

City of Gainesville, Florida

Office of Mayor Lauren Poe
PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the City of Gainesville encourages all citizens of Gainesville to support youth development, sustainability, entrepreneurship and community involvement; and

WHEREAS, educating and inspiring youth to become leaders and changemakers are key to sustaining the future of our community; and

WHEREAS, Young Entrepreneurs for Leadership and Sustainability (YELS) has represented the City of Gainesville, the University of Florida and the Warrington College of Business's Entrepreneurship & Innovation Center at national and international conferences, most recently being recognized with the 2016 United States Association for Small Business and Entrepreneurship Education (USASBE) Outstanding Specialty Entrepreneurship Education Program Award. This is the highest honor for an entrepreneurship education program and a once-in-a-lifetime accomplishment; and

WHEREAS, this marks the 10th year of the Young Entrepreneurs for Leadership and Sustainability summer program which has impacted the lives of hundreds of young people, who, over the course of the past ten years, have contributed a total of over 35,000 hours of volunteer service to nearly 100 non-profit organizations in our local community with a value of over \$777,000; and

WHEREAS, one in every three YELS Alumni (whose average age is 16) goes on to launch their own startup venture (business or organization) within one year of their YELS experience; and

WHEREAS, the generous support of numerous sponsors and friends whose gifts make it possible for YELS to provide scholarship assistance to approximately 25 percent of the students each summer, enabling students from low-income backgrounds to participate in this life-changing experience. YELS believes that having a diverse group of participants from a wide variety of backgrounds--socioeconomic, racial and ethnic, religious, cultural, etc.--enhances the experience of all students; and

WHEREAS, Founder and Director, Dr. Kristin Joos has created this unique summer program (as part of UF Warrington College of Business's Social Impact and Sustainability Initiative, which she launched with Professor Emeritus Arnie Heggstad in 2005) for college-bound high-school students to learn an entrepreneurial mindset, gain an awareness of global problems and practice living sustainably. Kristin is passionate about teaching and empowering students to use the skills and strategies of business to create innovative and sustainable solutions to social, environmental and economic problems in their local communities and around the world; and

WHEREAS, the success of YELS is credited to the generosity of many campus and community partners who support the program by serving as mentors; hosting community service teams; providing in-kind donations; sharing their skills, expertise, experiences, stories and advice with our students as guest speakers; welcoming YELS students to visit and tour their facilities on field trips; and helping connect the YELS program with the many members of our local community who serve as inspirational role models for YELS students.


NOW, THEREFORE, I, Lauren Poe, by the authority vested in me as Mayor of the City of Gainesville, do hereby proclaim July 7, 2016 as

Young Entrepreneurs for Leadership and Sustainability Day

in the City of Gainesville and invite all our citizens to join me in thanking the Social Impact and Sustainability Initiative of the University of Florida's Entrepreneurship and Innovation Center for organizing an exemplary program; the staff of YEIS (including both the UF students who serve as staff members for the program and Dr. Kristin Joos), who devote their summers to empowering students to become changemakers; and the high school students who choose to attend YEIS and spend their summer learning the key mindsets of entrepreneurs while endeavoring to make a positive impact in the world, starting right here in Gainesville.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the official seal of the City of Gainesville, Florida, this 29th day of June, A.D., 2016.





Lauren Poe
Mayor