



AMERICAN PORTFOLIOS FINANCIAL SERVICES, INC.
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American Portfolios Financial Services Hosts 2018 Virtual Enterprises International Business Plan Competition

HOLBROOK, N.Y. (March 13, 2018) — [American Portfolios Financial Services, Inc. \(AP\)](#), a privately-held, independent broker/dealer that services financial advisors across the country, hosted the finals for the eighth annual [Long Island Virtual Enterprises International \(VEI\) Business Plan Competition](#) on Feb. 28, 2018.

Students from nine VEI-participating high schools located throughout Long Island convened at the AP headquarters in Holbrook, N.Y., presenting their virtual business plans to a panel of judges. VEI is a non-profit organization that offers in-school experiential learning programs for high school students to form entrepreneurial, start-up businesses within a live global simulated setting. Each year, AP looks forward to ushering in a new wave of promising, young entrepreneurs as it continues its support of educational organizations that promote business leadership. The firm has worked closely with VEI since [2014](#), and has nurtured a relationship that has proven to be mutually beneficial on many levels. Holding this competition at AP's headquarters provides students with the backdrop of a true corporate experience. At the same time, the firm's employees and investment professionals find the judging experience to be extremely rewarding.

"VEI students fully understand the importance of having a business plan—knowing that without a road map, one cannot achieve success," explains AP CEO Lon T. Dolber. "However, there has to be some other purpose than making money and being successful. For me, that purpose is Corporate Social Responsibility. A corporation has a responsibility to be a good citizen and to do good work in the community. If we can influence just one person in a positive way, then any success we achieve as a company will be that much greater and meaningful."

Of the partnership with AP and the corporate setting for the final presentations, VEI Executive Director Iris Blanc expands on the amazing opportunities for participating students. "American Portfolios sets an amazing example for how a corporate partner can provide real opportunities for students by providing insight about the changing needs of the financial industry, hiring students as interns and opening up their offices for the competition's finals," she says. "This event serves as a milestone moment in the development of many students, no matter what career path they choose to pursue, and that's something everyone involved should be proud of."

The 2018 VEI Business Plan Competition was comprised of 12 student-run business teams from nine schools: Calhoun High School (Team Poseidon Pure); Herricks High School (Team PACK'D); Islip High School (Team Fresh Direct); John F. Kennedy High School (Team Flash Task); Mepham High School (Team TruView VR); Patchogue-Medford High School (Team EVO Tech); Plainview-Old Bethpage High School (Teams Elluminate and Sockit); Syosset High School (Teams It's Fudge and Ponix); and Westhampton Beach High School (Teams SPFY and Trubambu).

Each high school team's virtual companies became semi-finalists in the 2018 Long Island Trade Show held on Jan. 8-9, 2018, at Farmingdale State College. Presentations from the 12 virtual companies were made during the final competition to a panel of judges comprised of AP staff and affiliated investment professionals, as well as Dr. Kimberly Cline,



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president of Long Island University, and Assistant Dean Dr. Francine Federman for College-High School Programs at Farmingdale State College. “It was a pleasure to judge the VEI competition for the [second year in a row](#),” states Mark Gajowski, an AP-affiliated advisor and CEO/founder of Magii, Inc. “It’s a fantastic program. I’m always impressed with what the students are capable of pulling together. The knowledge, skill and poise the students possess—especially in a high-pressure environment in which they’re being judged by their peers—is amazingly impressive.”

The presentations were held and captured in AP’s in-house production facility, [Studio 454](#), to provide students with playback coverage of their performances as a way to improve on their presentation skills for future VEI competitions. Throughout the event, students had the opportunity to meet and network with the firm’s senior management, investment professionals and staff members. Staging the competition at AP’s corporate offices helped students to associate how their virtual business management and operating procedural plans might apply in a real business environment.

Of the judging in this year’s VEI Business Plan Competition, AP affiliated investment professional and Investment Advisor Representative at PPS Advisors, Inc. Patrick Passaretti says, “The student teams exceeded my expectations; the effort they put into their presentations were well above the level of knowledge I possessed when I was in high school. I was impressed that they understood the importance of taking an existing concept and improving upon it in meaningful and successfully implemented ways.”

Judges for the finals in the Business Plan Competition selected Fresh Direct, Flash Task, Elluminate, EVO Tech and SPF-y as the winning teams that will advance to the VEI National Business Plan Competition, which will be held as part of the Youth Business Summit event on April 16-18, 2018, at Pier 92 in New York, N.Y.

The firm’s commitment to nurture the talents of America’s future business leaders early in their academic careers doesn’t begin and end with sponsorship of competitive events; in 2016, AP and VEI launched the [AP-VEI Internship Fellows Program](#). This unique program creates pathways for students who have completed VEI’s business and entrepreneurship program to go on to summer internships with AP and other companies. This multi-year, national initiative serves as the catalyst for other companies to aid in the development of the next generation’s workforce. “It’s a wonderful opportunity for both VEI students and our affiliated investment professionals,” says Dolber. “Advisors not only gain a helping hand when they take part in this program, they’re investing in our collective future as a society.”

The firm looks forward to continuing its support of VEI throughout the year with internship and mentoring opportunities at its corporate offices, as well as nationwide throughout its 372 branch offices comprised of financial services business owners.

About American Portfolios

Headquartered in Holbrook, N.Y., American Portfolios Financial Services, Inc. (APFS) is a full-service, independent broker/dealer and member firm of FINRA and SIPC, offering a complete range of financial services, including personal financial and retirement planning, securities trading, mutual funds, access to investment research, long-term care planning, insurance products and tax-free investing. Fee-based asset management is offered through its sister



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subsidiary, American Portfolios Advisors, Inc., (APA), an SEC Registered Investment Advisor. Both entities, along with technology entity American Portfolios Advisory Solutions, LLC, collectively reside under the legal entity American Portfolios Holdings, Inc. (APH). Full-service securities brokerage is available through a clearing firm relationship with Pershing, LLC, a BNY Mellon firm, the securities of which are held on a fully disclosed basis. The company currently serves 816 independent investment professionals located in 372 branch locations throughout the nation. It was named Broker-Dealer of the Year* (Division III) by Investment Advisor magazine in [2015](#), [2016](#) and [2017](#), as well as one of the top five Best Small/Mid-Size Company to Work for in the state of New York for [2016](#) and [2017](#) by the New York State Society for Human Resources Management (NYS-SHRM) and the Best Companies Group (BCG).

**Based on a poll of registered representatives conducted by Investment Advisor magazine. Broker/dealers rated highest by their representatives are awarded "Broker/Dealer (B/D) of the Year."*

About Virtual Enterprises

VEI is a non-profit organization that provides experiential learning programs to schools across Long Island and beyond. Through their live global business simulation, students are offered a competitive edge through project-based collaborative learning that allows them to create and operate every facet of a virtual business. This program helps students develop 21st-century skills in entrepreneurship, global business, problem solving, communications, personal finance and technology.

VEI Judges

Dr. Kimberly R. Cline, President, Long Island University; Dr. Francine Federman, Assistant Dean, Farmingdale State College/Assistant Dean, College-High School Programs; Mark Gajowski, CFP®, CEO and Founder, Magii, Inc.; Gus Catanzaro, Chief Operating Officer, PPS Advisors, Inc.; Patrick Passaretti, Investment Advisor Representative, PPS Advisors, Inc.; Damon Joyner, Chief Financial Officer, American Portfolios Financial Services, Inc.; and Kimberly A. Branch, CFP®, Vice President of Marketing Strategy, American Portfolios Financial Services, Inc.

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