



Kids and Money: 2021's Money Smart Kids Hall of Fame winners

KIDS & MONEY

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(Rufous/Dreamstime/TNS)

This being end-of-the-year awards season, it's time to announce the newest members of the Money Smart Kids Hall of Fame.

This marks the third straight year this columnist – with a helping hand from readers – has honored individuals or institutions that have exhibited a long, deep passion for helping kids learn about all things money.

Past hall of fame classes have included the creators of Monopoly, the author of the classic book, “The Richest Man in Babylon,” and the founder of the Young Americans Bank in the Denver area.

This year's hall of fame class has four inductees, whose names will forever be inscribed in the cloud:

*Carrie Schwab-Pomerantz has been a highly visible advocate for family finance for more than 25 years in her role as board chair and president of the Charles Schwab Foundation.

The Schwab Foundation has had a long partnership with the Boys & Girls Clubs of America, teaching youngsters financial education. The daughter of Wall Street innovator Charles Schwab, Schwab-Pomerantz has advised two White House administrations on financial literacy.

This fall, the foundation launched Moneywise America, a money management program aimed at teaching teens nationwide about credit cards, budgeting, investing, and saving for rainy days.

*Eva Velasquez stands out for dedicating her career as a watchdog against ever-present identity thieves and fraudsters. As long-time president and chief executive of the San Diego-based Identity Theft Resource Center, part of her mission is educating consumers of all ages on how to reduce the odds of being victimized.

That's a tall order, especially with so many fraudsters hijacking social media accounts, payment apps, and digital wallets – all popular with teens and young adults. Indeed,

Velasquez said, the number of data breaches reached a record high in 2021, and she expects nothing different in the new year.

*Stan and Jan Berenstain are best known for their “Berenstain Bears” books. The series covers children’s subject matter ranging from throwing tantrums in public places to too much television, to the pitfalls of running with the “in” crowd.

But the prolific husband and wife authors and illustrators also dealt with important subject matter around the issue of money, including “Trouble with Money,” “Broken Piggy Bank,” and “The Berenstain Bears Get the Gimmies.”

More than 260 million copies of their books have been sold.

*This year’s lifetime achievement award goes to **Susan Beacham**, the co-founder of **Money Savvy Generation**, a financial education company now based in the Phoenix area.

When I first talked to Beacham in a telephone interview nearly 20 years ago, her passion for preaching the need for kids to be financially literate came across loud and clear and in a positive way. She understands the stakes.

“Our goal is to get out in front of money management behavior before bad habits set in,” the woman known as “Mrs. Money” said on her website.

Thanks to Beacham and the financial education programs, products, and books she’s created, many thousands of kids of all ages have learned their financial ABCs. One of her teaching tools: a simple four-slotted bank called the Money Savvy Pig with slots for saving, spending, donating and investing.

(Questions, comments, column ideas? Send an email to sbrosen1030@gmail.com.)

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