals to high school students through hands-on experiences. The program gives students the skills and tools to start their own business or enhance their business knowledge for future career opportunities, and encourages them to continue into higher education. YEK is a public not-for-profit 501(c)(3) foundation. For more information on the program or how to volunteer or make a donation, please visit [www.yeks.org](http://www.yeks.org).