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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Nadia Osman, (478) 361-1313 or nosman.yea@maconchamber.com

**LOCAL YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS COMPETE IN NATIONAL
PITCH COMPETITION**

MACON – Today, two local students from the Macon Young Entrepreneurs Academy (YEA!) program, Dabney and William Peters, are pitching their business idea at the YEA! National Saunders Scholars Competition, which takes place throughout the day, at New York’s Rochester Institute of Technology.

The young entrepreneurs, who developed a trading card company named Heroes of the Fray, were selected to represent Macon at the competition after winning the first annual YEA! Macon Investor Panel. During that event, a group of local business leaders invested \$12,000 in 16 different businesses, created by the local middle and high school students selected to participate in YEA! Macon.

Elijah Rutland, who creates custom-painted apparel and sneakers with his company Fix My Sole, and Macy Fuller, who makes books and dolls that celebrate diversity through her String Things business, were also selected as Investor Panel runners up.

The Saunders Scholars Competition brings together over 100 young entrepreneurs, ages 11 through 18, from across the country, who have won their local YEA! Investor Panel events, to pitch their business ideas. The event is named for and made possible by legendary entrepreneur E. Philip Saunders, with respected business and community leaders judging the presentations.

The participants are competing for business startup prizes, college scholarships ranging from \$25,000 to \$50,000, as well as a trip to America’s Small Business Summit in Washington, D.C.

The Greater Macon Chamber of Commerce runs YEA! Macon, which teaches local public, private and home school students how to launch their own companies. The program’s first year will culminate with a YEA! Macon Trade Show event on May 21, 2017, from 2 – 6 p.m., and the participants will graduate from the program on May 24, 2017.

For more information about YEA! Macon, including a full list of sponsors, as well as future opportunities for student participants, sponsors and community volunteers, please visit: www.maconchamber.com/young-entrepreneurs-academy.html.

About the Greater Macon Chamber of Commerce

Established in 1861, the Greater Macon Chamber of Commerce is the area's largest business services organization and primary advocate for the Macon business community. The Chamber supports the growth and development of business by offering networking and marketing opportunities, providing valuable benefits to its members, advocating for legislative issues that will promote a healthy business climate, and participating in the economic development efforts for Macon-Bibb. For more information, visit www.maconchamber.com.

About the Young Entrepreneurs Academy

The Young Entrepreneurs Academy (YEA!) is a 501(c)3 offering groundbreaking year-long classes that teach middle and high school students how to start and run their own businesses. Throughout the class, students develop business ideas, write business plans, conduct market research, pitch their plans to a panel of investors for startup funds, and launch and run their own, fully formed companies and social movements. The project-based program empowers students to take charge of their futures.

Founded in 2004 at the University of Rochester with support from the Kauffman Foundation, YEA! today serves thousands of students nationwide. In 2011, the United States Chamber of Commerce Foundation became a national sponsor and partner of the Academy to help celebrate the spirit of enterprise among today's youth and tomorrow's future leaders.

YEA! bridges the business and educational communities to fulfill its mission of teaching more students how to make a job, not just take a job. YEA! is made possible by the Kauffman Foundation, U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation and E. Philip Saunders Foundation. For more information, visit www.yeausa.org.

About the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation is dedicated to strengthening America's long-term competitiveness and educating the public on how the free enterprise system improves society and the economy.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce is the world's largest business federation representing the interests of more than 3 million businesses of all sizes, sectors, and regions, as well as state and local chambers and industry associations.

About Sam's Club

Sam's Club®, a division of Walmart Stores, Inc. (NYSE: WMT), is a leading membership warehouse club offering savings and services to millions of members in 651 clubs in the U.S. and Puerto Rico. Sam's Club offers affordable access to innovative services for families and small business owner, including travel, payroll and HR services, protection plans, legal solutions, cash rewards and more. To learn more about time and money with Sam's Club, visit www.samsclub.com/services.