

# The Yass Prize Year in Review

Or What Can Happen in 30 Years...30 Months...or 30 Days...

January 2024

Dear Friends,

On December 13, 2023, over 100 of the nation's best education innovators were joined by dozens of leaders in business, media and entertainment, for the awarding of the third annual Yass Prize for Sustainable, Transformational, Outstanding and Permissionless Education.

It was just 30 days ago, from the time of this report's final writing, that was the culmination of the 2023 Prize effort, which began with a launch at the HQ of our media partner, Forbes, in March.

Applications poured in from across the country as the Center for Education Reform team, who manage the Yass Prize, worked to reach new people and new entrants, and introduce new audiences to the growing Yass Prize Movement.

At the heart of the Yass Prize is the belief that there are millions of students who need and whose parents want better for them, and that there are thousands able to deliver that "better" approach. And most of these providers don't have the time, the money and oftentimes the knowledge to show up at the alphabet soup of conferences, seminars and industry events going on that could introduce them to how they might create exceptional value for dozens or hundreds or even thousands more students.

**It is the Yass Prize mission to find these educators, reward them, celebrate them and give them access to an expansive and distinctive network of innovators, agitators and education leaders who 'STOP' for education every day.**

And after receiving 2,700 applications from school leaders serving nearly 27 million students across all 50 states, representing every sector in education and every grade in the Pre-K to 12 continuum, and with 1,000 judges conducting 4 review rounds and final interviews to narrow the applicant pool to just 33 finalists, we arrived back in NYC to for the annual Semifinalist Showcase, and the final days of the year's competition, where our newly coached Semis provided the public with keen insights on the most current and pressing issues in education, some of which never make the papers. Hundreds more joined the competitors and innovators live on YouTube, where the event is still available to relive.



At our annual Gala and Celebration we named the nine finalists (to their surprise!) and one \$1 million grand prize winner.

But it didn't end there. It never does. The leaders of these winning organizations will spend their first year not just building out the programs and structures that will reach thousands more students at home, but visiting others state by state and providing proven, effective advice to other educators as well as with policymakers nationwide.

And the alumni from prior years will continue their own influential, no-holds-barred impact as they come alongside the new class, year after year.

We never dreamed just **30 years ago** — when the Center for Education Reform started — that this effort would result in such dynamism but clearly there was a need that many of us veterans working the field for so many years just never quite understood. Many just assumed that state and local groups everywhere would surface and support everyone working to make school work better for kids.

But they didn't, and they can't, because the fact is that entrepreneurs aren't joiners or followers — they are fiercely independent and they spend all their time working on their inventions. They want to associate with people with the same drive — or more — than they, not people who are comfortable with modest progress.

**The best entrepreneurs are never comfortable. They want more, better, best. And the more we meet, the more we want to help them accomplish just that.**

We don't have all the answers. We know what is working, but every day in every community someone is creating a new way of doing something, something that could be even larger if given the connections, knowledge and seed capital to do more.

It is said that innovation is the ability to identify a gap in the market and create something that fills that gap, or to find a better way of doing something that's already being done. The Yass Prize has spent **30 months** building the capacity to foster precisely that concept. This brief report into the past year — and a little more — is designed to help those who don't have time to follow us regularly on social, or email or in the media — most of you, that is — to learn a little more and perhaps find a way to join us by spreading the word, building momentum in your own communities, and creating policies and laws that advance and protect the work that is so necessary to the nation's survival — an educated, engaged and resilient populace.

Happy 2024, and Thank You.



Jeanne Allen





# The Story of Valiant Cross Isn't Normal in Education (But it Should Be)

What's so unique or award winning about a private boys school in Montgomery, Alabama, you might ask?

The application process, the judges, the intensive review, the accelerator and the pitch uncovered what makes [Valiant Cross](#) a Pulitzer Prize-like winner for a national education award.

Why it exists, how it exists, and what it has done for a community is a page-turner.

The 2023 Yass Prize Gala and Celebration so inspired famous rapper Meek Mill that he shared with our guests and later on X (Twitter) that he wanted to start his own Dream Chasers Academy where every student would be able to direct their education dollars to an education that helps them build their dream, their career, their future.



The story on [yassprize.org](http://yassprize.org) will tell you more. But we know that Anthony Brock and his brother Frederick will in fact change Alabama by the work that will be created now that he has the growing Yass team on his side.



Anthony Brock, co-founder and Head of School at Valiant Cross Academy in Montgomery, Alabama, accepting the 2024 Yass Prize in New York City on December 13, 2023: "I'm so excited because we have 210 young men back home and I want to give this opportunity to every boy of color in America and in the world."

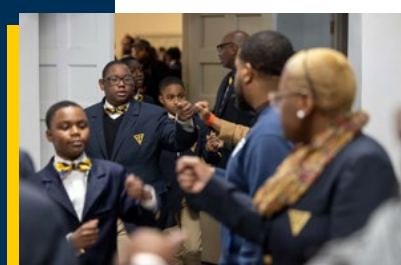
## How they STOP for education

Its **sustainable** model ensures young males have access to the state's publicly funded scholarship program to pay for a private education normally reserved only for the elite.

Its **transformational** efforts to innovate and create locally unprecedented partnerships for careers, computing, e-gaming and robotics.

Its **outstanding** curriculum which doubles the math and triples the literacy-time, provides differentiated instruction, aggressive tutoring, daily after school programming and more.

Its **permissionless** approach to education creates a strong environment for the young men who they want to celebrate and not just tolerate.



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## What Does Change Look Like?

The discovery of failing schools just miles from where she lived inspired Janine Yass to help co-found a school, a new infrastructure to support excellence in all sectors and eventually get involved in advocating for education opportunity nationwide. For her husband Jeff it was just as heartbreaking to see kids stuck in schools by zip code, but also more philosophical. As he shared with 2023 Celebration emcee Alyssa Farrah Griffin:

**Jeff Yass:** *“... one of the things that motivated me, I would talk to politicians and they would say, ‘Yeah, all these kids want to escape the schools.’ There would be tens of millions of kids who would get out of the government schools if they could. But there are no schools, there’s no supply. So you are the supply — the 33 Semifinalists tonight. Congratulations. You are the supply. Oh, and there’s thousands out there that are not in this room.*”

*“You can defeat that argument — [that there’s no place for them to go] because you can show them, you can take a couple of thousand kids now and as you grow, you can take tens of thousands of kids. So does the supply exist? This second of course not — no business is open until it’s legal. If it became legal for entrepreneurs to build schools, the 33 people here and the 64 people that we’ve had the last two years, together they can handle millions of students. I know you don’t like to think of yourself as a supply, but you are the supply and the kids who are desperately failing in these government schools, the demand. So we realize, well, the demand is there, that’s obvious. The supply is not there. So what we’re trying to do is find the best entrepreneurs, educational entrepreneurs... We went around the country looking for the best and the brightest around and that’s why they’re here tonight.”*

**Janine Yass:** *“And my personal answer to that question is I found this as a calling when I realized as a mother after my four children were set up in great schools that I shopped around for, which we all do for our children, those of us who can. And I befriended David Hardy who’s here in the room tonight and our boys were together at a private school. He started talking to me about schools in the city and showing me around. I think when I realized how I took for granted the choice that most families don’t have. And when you visit the schools and see the parents’ faces and you know that they know and as I said to Meek Mill they’re called pipelines to prisons. The parents say that they know their kids are going to drop-out factories and that’s accepted and that there was no sense of urgency to solve this problem. I just felt that it was a calling.”*



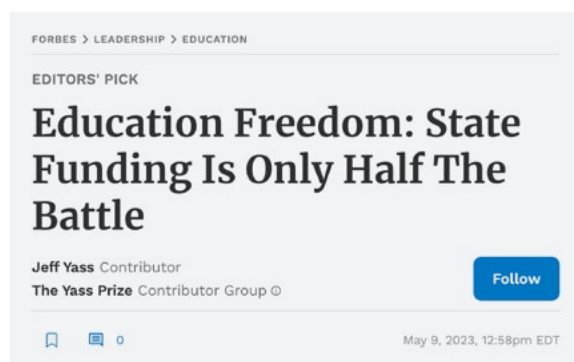
# Baby Bonds? The Next Frontier in Education Transformation is about Money.

In op-eds across a wide range of publications and appearances — *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, *Forbes*, Fox and more — Janine and Jeff Yass and the Yass Prize team have articulated a new vision for education that goes beyond “normal” school choice support. Expanding education freedom is just the first step toward consequences for failing schools. The *Aha!* moment last for the Yass Prize movement was discovering just how underfunded most choice programs are (and how much money actually stays in the system) which undermines the ability of new schooling opportunities to open.

**Jeff Yass:** “... 25 years ago, at a conference with Milton Friedman, I asked him, ‘What should I do [with] philanthropic money?’ He said, ‘School choice. The school system is horrible. We can do it for half the price and we can do it better. If I had philanthropic money, that’s what I would do.’ And he did, he started the Milton Friedman Foundation that was for school choice. So he was the guy I respected the most, [I thought] he was the smartest guy, and as a gambler, I go with the smartest guy ... Since then, [the traditional school system has] gotten remarkably worse. In Philadelphia, there are five or six schools with 1000 kids, where not one kid is on grade level, and they don’t shut [the school]. So it’s a bad system. And if the market took care of it, there’s no way that those schools wouldn’t be shut.”

**Janine Yass:** “When we follow the money, it’s ludicrous how this country is getting away with funding education. The funding is not following children. Real change — real justice — comes when every student has access to all the funds that are allocated for their education — to be used to fuel the choices that best suit them.

**Jeff Yass:** “The ‘aha!’ moment for me was kind of when I realized that the amount of money spent on schools since 1998 has doubled in real terms with inflation, and the results are worse,” Jeff argues. We could divide the money that we spend on schools, like in New York City, which spends \$40,000 per kid on school ... Over the course of 13 years, that’s \$520,000. And half the kids in New York City can’t read and write, and 20% don’t show up anymore. They’ve just given up.



*“You could go to a Catholic school for way less than that, [or] a private school or charter school, and put the \$20,000 in the bank account for the kid, when they graduate at 19 years old, they’ll have \$300-350,000. So if you had \$300,000 [and] you’re growing up in a bad neighborhood in the Bronx, and you know you have \$300,000 when you graduate, you’re not going to join a gang, you’re not going to be hopeless, you’re not going to be in despair. You are looking forward to your life. You can’t wait to get that \$300,000! You can start a business, you can go to college, you can buy a house. That could be done if we just had the political will to do it. There’s no extra spending, there’s no extra taxes, there’s just getting rid of the fraud and the waste and the corruption that the teachers union have imposed on these kids for the last 30 or 40 years. That’s what motivates us.”*

At the Yass Summit earlier in the fall, Wall Street Investor Mike Novogratz who is also a Robin Hood Foundation board member nicknamed the concept “Baby Bonds,” because giving every parent the money reserved for their students schooling to spend is like issuing bonds when they have a child. It’s an investment in their future.

**Mike Novogratz:** *“Your idea of, I’ll say baby bonds plus vouchers, or, you know just resonates because, you know, when you’re 22 years old or 18 years old, if there’s a nest egg for you, you get in a lot less trouble. I mean, it’s just in every study we’ve looked at. You got something to fall back on. It’s a little bit of the UBI (universal basic income) story.”*

Look into these articles and others like them to learn more about what it will take to create the supply to fuel real opportunity and career paths for students.



# The First Annual Yass Summit October 13, 2023

**Mark your calendar for the next Yass Summit:  
September 12, 2024 in New York City!**

This past October marked the 30th Anniversary of the Center for Education Reform (CER), and it was with that in mind that we decided to use the occasion of the announcement of the Semifinalists to also celebrate three decades of progress in education reform, and recommit to a future that works faster to transform education for the millions of students still without access to a future that affords them the opportunity to chase their dreams.

Dozens of Yass Prize winners, alum and applicants gathered, most meeting one another for the very first time, to dissect, learn and share the programs, policies and challenges that prevent that very notion from happening.





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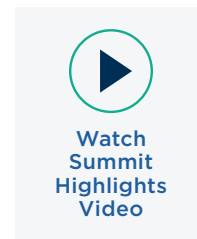
## Then Came You

As the iconic Spinners played some of their greatest hits at the opening reception, it dawned on us that they might as well have been singing our song, one just for the community we are privileged to serve.

“I never knew love before, then came you, then came you.”

It was so good that it’s the theme to a little video we created afterwards. You absolutely have to take a few minutes to watch it at [yassprize.org/summit](https://yassprize.org/summit).

After the Summit, the evening not only revealed the 33 semis — up one from last year in honor of the R&R theme... but also the big announcement of the decade...the formation of the Yass Center for Education to usher in...



## A New Age of Education Disruption

**Presented at the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland, OH on October 13, 2023** *(and inspired by the Age of Aquarius, with apologies!).*

At CER, we’ve been throwing parties to celebrate various milestones in our journey, since our inception.

THIRTY years ago this week, milestones that include putting education choice on the map, before a lot of people ever knew what it was — ***before it was cool***. And there’s history behind it.

It’s a history everyone needs to know — because without knowing the adversity you might face, and that you can overcome, you’ll never be prepared to face it when it comes again. And it will come again.

And here’s why it’s so important — at each convening we take time to notice who is leading, who is fighting, what programs and policies are working and **what our friends and enemies are doing — both right, and wrong**. You can’t negotiate a new policy unless you know what that actual policy resulted in somewhere else. You can’t campaign or advocate with words that may have different meanings to different people unless you know it. You need to understand the impact of what has been done — in the most granular of ways to drive better — and the best — laws.

Our thinking, our work, our policy solutions and our programs must evolve every day. Every encounter with another person in this work should make you rethink whether what you are doing and how you are doing it is right — no matter who’s doing the talking and pushing you out of your comfort zone. And you should never be afraid of pushing your friends and colleagues — because it’s not about you. It’s about the kids, across the county, without the opportunity they’re due.

I’m proud that when people are asked about CER, they respond and say we’re tough. They even say we don’t always play nice in the sandbox. But there’s a reason for that.

Some battles you just cannot win by just asking those guarding their toys to share. Sometimes it takes a fight. When we started in 1993, we chose the sun and its rays deliberately to signify the nature of the work we would do. We wanted sunlight on the dark parts of education inequity and failure — and to raise awareness of the policies and people who could make it better. We would put them on stages, in front of policymakers and in the media, and call them out, if need be.

We started with a half sun, completed it, morphed it, expanded it.

And then we had the eclipse no one could anticipate. It was called Covid. And suddenly we had to do things differently. The world was dark and we had to shine the sunlight in different ways — and we all had to pivot to do what was right.

While so many stayed in the dark — Chicago, Boston, Fairfax Cty, VA, and who can forget New York and California! — you all were in the sun.

When we started our online Covid Action Series, we began to realize the hidden gems in education who just pushed forward, educating students in whatever way you could — including breaking the law and defying wrist-slaps from state officials. **To all those who let your own families and welfare take second place for months on end, we salute you.**

Janine Yass, in the midst of the pandemic recognized the same, she wanted to reward those who were doing the work and transforming learning opportunities for kids. She asked us to help, and the STOP Awards became a new guiding star for what would carry us through the next evolution. Our first Awardees showed us what education disruption is all about. You helped us refocus our efforts on the right things — on building and sustaining wildly diverse and personalized and innovative approaches to education. And as Janine likes to say, *“you blew us away!”*

And it made us think. What would it look like if we were to evolve even further — and to spark even greater disruption in the education solar system.

The galaxy is constantly expanding and if we are ever going to help every child succeed, we knew we must expand too. So we grew from 20 awards to 64, gave alumni prizes, rewarded 4 states for expanding opportunity, and now in year three, what is now called The Yass Prize and STOP Awards Initiative.

**And now this universe of education freedom** includes every type of school and organization — who are breaking free from the one world view of education.

You are the stars in an ever growing universe that I’ve had the privilege of exploring for many moons. But today, our galaxy needs to disrupt the others if equitable education is going to reach more than the few it does today.

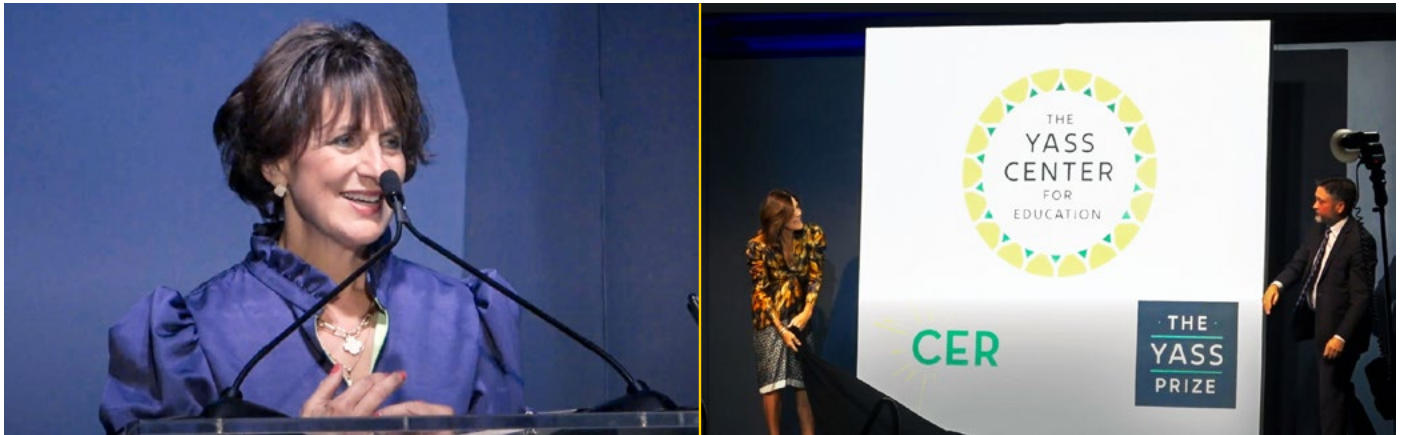


When Janine and I got together to start something, we had no idea that combining those two atoms would have the impact that it has, and we just love working together with one another and the alumni and all the whole network we have created, building on CER's past, and the Yass Prize present.

And now we are going to create an ever greater planetary system of people who do the great work day in and day out.

We are here because we want to ensure that all of you get not just what you need to survive — but to thrive.

**So, are you ready for The new Age of Education Disruption?** The new Yass Center for Education will expand even further the reach of The Center For Education Reform. It will house the Prize, Policy work, and the philanthropy under one roof, pulling together the rich history, legacy and knowledge base of CER with the new, fresh, supply of innovators who together will help us transform education for millions.



We will be completing the work of organizing the new entity in a few months time, as well as starting some major new activities that will propel the work of the Yass Prize alum forward.



# The Accelerator

Once the Semifinalists were chosen, they jumped into a four-week Accelerator, three weeks virtually that was open to the Quarterfinalists as well as all applicants, and then one week on-site exclusively for the semis in Miami, FL, where an innovation hub sits atop the Mater Brickell Academy, the entrepreneurship school started by **Fernando Zulueta** and his team at Academica. With the goal of creating and presenting their final pitch to a group of esteemed judges, the 2023 cohort engaged industry experts from a diverse array of fields, with speakers like GSV's **Michael Moe**, **Sal Khan**, founder of Khan Academy, author and podcaster **Michael Horn**, **Roger Love**, voice coach to the stars, **Phyllis Lockett**, of LEAP Innovations, Paul Quinn's dynamic president **Michael Sorrell** and so many more.

Alumni joined us in Miami to engage with the newest cohort and lead them in the most thought-provoking breakout sessions in executing on vision. Many of them were in this cohort's shoes just ONE year ago, and they were now imparting knowledge, lessons learned, and a few tips and tricks to this newest group of education innovators.

Another opportunity to learn first hand why this week is so valuable, [this video](#) was produced by our great videographer, Will Bridges, who's been with us from the beginning.



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## Speaking of Beginnings...

The first Accelerator launched in Dallas in December 2021 — developed in partnership with GSV Labs and Forbes Media. We gathered the first 20 Semifinalists for what was then called the STOP Award, based on the four core principles upon which the award was built — a search for education that is Sustainable Transformational, Outstanding and Permissionless education. Those first alum went on to lay the groundwork...and guide the formation of the next year and many of them have remained actively engaged since.

2021 Finalist **Taylor Shead** and Semifinalist **Pat Brantley** are Yass Prize Fellows; Individually and collectively they are also working with several other prior awardees on using their tools to transform learning with the pilot of a fully immersive online gaming environment for their students and learners.

**Louisiana Key**, Louisiana's Premier School for Students with Dyslexia, has expanded to Covington and Shreveport.

**Rock by Rock** is collaborating with 12 other awardees, bringing project based learning to microschoools, homeschools, public schools and charters.

**Oakmont Education** visited Chickasaw City Schools of Alabama for a two day training on 3D printing of prosthetics and the solar powered suitcase design to bring back to its students, and Oakmont was recently approved unanimously to open its pathbreaking education to career pathways school in Iowa.

These are just a few of the cross-sector and state innovations that are fueling a new movement, transforming even more the work of these stand out prize winners. They also have been called upon to write for numerous publications including our Forbes page, they speak and moderate panels, and they always return to support and expand the work.

Then there's **Rob Blevins**, whose **Discovery Center** of Springfield, MO was the museum that became the critical center for caring for the students and the community during Covid, as well as created a school, which continues to this day. Rob joined us to steer the Yass Prize and CER this past September and will continue to help us build on all he first encountered as a pioneer, and since.

## Public Schools that Make Their Own Kind of Music: Innovation at Northern Cass

Those of a certain age will remember “Mama Cass” of the folk rock quartet The Mamas & the Papas and her famous hit song, “Make Your Own Kind of Music.”

We realized with a tongue-in-cheek homage to that song that’s precisely what 2022 Yass Prize finalist Northern Cass School District Superintendent **Dr. Cory Steiner** is helping his students do! Northern Cass makes its own kind of music, providing a personalized competency-based learning system that allows learning outside the school walls for credit in any content area.



Northern Cass prepares its students to be “choice ready” and learners describe to us how the internship model allows them to explore various jobs and industries during their high school years. Given the school’s rural location, internships at businesses are limited but this hasn’t stopped the program. They also use a 6-week studio model of student-driven learning focusing on the personal interests of individual students. During studio learning, students participate in a collaborative process and hold themselves accountable with milestones. One learner’s passion for automobiles led to an effort centered on the Nissan Skyline and why it’s one of the best street race cars — an experience that required a focus on STEM and extensive research and culminated in the production of a 3-D model of a “street ready” Nissan Skyline.

As Dr. Cory Steiner, Superintendent of Northern Cass School District, has said, “We want to make sure our students have exactly what they need to become who they deserve to be.” Read the full story at [yassprize.org](https://yassprize.org).

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## A Launch, 5 Roadshows & a US Capitol Briefing

These were just **a few of the major events in the first half of 2023** that created a bridge for an increasingly close band of education warriors with civic leaders and policymakers nationwide.

**Whether it was touring** Sail Future with state legislators and the Mayor’s office, or doing a building day at Uncommon Construction, seeing how teaching reading really can overcome dyslexia at Louisiana Key, or the joy in the students at Care Elementary, an oasis of learning in a troubled community, we learned that the innovation and excellence the Yass Prize cohort is creating is sheer brilliance.

**Congressional leaders** were wowed by the presence of these determined innovators. They learned what 11 different school leaders — in every sector — are doing to combat



innovation-stifling rules and regulations, and how federal policy plays a role in undermining their ability to reach more, something that even the most informed lawmakers do not quite understand until they hear it directly from those affected.

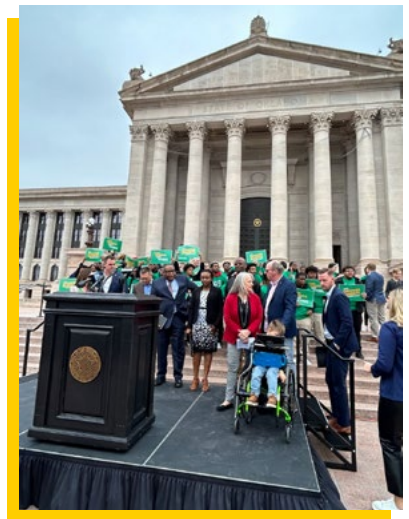
**U.S. Senator Bill Cassidy**, ranking member of the Senate HELP Committee: *“There is opportunity for bipartisanship here. We want to make it possible for you to make more of what you do possible for more students.”*

**Missouri Senator Roger Marshall**: *“Tell your story, tell your story, and then tell your story again. Keep telling your story. There is nothing more powerful than an idea whose time has come.”*

**Brad Thomas**, Senior Advisor to the Chair of the House Education and Workforce Committee: *“What is exciting about this group and what you all do, is our members are very interested in the all-of-the-above approach.”*

Throughout the year, there were also meetings with some of the nation’s most influential governors, and Yass Prize alum played a huge role in influencing and elevating the commitment of governors from Oklahoma to Texas.

These efforts have all resulted in the Yass Prize awardees being called up in small and large venues to illuminate what it takes to not just educate and train students for a great future but how business and industry, tech fields and government must respond to the needs of students.



## Opening Up Hearts and Minds

Education leaders who consistently succeed for kids and families share more than just a calling. Public, Private or Charter, Ed Tech, At-Home or Microschool Learning Pod; achievement is in much more than a name. What's the secret ingredient each of these innovators brings to the table? They revealed just that at the annual ASU+GSV Summit in San Diego this past April.



## The 2022 Yass Prize Winner Changing Landscape for Students With Autism

Arizona Autism Charter School (AZACS) is the story of a mom on a mission. When **Diana Diaz-Harrison**'s son, Sammy, was diagnosed with autism in 2004, she hoped Sammy's assigned school would meet his unique learning needs. It didn't. And there weren't any quality traditional public education options. Diana set out to do something about that. She partnered with other parents and grandparents to found Arizona Autism Charter School.

AZACS is the first tuition-free, public charter school in Arizona focused on the educational needs of children with autism. It's also the first autism-focused public charter school in the western United States. It's the first tuition-free, autism-focused



Arizona Autism Charter School founder and CEO Diana Diaz-Harrison doing the honors at their new location in Tucson, Arizona with numerous school representatives in attendance.





public charter school in America's Grand Canyon State. And it's the first to expand to K-12 from a K-5 school in just four short years. That might have something to do with its unique focus on science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics, and on project-based learning to prepare autistic students to pursue their passions and live meaningful lives.

Arizona Autism Charter School is well on its way to changing the American landscape of education options for children with autism. In less than one year, they opened a new school in Tucson, began replicating their program with NYC-based Launch Charter School — a 2022 Semifinalist — and began pursuing new schools in Nevada and Florida.

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## Yass Awards for Education Freedom

Everyone knows that without great education, our nation suffers. Great education is a vital link for students to become successful citizens. “We know a good education is the key to a happy life,” says Janine Yass. That’s why this June, 2023, after new states boldly adopted new student-centered education policies, the Yass Prize launched a new initiative — The Yass Award for Education Freedom, and with it \$5 million to be spread over the inaugural three states selected for their tenacity and universality in moving all families toward education freedom.

Subsequently Governors of Arkansas, Iowa and Oklahoma were invited to nominate up to ten outstanding education providers who have the capacity to ramp up quickly to serve more students. Their video messages which can be found at [yassprize.org/Yass-Award-for-Education-Freedom](https://yassprize.org/Yass-Award-for-Education-Freedom) say it best — students should be able to be educated in a way that best meets their needs, and programs like the ESAs and Tax Credit programs being enacted can ensure great education is sustainable for all students, and not just those with the means to leave their zoned public schools.

We salute Governors **who put principle over policy and politics to deliver great opportunities for students.**



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## Our Goals for 2024

Every day, across groups of awardees, alum and past applicants engage in discussions and info sharing across their networks, made possible by our internal platform and monitored and supported by the team. We can't keep up with the stories of new and improving efforts together, which almost inevitably sparks a discussion about policy change and "how do I..." do 'X.'

It's reminiscent of how CER first began, and cross-pollinated people and groups that had never been together before, except better. It's education entrepreneurs driving it, finding one another and committing to work together.

**Since 2021, the Yass Prize and STOP Awards Initiatives have invested more than \$50 million in innovative education leaders, tech entrepreneurs and community activists working to redefine education for parents, communities and ultimately the kids.**

Those resources, combined with the intellectual and social capital of the CER and Yass Prize teams, and the growing cohort itself, have made this enterprise the most unique and impactful effort to come about in the cause of education reform in more than a decade.

That's why it's transformational, not only the groups, but the work. Education reform efforts as we've often written have become stale, complacent and not always as bold as they need to be. The Yass Prize movement is shaking that up.

The new movement for change is not only about creating the conditions to allow for innovation and opportunity, but ensuring that there is a supply of Sustainable, Transformational, Outstanding and Permissionless education environments for students, educators, families and communities. The growing and diverse organizations that belong to this new movement are set up to change the face of American education for the better. We stumbled upon them when we launched, and never dreamed that the work we started in 2021 would propel them — and others — forward at such high velocity.

And now it's 2024. We began it knowing it will be an exciting and challenging year. Exciting — because elections bring with them the potential for new blood, which breaks old bonds that protect — intentionally or not — the barriers to great education.

Challenging, because most of us know that education innovation and freedom do not come easily, and that progress depends on weakening centuries old structures and special interests that outspend and often out-power parents.

This year, we'll be stepping up the cause of Parent Power and education freedom, helping Yass Prizers build new relationships and expand into new territory, and find and support even more groups that STOP for kids.

We started the process to find, reward and celebrate education providers who STOP for education earlier this year and will end the process early and our work will be omnipresent in the field.



On January 18th, we opened up the application window to find the 2024 Yass Prize winner plus the thousands we know we will meet in the process that are seeking to transform education outcomes and lifetime opportunities by stepping up to the plate to swing for the fences.

Key 2024 Yass Prize Dates & Happenings							
1/19/24	4/18/24	9/5/24	9/12/24	10/12-18/24	10/13/24	11/7/24	WINTER '24
The Yass Prize 2024 Application Window Opens	2024 Application Window Closes	2024 Parents Choice Award Voting Opens	The Yass Summit & 2024 Semi-finalists Revealed	Yass Prize Accelerator for Semi-finalists, Alums & VIPs	Parents Choice Award Voting Closes	2024 Gala Celebrating Finalists & The Yass Prize Winner	Road Show Featuring Yass Prize Finalists

**Quick note of gratitude:** In 2021, Forbes partnered with CER to help Janine and Jeff Yass launch the Yass Prize and STOP Awards Initiative, bringing greater awareness and insights to the world of education entrepreneurship. This longstanding partnership has helped to celebrate and highlight the achievements of Yass Prize recipients. Forbes annually hosts many of the flagship Yass Prize events and incorporates their achievements among many efforts, from commentary and videography to participation in the annual 30 under 30 Summit. Our thanks to Randall Lane, Chief Content Officer and Steve Forbes, Chairman and Editor-in-Chief, Forbes Media for their inspiration, motivation and support!



**Follow the numbers** Each and every day The Yass Prize and edreform.com teams are managing and reporting on the progress in the public, media and policy spheres.

<b>4</b> years	<b>200+</b> organizations	<b>\$50</b> million awarded	<b>43</b> states represented	<b>Over</b> <b>1 million</b> students impacted
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Follow along with us on social media on X (Twitter), Facebook, Instagram, and our ever growing YouTube channel. Look for more exciting announcements in the coming weeks and months by subscribing to alerts at [yassprize.org](https://yassprize.org).



## What is the Yass Prize?

The Yass Prize for Sustainable, Transformational, Outstanding and Permissionless education, now in its fourth year, is a rapidly growing effort to find, reward, celebrate and expand best-in-class education organizations from every sector, in every state, and to create unprecedented partnerships that accelerate impact with the speed and urgency our students deserve. The Yass Prize and STOP Awards Initiative are accelerating education opportunity for students and freedom for parents and teachers all over the country.



[yassprize.org](https://yassprize.org)