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El Segundo's Da Vinci Schools Named One of America's Most Innovative Educational Organizations; Semifinalist in Competition for \$1 Million National Prize

WASHINGTON, DC - El Segundo's Da Vinci RISE High, which focuses on educating "youth navigating foster care, housing instability, probation, and/or other circumstances that have caused disruptions in their academic journeys," has been named one of America's most innovative and effective schools and a semi-finalist for the \$1 million Yass Prize, which will be awarded December 14 in New York City at an event held in partnership with Forbes Media. As one of 32 semifinalists, Da Vinci RISE High, which is part of the Da Vinci Schools network, **will receive a minimum \$200,000 prize.**

Awarded annually, the **Yass Prize for Sustainable, Transformational, Outstanding and Permissionless Education**, administered by the Center for Education Reform, is quickly becoming one of the most prestigious honors in PreK-12 education. It is awarded to the education provider whose innovative product or program is judged to give students the most effective, transformational and lasting educational experience possible—with a clear, barrier-free path to success.

Some 2,700 organizations from 48 states—including public, private and charter schools, education technology companies, "microschools" and a variety of nonprofit organizations—entered the competition for this year's prize. Most of the organizations named as semifinalists were singled out for creating new forms for delivering education, such as microschools, pods, and hybrid learning environments that combine both the public and private sectors, innovative charter schools, private schools serving specialized student populations—such as neurodivergent learners (those with ADHD, autism, and dyslexia and other barriers to learning)—underserved by traditional schools, and ed tech apps. Several are parent-led organizations and others combine career prep and apprenticeships with traditional learning.

The 32 Yass Prize semifinalists will compete next month in the competition's "accelerator" round, from which the winner and six runners-up (each of which will receive \$250,000) will be selected. Altogether, more than \$11 million in prize money will be awarded.

"Those who think a quality education is no longer available to American students whose families aren't wealthy should look at the extraordinary range of success stories told by our semifinalists," said Janine Yass, founder of the Yass Prize.

"They take many different approaches, and face many different challenges, but they all arrive at the same destination: students who are successful in school and are highly likely to be successful in life as well." Many of the organizations reach their goals on a shoestring, she stressed. "We are honored to recognize their extraordinary creativity, tenacity and achievements and help them build for the future."

Jeanne Allen, director of the Yass Foundation and founder and CEO of the Center for Education Reform, said the awards program is helping to build a "critical mass of innovation and success" beyond the confines of America's troubled public-school systems. "We are hopeful that what we see and learn from each year's competitors will be applied by others to improve their own schools. As the Yass Prize competition confirms, there is no reason for failure. Given the right tools and environment, even children in the most challenging circumstances can learn."

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The **\$1 Million Yass Prize for Sustainable, Transformational, Outstanding and Permissionless Education** celebrates the country's education provider which best demonstrates the STOP principles. In conjunction with The Yass Prize, the STOP Awards initiative provides more than **\$16 million** in support annually to honor educators who achieve and deliver for underserved children through the STOP principles. To learn more about the work and the incredible education providers who have been honored, visit yassprize.org. For media inquiries, please contact John at 202-203-9688 or pr@yassprize.org.