



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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100 BEST W!SE HIGH SCHOOLS TEACHING PERSONAL FINANCE RANKINGS ANNOUNCED

- Third annual event marks the 13th anniversary of the national Working in Support of Education (w!se) Financial Literacy Certification Program
- Schools in 40 states now participating, up from 34 in prior year
- Nicolet High School ranked among the top 30 high schools
- Students from the top ranked schools attend ceremony hosted by the New York Stock Exchange
- Average passing rate was 77 percent for all participating schools

NEW YORK – April 20, 2015 – Working in Support of Education (w!se), a New York City based, national educational not-for-profit, today announced its third annual “100 Best w!se High Schools Teaching Personal Finance” national ranking during a ceremony sponsored by Voya Financial® at the New York Stock Exchange. This year, for the first time, w!se also released rankings of the top ten small, midsize and large high schools within its network.

The announcement marks the 13th anniversary of the w!se Financial Literacy Certification Program. Schools in 40 states participated in the certification program, up from 34 in the prior year. The award-winning program provides teachers with a curriculum and instructional resources to teach personal finance and measure students’ financial literacy through w!se’s Certification Test. Students who pass the test are designated Certified Financially Literate™. Since its introduction, the program has become an integral tool to teach personal finance in thousands of classrooms across the United States.

The 100 Best w!se High Schools Teaching Personal Finance recognizes the top performing high schools in w!se’s national network. Nicolet High School ranked among the top 30 high schools within its network. The schools were honored with banners as well as a trophy for the No. 1 ranked school at a ceremony, which included the following:

- Sam Stovall, Managing Director, U.S. Equity Strategist for S&P Capital IQ
- Amy Springsteel, Director, Corporate Responsibility, Voya Financial
- Phyllis Frankfort Perillo, Founding President and CEO, Working in Support of Education (w!se)
- Tom Farley, President, New York Stock Exchange
- Steve Wheeler, Director, New York Stock Exchange
- Gretchen Goodall, Managing Director, Citi Institutional Clients Group/KYC Control Unit
- Taylor Smith, Partner and Managing Director, Boston Consulting Group
- Charlotte Frank, Ph.D., Senior Advisor Research and Development, McGraw Hill Education
- James Abry, CFO, SCP Worldwide and CFO/Managing Director, Checketts Partners Investment Management
- Bruce Kasman, Ph.D., Chief Economist, J.P. Morgan
- Sharon Epperson, Senior Personal Finance Correspondent, CNBC

The 100 Best w!se High Schools Teaching Personal Finance ranking seeks to shine the spotlight on the importance of personal finance education. Only 17 states require personal finance instruction in high school. The level of financial literacy is particularly acute among people with no post-secondary education and with

incomes below \$25,000. According to the FINRA Investor Education Foundation, Hispanics and African Americans are disproportionately represented in these education and income segments and are especially vulnerable. Retirement readiness is also a major issue.

“It is in our national interest to address the chronic lack of financial literacy among young people,” said Phyllis Frankfort Perillo, Founding President & CEO of w!se. “The schools – and their students – on our 100 Best ranking are examples for their peers and the country. These students are now empowered with skills, knowledge and behaviors critical for a life of financial wellbeing.”

“We believe that individuals need to be empowered to better understand and take control of their finances, so we’re proud to support w!se in its mission to advance financial literacy in high schools across the country,” said Amy Springsteel, Director of Corporate Responsibility for Voya Financial, sponsor of this year’s ranking and ceremony. “Congratulations to this year’s winners on completing your certification and taking an important step toward building a secure and rewarding future.”

“The w!se program is tremendously valuable to young students. It helps us approach our finances proactively and it helps us to know what to do and what to expect early in our experience with money rather than having to approach our finances reactively by trying to figure out how we got into debt and how to get out of it,” said a student from Chicago.

w!se determined the 2015 ranking with support from an Advisory Board of experts from academia and finance. The predominant factor was the average score on the Financial Literacy Certification Test with consideration given to eligibility for free lunch and the proportion of test takers to the school population.

The Financial Literacy Certification Program now includes more than 3.5 million hours of instruction in participating high schools annually. The average passing rate was 77 percent in 2014 for students at schools participating in the certification program. All schools participating in the Financial Literacy Certification Program have an opportunity to earn a place on the “100 Best” list each year.

For more information about w!se, contact [info\(at\)wise-ny\(dot\)org](mailto:info(at)wise-ny(dot)org), or visit the [program website](#) for the most recent program news and updates.

About Working In Support of Education (w!se)

Working In Support of Education (w!se) is a national not-for-profit dedicated to improving the lives of young people through programs that develop financial literacy and readiness for college and the workforce. Our Initiatives are built on five pillars – relevancy, real world experiences, strong partnerships, volunteerism, and evaluation. The standardized w!se Financial Literacy Certification Test is administered by schools participating in the Financial Literacy Certification Program to measure knowledge, skills and behavioral changes in students after a unit or course on personal finance. For more information, visit wise-ny.org. Follow w!se on [Facebook](#) and Twitter [@wisenewyork](#).

About Voya Financial®

Voya Financial, Inc. (NYSE: VOYA), is composed of premier retirement, investment and insurance companies serving the financial needs of approximately 13 million individual and institutional customers in the United States. The company’s vision is to be America’s Retirement Company™ and its guiding principle is centered on solving the most daunting financial challenge facing Americans today — retirement readiness. Working directly with clients and through a broad group of financial intermediaries, independent producers, affiliated advisors and dedicated sales specialists, Voya provides a comprehensive portfolio of asset accumulation, asset protection and asset distribution products and services. With a dedicated workforce of

approximately 6,500 employees, Voya is grounded in a clear mission to make a secure financial future possible — one person, one family, one institution at a time. For more information, visit voya.com or view our [Voya Financial Interactive Company Profile](#). Follow Voya Financial on [Facebook](#) and Twitter [@Voya](#).

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