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Press Release

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**North Carolina 8th-grader’s Expert Investment Advice Drives Positive Returns in Capital Markets and in Life**

*Michael Brown’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** – Michael Brown, age 13, from Cleveland, North Carolina is well on his way to joining the ranks of some of the best financial legends in the world. The diligent 8th-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 middle school division, Brown, who attends West Rowan Middle School, 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 Michael 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.

Brown 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.”

Michael Brown and his teacher, Raye Brothers, 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 Michael Brown**

How a Pandemic Affected Me and Tesla

Due to a global pandemic starting, I have made some adaptations in what I do on a day to day basis. I have to wear a mask in public, and I cannot meet my friends, or go on vacations. In school there are two groups of students, “A group” and “B group” and some of my friends are in the B group so I can’t see them. Each group goes to school for two days then we have three days of online learning. Some of my classes in school only have six students. This pandemic has given me lots of free time to do things I like to do like play video games, but this free time has also given me opportunities to see what careers I may like.

Tesla has done many things to help keep its employees and customers safe amongst the pandemic. Tesla’s leadership has created a plan to resume operations and keep employees safe. It has given workers a paid 14-day quarantine if they feel like they are sick with COVID. Tesla has also given its employees the option of working from home so that they do not have to make contact with anyone. Tesla abides by state and Centers for Disease control COVID regulations. Tesla workers have to wear personal protection equipment, social distance, and they have to do a self-health checklist every day. The self-health checklist includes things like if the worker has COVID symptoms, and if they have been around anyone who is sick. Tesla has changed workers' shifts to prevent a large gathering of people in one place and they have reduced shuttle occupancy to 50% to further mitigate the spread of COVID. The Tesla factories are sanitized constantly to kill any viruses that are on surfaces. They sanitize commonly touched places like doorknobs and tables, they also check air filters regularly to make sure they work effectively.

I would add tech companies to my portfolio because I believe that in the future a lot of things will involve technology. This is why I will add companies like AMD, Nvidia, and Microsoft to my portfolio. I would add AMD and Nvidia to my portfolio because they are dominating the CPU market and are starting to gain traction in the graphics card market. AMD started becoming a powerhouse in the computer industry after they hired Lisa Su. When Lisa Su was hired AMD was in the red and losing money, she decided to stop trying new things and work on their core products like CPUs and GPUs. Eventually their competition, Intel, stopped advancing and they took over.

I would add Microsoft to my portfolio because they have a monopoly over the operating system market for computers. Their competitors are Apple’s macOS and Linux. macOS isn’t an issue for them because it is only for Apple devices, and Linux isn’t an issue either because it is difficult to use for most people. I would add Nvidia to my portfolio because they are making major advances in Artificial Intelligence and graphics cards.

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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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