

High school investment club makes real investment in future

Club's stock worth \$40K funds scholarships

Natalie Ryder
Community Editor

The typical memories of high schoolers involved in their school's investment clubs consist of using fake currency in a simulated stock market to imitate that experience. The students in at the Forest Lake Area High School's investment club will have drastically different memories as their TD Ameritrade account currently has more than \$40,000 in the pot.

The investment club is not only an extracurricular activity providing knowledge about investing, but the money they raise through investments will support those students' future through



Submitted photo

The Forest Lake Area High School Investment Club gets education on the stock market from two area financial planners.

financial scholarships. The scholarships offered to the students in the club are coordinated through the Forest Lake Area Community Scholarship Foundation, who will put a portion of the club's investment total toward scholarships.

"Based on funding, they determine how many students will get the scholarships," Forest Lake Area High

School business education teacher Kristen Nellis explained. "This is the first year we have this many students, so that number was being determined and has not yet been announced. I know that more money was added to the funds to give more scholarships this year since we grew so quickly."

Students are learning about the stock market

through this investment opportunity with real skin in the game.

"It's usually a subject that's not talked about a lot, even in college. A lot of people come out of college and don't even know what investment is," partner and financial planner at Five Star Financial Resources Brad Beck said.

Zoey Braaten, a student in the investment

club, said she's happy to be learning, since she has seen an uptick of social media posts about booming financial industries like Bitcoin and non-fungible tokens.

"I really wanted to join just to kind of learn more myself," Braaten said, adding that the scholarship opportunities are "super awesome."

"I think that this is an important skill no matter what you do in life. It's good to make smart financial decisions and investments and stuff," junior Dale Kangas said.

Club's growth

The club started in 2018 when Kangas was a freshman, but it was a dismal group with only a few participants. The club, which had been an unofficial one until this year, began with an anonymous donation of \$25,000. The club was just two to three people

Investment see page 3

Forest Lake council gets preview of budget season

Hannah Davis
News Editor

City Administrator Patrick Casey gave the Forest Lake council a chance to review key directives by the council in relation to the city's strategic plan and budget as budget season nears, offering the council a look back at the last year and what to expect for this year's budget season, a time when the city hashes out priorities and spending needs.

In his overview of how the city is faring with four of its key objectives in the strategic plan, Casey said that while focusing on parks and recreation goals and making improvements to attract businesses and developments has seen great success, the city has also struggled in developing a financial plan to update the city's infrastructure and communicating with the public.

"Obviously, we've had some challenges with performing and to meeting our goals with the strategic plan, not only with COVID, but as I mentioned a minute

Budget preview see page 2

News Pages 1-4	Opinion Pages 5	Arts & Entertainment Pages 6	Community Pages 7-11	Puzzles Page 8	Announcements Page 9	Sports Pages 12-15	Classifieds Pages 16-24	Business Page 32
-------------------	--------------------	---------------------------------	-------------------------	-------------------	-------------------------	-----------------------	----------------------------	---------------------

WE DO EVERYTHING!
ROYAL CREDIT UNION DOES BUSINESS BANKING!

- Online Loan Applications
- Dedicated Business Bankers
- Cash Management Solutions

ROYAL CREDIT UNION

rcu.org/RoyalBusiness
715-833-7296
BusinessBanking@rcu.org

Equal Housing Opportunity. Insured by NCUA.

COMMUNITY

Spring fun
City of Forest Lake holds annual event
Page 11

SPORTS

Track triumphs
Boys 3rd at Rochester
Page 13

APG
EAST CENTRAL MINNESOTA

8 34493 00010 6



News

Hannah Davis | 763-233-0709 | hannah.davis@apgecm.com

Investment

from page 1
in the first few years.

“Last year, it was just me and like one other person. So I’d be coming in every couple days and be like, ‘All right, sell this, buy this.’ ... It was sort of tough. But it’s nice to have the group and the group decisions,” Kangas said.

In the club’s earlier days, Kangas and the other members were learning as they went.

“I had zero knowledge at all – like, nothing. I didn’t even know what the number on the stock tickers was, the share price,” Kangas joked.

This year, the school made it an official activity, and the club began to draw more students – and with those students, another anonymous donation of \$15,000 was added to the students’ portfolio.

“This year we were able to make it an official school club through the high

school,” Nellis said.

The ability to use real money has been a draw, and sometimes a shock, for students who have joined the club.

“When Nellis was first telling me about how much money we had because it was an anonymous investor, I was really thrown back. That’s a lot of money,” Braaten said.

Investing in education

With the increased participation and pressure handling more than \$45,000, Nellis realized she’d need some more help to foster the students’ education in investments, so she brought in two community members to help. Beck and Five Star Financial Resources financial planner Troy Axelson attend the club’s meetings, teaching the students about the market and investments, though they can’t offer any specific advice.

“It’s just a passion of

mine. I’ve done it for 30 years and I’d do [the job] even if I wasn’t paid for it. ... It’s a good opportunity just to share with the next generation,” Axelson said.

To kick off their involvement and a new era for the investment club, Beck and Axelson held an informational session to lay basic groundwork of investing for the students.

“They started the year off with a ‘crash course’ on investing for the kids and challenged them weekly to research and learn what was happening in the market. They are able to bring to the group purpose and expertise,” Nellis said.

Braaten joked that at first it seemed Beck and Axelson were speaking in a different language during the crash course.

“There’s so much that you need to understand and so there’s a lot of open dialogue,” Braaten said.

Beck and Axelson said they both enjoy working with and encouraging

the students as they guide them through the ever-changing current events that can impact the market and the club’s real investments, and the students have responded.

Kangas said, “You get all real variables ... like what’s happening in the real world and how it really affects the stocks and stuff. It’s not just sort of a game.”

The club discusses those “real” variables, like Elon Musk purchasing Twitter, and how that could im-

pact their current shares in Twitter and their shares in another social media conglomerate, Meta, which owns Facebook and Instagram.

Though Axelson and Beck cannot advise students on what to buy or sell, the two encourage the students to research and propose stocks they’re interested in buying and selling based on current trends in the world. During the Tuesday, April 26, meeting, Braaten presented the

possible purchase of Sony stock due to the company’s new virtual reality technology that it is creating.

“I’ve been seeing lots of things on the internet of actual physical places you can go to and use VR and experience it. And that’s something I would be really interested in. I just know that it is taking off,” Braaten said.

Following her presentation on why she thought the club should invest in Sony, Beck and Axelson walked the students through an in-depth reading of how well Sony stock has done long term and if it is a stable investment. The students didn’t purchase Sony at the end of April but began discussing that possibility in the future.

“We’re really just here to teach them to fish. And then they go and determine which fish they want to catch,” Axelson said.

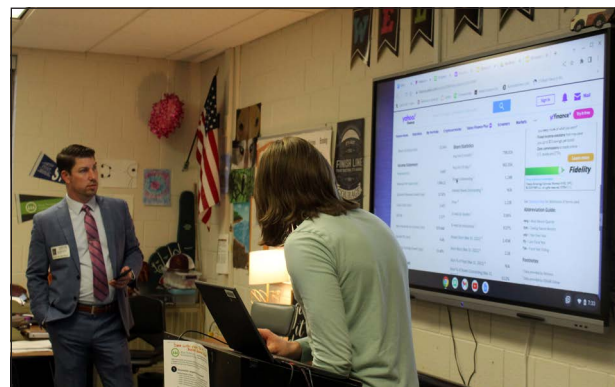


Photo by Natalie Ryder

Bradley Beck, left, partner and financial planner at Five Star Financial Resources, analyzes Sony’s stock credentials with Dale Kangas following the presentation from student Zoey Braaten, who proposed the club buy Sony shares.

PREPARE FOR MEDICARE WORKSHOP



Get the Medicare answers you need and learn about Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota plans that can help fill gaps in coverage at a free, no obligation workshop.

Reserve your spot today.

Stillwater

Water Street Inn
101 Water St South
Tuesday, May 17, 10 a.m.

Forest Lake

Senior Community Center
767 4th St SW
Monday, May 23, 2 p.m.



Jeff Nelson
(651) 662-3602 | TTY 711
jeff.nelson@bluecrossmn.com
bluecrossmn.com/nelson

Blue Cross offers PPO, Cost and PDP plans with Medicare contracts. Enrollment in these Blue Cross plans depends on contract renewal. Plans are available to residents of the service area. A salesperson will be present with information and applications. For accommodations of persons with special needs at meetings, call the number above to be directed to a licensed insurance agent.

You + Blue™

Y0138_102120FF02_C

Authorized independent agent/agency of Blue Cross® and Blue Shield® of Minnesota and Blue Plus®, nonprofit independent licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

UNEXPECTED COMPANY CHORALE

PROUDLY PRESENTS

BRINGING BACK BROADWAY

FEATURING MUSIC FROM
SOUND OF MUSIC • SWEENEY TODD
INTO THE WOODS • LES MISERABLES
WAITRESS & MORE!

FRIDAY • 7:30PM	SUNDAY • 3:00PM
MAY 13, 2022	MAY 15, 2022
TRINITY	FOREST HILLS
LUTHERAN CHURCH	CHURCH
13025 NEWELL AVE.	1790 11TH ST. SE
LINDSTROM, MN	FOREST LAKE, MN

ALL TICKETS ARE \$10
AVAILABLE AT THE DOOR OR ONLINE AT
WWW.UCCHORALE.ORG/CONCERTS-EVENTS

WWW.UCCHORALE.ORG

GET TICKETS