



## Young changemakers awarded \$15,000 each from Prudential Financial at inaugural Emerging Visionaries Summit

The five Grand Prize winners were among 25 young people honored this week by football legend Eli Manning and Prudential Chairman and CEO Charles Lowrey for their work addressing the challenges of a changing world.



Emerging Visionaries 2022 winners (left to right): Isaac Hertenstein, Rachel Holmes, Sahana Mantha, Faaris Zuberi and Ella Gupta.

**NEWARK, N.J., April 28, 2022** – For initiatives that range from promoting financial inclusion to advocating for economic equality, five young people were named Grand Prize winners by [Prudential Financial's Emerging Visionaries program](#) at a four-day summit held this week at Prudential's Newark headquarters.

The Emerging Visionaries program is conducted by [Prudential Financial](#) in partnership with the social entrepreneurship network Ashoka, with advisory support from the Financial Health Network. It honors young people between 14 and 18 years old across the United States for leading initiatives that produce fresh, innovative solutions to current financial and societal challenges.

“Supporting the efforts of these Emerging Visionaries is another way we are working to fulfill Prudential’s purpose: to make lives better by solving the financial challenges of our changing world,” said Prudential Chairman and CEO Charles Lowrey. “We’re honored to celebrate the initiative, creativity and empathy of these young leaders, and look forward to seeing all the great things they accomplish in the future.”

The 25 winners, named in February, each earned a \$5,000 prize and an all-expenses-paid trip to this week’s Emerging Visionaries Summit, plus a chance to win an additional \$10,000. The summit included an awards ceremony, where finalists were celebrated by special guests including philanthropist and two-time Super Bowl-winning quarterback Eli Manning. The students also consulted with Prudential senior leaders on topics of strategy and impact, and worked with Prudential employee coaches who helped them refine and advance their projects.

As part of the four-day event, five young people were selected to pitch their ideas for advancing financial equity to a panel of judges for a chance to win an additional \$10,000 in funding for their initiative. Pitch-off judges included Lowrey, leaders from Ashoka and the Financial Health Network, and two program alumni.

The panel was intended to select one Grand Prize finalist from the five who pitched their projects. However, after hearing the pitches, judges decided to award \$10,000 to each of the five presenters, in recognition of the societal impact of their initiatives.

In addition to the Grand Prize winners, Prudential employees voted on an Employees’ Choice Award winner, who received an additional \$5,000.

Read on to learn about the five Grand Prize winners and the Prudential Employees’ Choice Winner.

### **Grand Prize Winner: Ella Gupta, 17, of Raleigh, North Carolina**

Ella started the [Initiative for Financial Literacy Exploration](#) to address gender economic inequality by empowering young women to gain self-confidence and invest in themselves through financial education. By providing free workshops, lectures and resources, her initiative creates a safe space for young women to learn about money management.

Ella has worked as a consultant to more than 300 personal finance and leadership teams, helping them adapt their classrooms to better engage younger generations. Her book on personal finance and investing and its corresponding curriculum have been implemented in 120 schools, reaching more than 10,000 students. She is currently leading an online campaign to guarantee financial education for all high school students.

### **Grand Prize Winner: Isaac Hertenstein, 16, of Greencastle, Indiana**

Isaac founded [Students Teaching Finance](#), an initiative that empowers high school-aged changemakers to teach financial literacy to K-8 students and promote financial inclusion in his rural community. The program is modeled for students globally through its website and the initiative has an open-source curriculum, making it a collaborative creation. Isaac works to maintain and augment the inclusivity of the program’s resources by tailoring lessons to a range of developmental levels and backgrounds.

In 2020, Isaac started this initiative after witnessing the stark wealth gap impacting his community firsthand. “The financial discrepancies in my community sickened

me, and I pondered a potential solution,” he explained. To date, “Students Teaching Finance” has brought its lessons to more than 325 students with all participants reporting that they are now more motivated to invest and save.

**Grand : Rachel Holmes, 18, of San Jose, California**

Rachel started [Black Girls Mean Business](#), a career development and networking program for Black high school girls that fosters the skills and confidence needed to become successful in their careers — ultimately increasing their representation in the corporate world. “Since I want to be a businesswoman myself, I’ve become aware of the daunting lack of representation in the field,” she said.

The program includes virtual courses, hands-on learning, networking opportunities with professionals and university-led workshops. Participants reported that they overwhelmingly enjoyed the program and felt better prepared to take on a business career. Rachel wants to expand the program’s reach and offerings, providing year-round programming and opportunities such as college tours and internships.

**Grand Prize Winner: Sahana Mantha, 15, of Charlotte, North Carolina**

Sahana co-founded [Foundation for Girls](#), which empowers mothers experiencing homelessness, connecting them with long-term coaches who accompany them on their journey to financial health and economic security. Working alongside her sister, Sahana focuses the project on supporting women to be financially savvy, career confident, digitally capable and socially connected.

“I began my journey by understanding the issues in my community to learn about the root causes of issues impacting women and children,” she said. Over the past six years, “Foundation for Girls” has reached more than 2,500 single mothers and their children experiencing homelessness in nine states through group workshops, coaching and care packs.

**Grand Prize Winner: Faaris Zuberi, 17, of Rockville, Maryland**

Faaris is a leader of [Financial Literacy Introduction Program](#), which offers financial literacy to student members of the Youth Economic Initiative — the largest coalition of economics clubs worldwide — to help young people prepare for the real world. Faaris was surprised to learn that many adults lack financial skills, and in response, he co-designed the initiative’s peer-to-peer program to distribute financial literacy content to youth on a national scale.

The initiative works with students in grades seven to 12 and covers important topics like budgeting, loans, credit, taxes, investing and retirement. The program has hosted over 30 training sessions and distributed its curriculum to more than 70 clubs.

**Employees’ Choice Winner: Naomi Porter, 17, of Rancho Palos Verdes, California**

Naomi founded [EntrepreYOUership](#) to make entrepreneurial education more accessible, equipping the next generation of innovators with skills and startup funds to launch their own businesses. Founded on the idea that “you can do it too,” the program includes free workshops, funding opportunities, mentorship and individualized coaching.

Participants learn everything from managing cash flow to interpreting financial data and writing a business plan. “Very little of what I learn during school hours prepares me for these real-life business challenges, which is why I launched this project to provide resources and support for youth,” Naomi explained. The organization has 141 ambassadors from 35 countries, and the curriculum has been translated into five languages. The project has served 3,300 young innovators.

To learn more about Prudential Emerging Visionaries and all 25 winners, visit [prudential.com/emergingvisionaries](https://prudential.com/emergingvisionaries).

**About Prudential Financial**

Prudential Financial, Inc. (NYSE: PRU), a financial wellness leader and premier active global investment manager, has operations in the United States, Asia, Europe and Latin America. Prudential’s diverse and talented employees help to make lives better by creating financial opportunity for more people. Prudential’s iconic Rock symbol has stood for strength, stability, expertise and innovation for more than a century. For more information, please visit [news.prudential.com](https://news.prudential.com).

**About Ashoka**

Ashoka is the largest global network of leading social entrepreneurs — individuals with new ideas to systemically address the world’s biggest challenges and the entrepreneurial skill to transform those ideas into national, regional and global social impact. Over 40 years, Ashoka has supported more than 3,600 social entrepreneurs in 90 countries with solutions addressing society’s most pressing issues. Ashoka’s vision is a world in which Everyone is a Changemaker — a society that responds quickly and effectively to challenges, and where every individual has the freedom, confidence and societal support to address any social problem. For more information, visit [ashoka.org](https://ashoka.org).

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