



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF THE VALLEY



Boys & Girls Clubs of the Valley and business leader Justin Bayless to select Summer 2023 Bayless Entrepreneurship Program winner

PHOENIX (August 10, 2023) - For one Boys & Girls Clubs of the Valley (BGCAZ) AZYouthforce teen, an entrepreneurial dream is about to become reality. On August 10, seven teens will pitch their ideas for a new business in hopes of becoming the next [Bayless Entrepreneurship Program winner](#).

The winner of the program's fourth cohort will join three previous AZYouthforce teens in earning a \$2,500 investment from local entrepreneur and The Journey Venture Studio Founder & President Justin Bayless as seed money. These funds help the teen entrepreneurs start their businesses.

The teens will have five minutes to pitch their ideas to four judges, including Bayless, and answer questions from the judges before one business is ultimately selected for investment. To prepare for their pitch, the Bayless Entrepreneurship Program includes an eight-week training in which teens work one-on-one with business mentors to develop a business plan and marketing strategy while conducting market and economic research to inform their ideas.

The previous cohort's winner was high school senior **Charles A.**, whose business idea begins with an app designed to target housing insecurity before it occurs by connecting families with necessary resources and solutions. Motivated by his own experiences in a family faced with losing their home, Charles' business will help families avoid the situations he often lived through.

Born from a \$500,000 donation from Bayless last year, this AZYouthforce program equips teens with the tools and resources to become successful small business owners. It sets teens who may come from under-resourced communities on a path to success by teaching them essential business skills, harnessing their entrepreneurial creativity, and helping them transform their ideas into bonafide businesses. They also develop a personal network by working with local business leaders on their plans.

Once a winner is announced, it will mark the end of the fourth Bayless Entrepreneurship Program cycle. The fifth will begin this fall. Applications for the next cohort will open at www.azyouthforce.org.

WHAT: AZYouthforce, BGCAZ's teen workforce development program, entrepreneurs to pitch business ideas; one winner selected to receive a \$2,500 investment as seed money

WHEN: Thursday, August 10, 2023, from 5:30-7:30 pm

WHERE: Galvanize, 515 E Grant St, Phoenix, AZ 85004

VISUALS: Teen entrepreneurs presenting business ideas, interview opportunities with teens, judges, and AZYouthforce leaders

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About Boys & Girls Clubs of the Valley

Boys & Girls Clubs of the Valley offers affordable after-school and summer programs for 16,000+ young people in grades K-12. At 30 Clubs across the Valley, BGCAZ provides award-winning programs designed to change the lives of young people. For over 75 years, BGCAZ has been creating equity and opportunity for youth through academic, social, and workforce opportunities. We help young people make healthy decisions and focus on social and emotional development to build resilient young adults. Most importantly, we work to develop strong character and leadership skills by creating positive connections to caring adults and their community. For more information: visit bgcaz.org. Follow us on social media at @BGCArizona.