



2006 NFIB/Visa Young Entrepreneur Regional Award Winners

The NFIB Young Entrepreneur Awards program, administered by the NFIB Young Entrepreneur Foundation, awards educational scholarships to high school seniors, nationwide, who have demonstrated exceptional entrepreneurial effort, skill and achievement. Since 2003, when this awards program made its debut, the NFIB Young Entrepreneur Foundation has awarded 1,115 Young Entrepreneur Award Scholarships totaling \$1.18 million. For the third straight year, Visa has donated over \$100,000 in scholarship money to the NFIB Young Entrepreneur Foundation to support the Young Entrepreneur Awards program. This includes a special \$10,000 “Young Entrepreneur of the Year” Award and four \$5,000 regional Young Entrepreneur Awards.

To earn a scholarship, students were asked to demonstrate their entrepreneurial achievement by answering a short, personal questionnaire defining their efforts. Each applicant also composed an essay about the importance of free enterprise. Standardized test scores, GPA and class rank were also taken into consideration.

Southeast Regional and the 2006 NFIB/Visa “Young Entrepreneur of the Year” Award Winner:

Ashley Gunn of Brandon, Mississippi
Plans to attend the University of Pennsylvania

Ms. Gunn is the founder and chairman of Students Aiding Indigent Families (SAIF), a non-profit organization that buys, renovates and sells abandoned homes to families in need, usually single mothers, at below-market value. Ms. Gunn first thought of this business idea after returning from a mission trip to Africa in the summer before entering the 7th grade. Moved by the poverty and despair all around her while in Africa, she was determined to help address similar needs back home in her Jackson, Mississippi community. On track to generate \$100,000 in revenue this year, SAIF has been certified by the Mississippi Secretary of State and all proceeds from their home sales go toward providing college scholarships to deserving students who are in need.

Northeast Regional Winner:

Andrew J. Sohn of Teaneck, New Jersey
Plans to attend Rutgers University

In April of 2002, Mr. Sohn founded Acend Productions, a complete media marketing company with a video and film production studio. Acend creates, from the ground up, complex data, content management and e-commerce systems for businesses looking to streamline operations through their computer systems.

Central Regional Winner:

Leah J. Hansen of Letcher, South Dakota
Plans to attend South Dakota State University

Leah breeds hunting Labrador puppies which she then sells to local hunting organizations for their banquet raffles. She also has developed a concession and lunch counter at which she sells her own baked goods. In the summer, she provides concessions at a local ballpark.

Midwest Regional Winner:

Joseph A. Pascaretta of Rochester, Michigan
Plans to attend the University of Michigan

In 1999, Mr. Pascaretta established Alps Technology International, an Internet technology firm for the website development market. Within three years, Alps Technology has grossed more than one-hundred thousand dollars in revenue, with business shifting from web development to database integration and the brokering of database space. Mr. Pascaretta is also the founder of a landscaping firm called The Alps Lawn Company. He grossed about \$10,000 in cash in his first year.

Western Regional Winner:

Elliot Bradshaw of Bellingham, Washington
Plans to attend the University of Washington

At the age of 15, Mr. Bradshaw started his own web hosting business called Incognito Networks which hosts a client's website on the Internet and makes it accessible to all web users.