



FOUNDATION

Press Release

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Fourth Grader Kate Rominger Places 1st in North Carolina in the SIFMA Foundation's Fall 2023 National InvestWrite® Competition

Savvy Young Investor Creates a Diversified Portfolio to Reach Long-Term Goals

New York, NY, April 24, 2024 – Echoing the immortal words of Nelson Mandela, “It always seems impossible until it’s done,” Kate Rominger is making remarkable strides towards achieving her goals through the development of a comprehensive long-term investment portfolio. Currently enrolled in 4th grade at Selwyn Elementary School in Charlotte, NC, Kate is dedicated to crafting a diversified array of investments aimed at securing long-term financial success.

Kate’s commitment to her investment strategy bore fruit with a remarkable achievement in the SIFMA Foundation’s Fall 2023 InvestWrite competition. Kate emerged triumphant among thousands of student participants nationwide, crafting an outstanding essay on long-term investing and the dynamics of capital markets in the elementary school division. In recognition of her accomplishment, Kate and her esteemed teacher, Nardish Mac, were honored by the SIFMA Foundation and the North Carolina Council on Economic Education during the NCEE’s Awards Ceremony held on April 24.

The SIFMA Foundation’s InvestWrite national essay competition serves as a vital bridge between classroom education in mathematics, social studies, and language arts, and the practical application of research and knowledge essential for saving, investing, and long-term financial planning. As a culminating activity for The Stock Market Game™, a curriculum-based financial education program challenging students to manage a hypothetical \$100,000 online portfolio of stocks, bonds, mutual funds, and cash, InvestWrite empowers students to apply their learning in real-world scenarios.

The efficacy of SIFMA Foundation’s programs in enhancing participants’ test scores in math and economics, fostering financial planning skills, promoting teamwork and interpersonal social-emotional learning, and better preparing students for future academic and professional endeavors, has been well-documented. With a steadfast commitment to closing the opportunity gaps in our society, the SIFMA Foundation is dedicated to equipping young people from all backgrounds, with a particular focus on underserved youth, with a robust understanding of financial markets.

“It brings me immense joy to extend my heartfelt congratulations to Kate, her dedicated teacher, and the entire school community for their remarkable achievement in the essay writing

competition,” said Melanie Mortimer, President of the SIFMA Foundation. “Through her insightful exploration of diversification and steadfast commitment to long-term goals, Kate has not only demonstrated adeptness in navigating market dynamics, but has also illuminated pathways to enduring financial prosperity. This victory underscores the profound impact of financial education, transcending individual accomplishments to foster meaningful community empowerment.”

The Stock Market Game and InvestWrite are offered in North Carolina through the North Carolina Council on Economic Education and the programs are sponsored by Coastal Credit Union. “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.”

The Fall 2023 InvestWrite competition posed the following challenge to 4th-12th graders: ‘Which of your Stock Market Game investments performed well or poorly, and why? Utilizing at least one of their Stock Market Game investments, participants were tasked with constructing a diversified portfolio of stocks, bonds, and mutual funds aimed at achieving a personal, family, or community goal by 2033.’

Kate captivated a panel of expert judges from the financial services industry with a compelling and insightful essay.

Winning Essay

The Stock Market Game was challenging and sometimes confusing. I learned to work with a group and that made it easier to understand. I knew some popular companies and knew they were doing well like Nike. So, my team researched the companies we knew, and selected the ones that were doing the best for our portfolio.

Some choices I made were Nike, Barnes and Noble and Dominion Energy. I made those choices because they were going up and would help to get me my short-term goals and some of my long-term goals. I also made those choices because I wanted to diversify my portfolio because the stocks are in different sectors.

Our portfolio did not perform as well as I hoped. Our Amazon stock started losing points which we didn't expect to happen. Our Omega stock also had a pretty big drop and we started losing even more points. The rest of the stocks did pretty good although they were doing better, they did not go up a lot and we still got sixth place in the competition.

In ten years, I would like to get a car so I can drive myself around to places I want to go. I would use my car to go to school, my job, my friends' houses and take it on road trips. It would have been better so I wouldn't have to walk or take the bus. I would have a good time with my car and jam out to music while driving places.

In 10 years I want to have a mix of the different types of investments. Since it's only ten years until I buy a car, I want to have some low-risk holdings. I also want some high risk so I can make money faster. I want $\frac{1}{3}$ of high risk, $\frac{1}{3}$ of medium risk and $\frac{1}{3}$ of low risk. One of the stocks I would use is Nike because it is doing really well and doing better than our other stocks. I think Nike is going to continue being popular in 10 years because it sells good and strong shoes.

I split my \$10,000 into thirds so I wouldn't have too much low risk because then I wouldn't have as much money. I also did not want too much high risk because then I would be getting then losing the money right away. That is why I split my \$10,000 into thirds.

I think this portfolio can help me achieve my goal because I can take what I learned and invest in companies to get money for my car. My portfolio has $\frac{1}{3}$ of mutual funds, $\frac{1}{3}$ of bonds and $\frac{1}{3}$ of stocks so I will have some money for the low and medium risk and a lot of money for the high risk. The low and medium risk will protect me from losing too much money.

In this class, I learned how to work in a group, invest in companies and diversify my portfolio so I have high and low risk investments. By doing this, it increases my chances of reaching my financial goals.

About the SIFMA Foundation

The SIFMA Foundation is committed to closing the opportunity gap by fostering greater knowledge of the financial markets for young people of all backgrounds. Drawing on the support and expertise of educators and the financial industry, the Foundation provides financial education to strengthen economic opportunity across communities and increase awareness of the benefits of the global marketplace. Since 1977, the Foundation's flagship program, The Stock Market Game™, has guided more than 22 million students on their path to financial independence by attaining stronger life skills, improving academic achievement, and boosting their social-emotional learning. For more information on 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. More than 275,000 student essays have been evaluated by their teachers and over 50,000 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 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 (NCCEE)

The North Carolina Council on Economic Education was founded in 1970. NCCEE is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization working with K-12 teachers statewide to give our students a better understanding of economics and to prepare them for personal financial decision-making. With support from private businesses and foundations, and through partnerships with state agencies, the NCCEE is a tremendous example of an effective public-private partnership. More information on is available at www.nccee.org.

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