



Prudential Financial names its next Emerging Visionaries

For the second year, 25 exceptional young leaders are honored for their work addressing the challenges of a changing world.

NEWARK, N.J., Feb. 21, 2023 – Prudential Financial today announced its next class of Prudential Emerging Visionaries — 25 young leaders from across the U.S. with an inspiring commitment to improving the lives of others.

Prudential Emerging Visionaries honors young changemakers ages 14-18 who have innovative, bold solutions to financial and societal challenges in their communities.

“The goals of our Emerging Visionaries program reflect Prudential’s overarching purpose: to make lives better by solving the financial challenges of our changing world,” said Chairman and CEO Charles Lowrey. “We applaud all of our honorees for their commitment to improving the lives of others and creating inclusive and thriving communities.”

Five winners’ projects help overcome barriers to financial inclusion and well-being, while 20 focus on societal issues, helping to create more equitable and sustainable communities. Through their work, they address wide-ranging and critical issues including expanding financial literacy, combating climate change, improving access to mental health services and assisting refugees.

Winners were selected based on four main criteria: Their solution is innovative; it will create meaningful impact and can grow beyond the student’s community; it demonstrates a deep understanding of the issue it addresses; and the student is passionate about making a change and inspiring others to take action.

Each of the 25 changemakers has won \$5,000 to advance their projects. They are also invited to attend an all-expenses-paid trip with their parent or guardian to Prudential’s Newark, New Jersey, headquarters for a three-day summit in April where they will receive coaching, skills development and networking

opportunities with Prudential employees and other young leaders.

The summit is also where the five winners of the financial solutions category will have the opportunity to participate in a pitch-off, where a grand prize winner will be awarded an additional \$10,000. And Prudential employees will again vote to name an Employees' Choice Award winner, who will receive an additional \$5,000.

Prudential Emerging Visionaries is a collaboration between Prudential Financial and Ashoka, a leading social impact organization, with advisory support from the Financial Health Network, an authority on financial health and a longtime partner of The Prudential Foundation. The program also operates in other countries where the company has a significant business presence, including Brazil, China, India and Japan. The program is an evolution of Prudential's Spirit of Community Awards, which over 26 years honored more than 150,000 outstanding youth volunteers.

2023 Prudential Emerging Visionaries

Applicants focused their projects on two categories: Financial Solutions for a Changing World and Societal Solutions for a Changing World.

Financial Solutions for a Changing World Award Winners

Nikita Agrawal, 17, of Chicago, is the co-founder and president of "FinPro World," an initiative that promotes financial literacy among middle and high school-aged students by teaching them computer programming skills.

Okezue Bell, 16, of Easton, Pennsylvania, created "Fidutam," an accessible mobile app that is expanding financial access to unbanked and low-income communities.

Aaryan Doshi, 16, of Cupertino, California, leads "CirFin," a global initiative that aims to inspire young people to use fintech to support and strengthen more sustainable economies.

Catherine Mellett Felix, 17, of New York, New York, started a mobile app to address gender economic inequality by teaching young women how to manage and grow their personal finances.

Jordyn Wright, 14, of Rosharon, Texas, started a youth entrepreneurship program to teach young people how to identify their passions and use them as a launching point for creating innovative enterprises that serve their communities.

Societal Solutions for a Changing World Award Winners

Jack Bonneau, 17, of Broomfield, Colorado, launched "Teen Hustl," a startup on a mission to create environmentally conscious opportunities for youth employment in today's gig economy.

Varuni Chopra, 17, of North Royalton, Ohio, is the founder of "Bridge the Gap Initiative," a project that teaches digital literacy skills to senior citizens, boosting their connectivity and increasing their quality of life.

Sydney Collins, 18, of La Plata, Maryland, is the founder of "Perfect Timing," an international podcast that promotes youth positivity by giving young people the space to celebrate their achievements and combat mental health stigmas.

Kean Dao, 17, of Winterville, North Carolina, co-founded "Environmental Droners," an initiative that utilizes technology to engage and educate the public on protecting the environment by identifying polluted areas in need of cleanup.

Mia Fritsch-Anderson, 18, of Chicago, is the creator of "Choose to Breathe," a movement to educate young people about asthma and reduce the stigma around using inhalers.

Kylee Hamamoto, 17, of Honolulu, created "WeGo! Hawaii" to foster strong and independent female

leaders and create a community space for young women to pursue changemaking.

Zoya Haq, 18, of Dallas, leads “HiStory Retold,” a global initiative to promote inclusivity in history classrooms by encouraging community storytelling and new classroom policies and curriculum resources.

Lillian Hertel, 17, of St. Louis Park, Minnesota, is the founder of “Students Stand Up,” an international program that provides young people with the necessary resources to get started in advocacy and grassroots organizing.

Shraman Kar, 16, of Louisville, Kentucky, co-founded “Community AI,” a nonprofit that trains youth in creating scalable technology products that better the world.

Sidney Keys III, 17, of Marietta, Georgia, founded “Books N Bros,” a book club that improves the relationship young Black men have with reading by amplifying African American stories and literature.

Isheta Kulshreshtha, 16, of Hockessin, Delaware, is the founder of “Leveled Legislation,” an initiative that aims to increase gender parity around the world by advocating for equitable policies and increasing youth civic engagement.

Vaishnavi Kumbala, 15, of Metairie, Louisiana, is the founder of a mobile app developed to improve teen mental health as well as expand access to mental wellness resources, particularly in disaster-prone areas.

Mark Leschinsky, 16, of Mahwah, New Jersey, is the founder of “Student World Impact Film Festival,” a film competition that elevates the voices of young storytellers from underserved communities.

Aanand Mehta, 17, of Phoenix, co-founded “Magical Motors,” an assistive technology initiative to help children with mobility impairments regain autonomy by rewiring ride-on toy cars to be hand-controlled instead of foot-powered.

Joshua Oh, 14, of Gambrills, Maryland, co-founded an initiative to increase access to diapers across the United States through innovative distribution methods and lobbying to remove diaper taxes.

Rishan Patel, 16, of Atherton, California, leads “The Lending Locker,” which increases youth access to sports by providing free athletic gear year-round to underserved schools.

Riyah Patel, 17, of Concord, New Hampshire, started “New American Scholars” to close the achievement gap between students who are refugees and their American-born peers by providing academic support and educational resources.

Austin Picinich, 17, of Kirkland, Washington, created the “Save Our Salmon Through Art” initiative, which stages public art projects that encourage community members to be stewards of local salmon to preserve their once-thriving populations and spawning streams in the greater Seattle area.

Siona Pramoda, 14, of Guaynabo, Puerto Rico, is a leader of “SafeTeensOnline,” a peer-led and experience-sharing community that teaches young people online safety and privacy skills.

Kosha Upadhyay, 16, of Bellevue, Washington, started “Buzz Bowl,” a quiz game that aims to elevate the percentage of female STEM graduates by giving fifth- through eighth-grade girls access to an AP-level education in science and math subjects.

For more information about Prudential Emerging Visionaries and to learn more about their stories, visit prudential.com/emergingvisionaries.

About Prudential Financial

Prudential Financial, Inc. ([NYSE: PRU](https://www.nyse.com/quote/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.

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 everyone has the freedom, confidence and societal support to address any social problem. For more information, visit ashoka.org.

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