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Press Release

Contact:Katrina Cavalli**,** 212.313.1181, kcavalli@sifma.org

**North Carolina 11th-grader’s Expert Investment Advice Drives Positive Returns in Capital Markets and in Life**

*Kevin Granson’s Essay Wins SIFMA Foundation’s*

*Fall 2020 National InvestWrite® Competition*

*He Will Be Surprised with Celebration on April 30, 2021*

**New York, NY, April 30, 2021** – Kevin Granson, age 17, from Belmont, North Carolina is well on his way to joining the ranks of some of the best financial legends in the world. The diligent 11th-grader defied the challenges of distance learning and cinched an exhilarating win in the SIFMA Foundation’s Fall 2020 InvestWrite competition, penning an essay on how challenges can create opportunities in the global economy and in life.

Competing in the high school division, Granson, who attends Highland School of Technology, researched and composed an impressive long-term financial plan and now he is being recognized as the winner in the state of North Carolina.

SIFMA Foundation’s InvestWrite national essay competition bridges classroom learning in math, social studies, and language arts with the practical research and knowledge required for saving, investing and long-term planning. It also serves as a culminating activity for The Stock Market Game™ a highly effective in-person, remote learning and hybrid educational tool in which students invest and manage a hypothetical $100,000 online portfolio of stocks, bonds, mutual funds and cash.

“SIFMA Foundation’s programs give youth of all backgrounds, especially in underserved communities, a real shot at financial independence and economic mobility,” said Melanie Mortimer, President of the SIFMA Foundation. “We equip and train teachers to offer essential skills and knowledge to their 4th-12th graders to navigate the capital markets and financial decision-making. To date, we’ve transformed the lives of 20 million students like Kevin through learning that is practical and fun.”

The Fall 2020 InvestWrite competition challenged students to write an essay about how they’ve adapted to change at some point in their lives, how a publicly traded company has adapted to change, and how that company’s stock could be combined with other stocks, bonds or mutual funds to create a successful long-term portfolio.

Granson developed a plan that would have an impact today and into the future and wowed the team of judges with his essay.

The Stock Market Game and InvestWrite competitions are offered in North Carolina through the North Carolina Council on Economic Education. The Stock Market Game was made possible by the generous support of Coastal Credit Union Foundation in areas where their footprint is present and the InvestWrite competition by Fidelity Investments. “We honor and congratulate our InvestWrite winning student and teacher,” said Sandy Wheat, Executive Director of the North Carolina Council on Economic Education, “Helping North Carolina students better understand our economy, our markets, the role of investors, and how to make good investments will pay dividends for the students, their education, and the North Carolina economy.”

Kevin Granson and his teacher, Dan Froehlich, will be honored during a surprise virtual presentation by the North Carolina Council on Economic Education and the SIFMA Foundation on April 30, 2021.

**Winning Essay by Kevin Granson**

When I was first on my way to “the highlands,” I had to endure an immense amount of change in my schedule along with a heightened amount of responsibilities and tasks that demanded my full devotion and attention. I thought of it as a hefty change from my usually structured life of school and extracurriculars. But Highland was a different breed of school with a big focus on self-direction and motivation that pushed me to become self-sufficient with my time rather than depending on a plan of the day.

A publicly-traded company that I think embodies this need for adaptation in an adverse environment is a business by the name of Uber. This company started out as a new way for people to taxi around their respective domains by allowing people, with the help of an app, to be their own boss and taxi people around town. This idea was revolutionary in the transportation industry as relying on strangers to drive an individual around seemed very dangerous with the severe possibility of theft or kidnapping.

But Uber was able to adapt by inputting a rating and a tracking system that would allow you to keep track of where your designated vehicle is as well as rate your experience with the driver, thus making it easier to ensure the safety of the app's participants. The company also took this idea a step further with the extension of the app's abilities with Uber Eats which would allow you to order food from any restaurant for delivery via Uber so you don't have to worry about going to get the food yourself. This is also managed and regulated with the ability to track the car with your request as well as rate the experience. This new feature was a great addition, especially with the abrupt appearance of the pandemic keeping everyone indoors and unable to go out for food.

What is truly astonishing is Uber's ability to improve upon their idea again with the occurrence of COVID-19 by adding a new feature that would allow you to charge an Uber participant with getting groceries so you wouldn't have to leave quarantine for the necessities of items such as, toilet paper, cleaning supplies, and food along with other essentials for maintaining a quarantine lifestyle. I found this versatile business strategy absolutely remarkable in the sense that no matter what happens, this business will always be in demand whether the world is in a pandemic or in prosperity, making it a virtually unstoppable company with few competitors that can match its versatility. Much like how I had to adapt to my new environment and social transactions, Uber was able to find a niche that was broad and at the same time essential for the present with plenty of opportunities for growth. This makes Uber a fantastic long-term investment that won't have you questioning your morals like with some businesses in the energy business or have you wondering how long they can keep progressing like the communication industry.

This company along with other trailblazers in transportation and retail like Tesla and bonds with Amazon could lead to a sturdy portfolio for any would-be investors. These revolutionary ideas are destined to change the way their respective industries work for years to come so it is my humble belief that these companies along with the corporate bonds that can go with them are an excellent long-term investment. Similar to how I invested myself into Highland School of Technology three years ago.

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**About the SIFMA Foundation for Investor Education**

The SIFMA Foundation is dedicated to fostering knowledge and understanding of the financial markets for individuals of all backgrounds, with a focus on youth. Drawing on the involvement and expertise of educators and the financial industry, the SIFMA Foundation provides financial education programs and tools that strengthen economic opportunities across communities and increase individuals’ access to the benefits of the global marketplace. Notable Foundation programs include The Stock Market Game™, which has enabled more than 20 million students to become financially prepared for life, the InvestWrite® national essay competition, the Capitol Hill Challenge™, and Invest It Forward®. For more information on the work of the SIFMA Foundation, visit **www.sifma.org/foundation**.

**About InvestWrite**®

InvestWrite® is a culminating activity for Stock Market Game students extending their classroom learning with a written challenge to address real-world financial issues and situations. Students must analyze, think critically and problem solve about a long-term saving and investing scenario. Nearly 250,000 student essays have been evaluated by their teachers and over 40,000 financial professionals have served as volunteer judges. Essays are judged by financial professionals who volunteer their time each year to ensure young people are exposed to the essentials of personal finance early in life. Judges evaluate students’ understanding of long-term investing, diversification, the global capital markets, and factors that drive investments as well as their expression of investment ideas in essay form. Winners locally and nationally rise to the top to earn exciting awards and prizes including laptops, classroom pizza parties, trophies, plaques and banners, and certificates.

For more information about InvestWrite®, visit **www.investwrite.org**.

**About the North Carolina Council on Economic Education**

The North Carolina Council on Economic Education, a nonprofit organization, provides North Carolina K-12 students with the economic knowledge and financial skills needed to thrive in the dynamic economy. By providing quality training and up-to-date resources, the North Carolina Council on Economic Education partners with teachers and school divisions to help students develop decision-making skills needed to be informed consumers, productive employees or innovative entrepreneurs, thoughtful investors, and reasoned voters. For more information, visit **www.nccee.org.**

**About SIFMA**

SIFMA is the leading trade association for broker-dealers, investment banks and asset managers operating in the U.S. and global capital markets. On behalf of our industry’s nearly 1 million employees, we advocate on legislation, regulation and business policy, affecting retail and institutional investors, equity and fixed income markets and related products and services. We serve as an industry coordinating body to promote fair and orderly markets, informed regulatory compliance, and efficient market operations and resiliency. We also provide a forum for industry policy and professional development. SIFMA, with offices in New York and Washington, D.C., is the U.S. regional member of the Global Financial Markets Association (GFMA). For more information, visit **www.sifma.org**.

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