

Entrepreneurs' Organization Birmingham Names Madison Hamilton as 2025 Global Student Entrepreneur Awards Finalist

EO Birmingham named Samford student Madison Hamilton its 2025 GSEA finalist. She'll represent Birmingham at nationals in the Dominican Republic.

BIRMINGHAM, AL, UNITED STATES, January 8, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Entrepreneurs'



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Rob Evans

Organization Birmingham has announced Madison Hamilton, a Samford University student and founder of Stitched by Madison, as the finalist for the Global Student Entrepreneur Awards (GSEA) Birmingham. Hamilton will represent Birmingham at the National GSEA Competition, which will take place later this year in the Dominican Republic.

GSEA is the world's leading competition dedicated exclusively to undergraduate and graduate students who are actively building and running their own businesses.

Organized by Entrepreneurs' Organization (EO), the program recognizes the creativity, courage, and grit it takes to launch a company while juggling coursework, deadlines, and the demands of everyday student life. Unlike many traditional business competitions, GSEA does not measure success solely through revenue or valuation. Instead, it celebrates that which fuels entrepreneurial growth: adaptability, passion, and relentless determination.

For student founders, GSEA often serves as a turning point for their budding businesses. Participants gain access to real-world guidance from experienced EO members, receive strategic feedback on their business models, and connect with like-minded peers worldwide. Finalists also benefit from increased media exposure, both locally and internationally. At the Global Finals, students compete for a first-place prize of \$50,000 in cash and business services.

Hamilton's company, Stitched by Madison, has grown from a small idea sparked by the spontaneous purchase of a sewing machine into a licensed sorority apparel and accessories brand serving chapters nationwide. The business specializes in creating customizable, high-quality products that reflect the identity and traditions of each organization. While balancing classes, Hamilton has managed supplier relationships, product development, nationwide

fulfillment, and brand strategy. Her success reflects both entrepreneurial drive and the resourcefulness required to build a company while obtaining an education.

"It is very inspiring to see the tenacious spirit these student entrepreneurs have. What impresses me the most is hearing how much passion they have to figure out how to navigate the chaos of running a business, passing their classes, and still maintaining a social life in college," said Rob Evans, GSEA Birmingham Chair. "These students are balancing two huge roles—being a student and a business owner—with a level of resilience and energy that is challenging and contagious."

Founded in 1987, the Entrepreneurs' Organization is a global network of nearly 20,000 entrepreneurs in 61 countries, spanning more than 220 chapters. EO Birmingham supports local business owners through peer-to-peer learning, chapter events, leadership development, and community involvement. Each year, the chapter hosts GSEA to invest in the region's next generation of innovators and job creators. Students interested in participating in next year's GSEA competition may visit <https://eonetwork.org/gsea/> for eligibility requirements, deadlines, and application details.

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