

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Engaging Creative Minds Awarded \$125,000 Chick-fil-A True Inspiration Awards® Grant to Expand Youth Entrepreneurship Education Across South Carolina

Charleston, SC - February 10, 2026 - Engaging Creative Minds (ECM), a Charleston-based nonprofit, has been named a 2026 Chick-fil-A True Inspiration Awards® grant recipient, receiving \$125,000 to expand its YEScarolina youth entrepreneurship program into high school classrooms statewide.

The Chick-fil-A True Inspiration Awards® recognize nonprofit organizations that are creating meaningful and lasting impact in their communities. In 2026, a total of 56 organizations were selected worldwide from more than 3,500 applicants, with over \$6 million in grants awarded—marking the program’s largest global giving footprint to date.

YEScarolina is ECM’s high school program that provides students with the skills, confidence, and mindset needed to explore entrepreneurship, innovation, and career readiness. Programs are delivered directly in classrooms and through educator training, helping students develop real-world problem-solving skills, financial literacy, and leadership experience.

“Entrepreneurship creates opportunity and lasting impact,” said Robin Berlinsky, CEO of Engaging Creative Minds. “We are grateful to Chick-fil-A, an organization built on entrepreneurial vision, for investing in our teachers and their students who will become South Carolina’s next generation of creators and leaders.”

David Stinson teaches Entrepreneurship at Baptist Hill Middle High School and adds, “This program has had an incredible impact in my classroom. My students see the unlimited potential their future holds because entrepreneurship empowers them to shape their communities, not just survive in them.”

The funding will support program expansion in high schools across the state, provide resources and training for educators, and increase opportunities for students to engage in hands-on entrepreneurship experiences, including competing in the annual statewide Business Plan Competition in Columbia.

The True Inspiration Awards were established in 2015 to honor the legacy of Chick-fil-A founder S. Truett Cathy and his commitment to generosity, service, and community impact. To date, Chick-fil-A has awarded nearly \$40 million through the program to organizations addressing critical community needs.

“We are honored to be recognized alongside organizations from around the world that are making a difference in their communities,” said John Mistretta, ECM Board Chair. “We are very proud of our team.”

Visit www.engagingcreativeminds.org for information about ECM's entrepreneurship program.

Media Invitation:

Members of the media are invited to join Engaging Creative Minds and Chick-fil-A for a celebration today, February 10, at 11:15 a.m. at Chick-fil-A, 4926 Centre Pointe Dr, North Charleston, SC 29418. Interview and photo opportunities will be available on site.

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About Engaging Creative Minds

The mission of Engaging Creative Minds is to spark creativity and curiosity in all learners through innovative and experiential learning.

About Chick-fil-A True Inspiration Awards®

Founded in 2015, the Chick-fil-A True Inspiration Awards honor the legacy of founder S. Truett Cathy by supporting nonprofit organizations that are creating positive impact through caring for people, caring for communities, caring for others through food, and caring for our planet. Since its inception, Chick-fil-A has awarded nearly \$40 million to organizations around the world through the program.