

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Financial Literacy Program for Girls Reaches New Heights

Rock The Street, Wall Street Expects to Impact Over 1,000 Girls This Year

NASHVILLE, August 5, 2019 — As a new academic year begins, the nonprofit organization [Rock The Street, Wall Street](#) is reaching new heights in its efforts to improve girls' financial literacy, more than tripling the number of its high school programs over the last two years. Rock The Street, Wall Street (RTSWS) is a 501(c)(3) organization that provides financial and investment education to high school girls to spark their interest into careers of finance.

RTSWS' momentum is accelerating, expanding to **30 high schools** (versus 18 last year; and 9 the prior year) across **17 U.S. cities** during the 2019-20 academic year. More than 1,700 girls have completed the program since its founding in 2013, and that number is expected to increase by more than 1,000 this year.

“Pressure is building to make financial literacy programs mandatory – but college is too late. College students are already on their way to accruing massive debts, leading to a significant cultural problem that disproportionately affects women. Solutions must target kids early and find a way to resonate with girls specifically,” said [Maura Cunningham](#), **Founder and CEO of Rock The Street, Wall Street**.

Girls' interest and confidence levels in math start to wane at age 9; finding new strategies to re-engage their interest in math during high school is critical. With so many teachers reporting they are ill-equipped to teach finance, RTSWS brings female financial professionals into the classroom to teach and mentor young girls. It not only raises girls' comfort and confidence levels, but it also exposes them to role models that are often lacking.

“The ‘M’ in STEM is too often ignored, especially when we’re talking to girls,” said Cunningham. “Exposing them to the creative and practical sides of math – such as stock market investing – can influence their career choices and empower them to make better decisions about money.”

Legislators are also taking a closer look at how diversity is addressed by the industry, discussing how to increase institutional investors' use of diverse asset managers. RTSWS board member [Meredith Jones](#), founder of MJ Alternative Investment Research, participated in a U.S. Congressional hearing in June to inform the legislation.

“To increase diversity in a meaningful way, the investment industry has to focus on both supply and demand,” said Jones. “From a demand perspective, we have to inform investors about the ‘diversity dividend’ and how it works to increase investment returns and grow the economy at large so they push asset managers to hire more diverse applicants. At the same time, we must

focus on early educational intervention to increase the supply of highly-qualified diverse investment job and portfolio management candidates.”

RTSWS’ advisors have been critical to the organization’s growth. RTSWS welcomed six new [board members](#) in 2019, including:

- Anders Hall, CFA, Vice Chancellor for Investments and Chief Investment Officer at Vanderbilt University
- Arthur Steinmetz, former Chairman, President and CEO of Oppenheimer Funds
- Christine Ritchie, CFA, CFP, Director of Compliance at CarVal Investors
- Jennifer Knight, Senior Investment Analyst at HCA Healthcare
- Judy Ricketts, Managing Director and Head of Investor Services at TD Ameritrade
- Viraj Parikh, CFO and strategic finance consultant at TechCXO

RTSWS students average an 88 percent increase in their understanding of financial literacy between the start and end of the program. Graduates of the program are four times more likely to pursue degrees in finance, economics or related fields than the national average for undergraduate females.

About [Rock The Street, Wall Street](#)

Rock The Street, Wall Street is a financial literacy program designed to spark the interest of high school girls into careers of finance. Girls learn about positive money management habits and the capital markets, while simultaneously helping them see the real-world application of the math content they learn in the classroom. RTSWS programs are funded by sponsors; volunteers are female financial professionals who go into local high schools to teach the M in STEM, and serve as real-life role models and mentors for girls. RTSWS programs provide a strong focus on the barriers that need to be removed and the types of interventions that “lift” students’ interest, commitment, and ability to persist in the M of the STEM fields. Headquartered in Nashville, Tenn., RTSWS programs are in 30 high schools across 17 U.S. cities in the 2019-20 academic year: Atlanta, Charlotte, Chicago, Dallas/Ft. Worth, Gulfport, Kansas City, Minneapolis, Nashville, New Orleans, New York City, Omaha, Philadelphia, Raleigh, Sacramento, San Diego, San Francisco and St. Louis. RTSWS is a 501(c)(3) organization.