

SPRINGFIELD, Mass., Jan. 23, 2014 /PRNewswire/ -- [Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Company \(MassMutual\)](#) today announced the launch of MassMutual's FutureSmartChallenge, a nationwide future leadership program that offers middle school students the opportunity to learn about smart educational and financial choices in an exciting interactive seminar held in local arenas where NBA teams play, followed up by Junior Achievement curriculum in their classrooms during the school year. The goal of the program is to empower and challenge young leaders to take positive steps toward a successful career and financial security for themselves, their families and their communities. The company is devoting over \$1 million to MassMutual's FutureSmart Challenge in 2014.

"As a mutual company sharply focused on its policyowners and customers, MassMutual's purpose is to help people secure their future and protect the ones they love. It is that same purpose which makes MassMutual's FutureSmart Challenge such a natural extension of our efforts to help people build greater financial security," said Roger Crandall, Chairman, President and CEO, MassMutual. "Our FutureSmart Challenge program will help educate and enrich our young people so the next generation is better positioned to have a fulfilling and financially secure future."

According to the [2013 MassMutual State of the American Family Study](#), nearly three-quarters (72 percent) of Americans believe it is important to educate our children on finances to ensure a strong economy in the future. In fact, [corporate responsibility](#) is a pillar in MassMutual's strategy and culture – with education, economic development and community vitality among the company's key areas of focus.

MassMutual Scores a Slam Dunk with New FutureSmart(SM) Challenge

Written by Australian Business

MassMutual's FutureSmart Challenge, hosted by award-winning actor and *New York Times* best-selling author Hill Harper, kicks off its first of four scheduled events at the home of the Dallas Mavericks at the American Airlines Center on

January 28, 2014

, with the tour continuing on to Atlanta

, Los Angeles

and Phoenix. (See schedule below). The program will reach nearly 10,000 middle school students this year, with additional events in development for later in the year and 2015.

Harper is a firm believer in the transformative power of education, graduating magna cum laude from Brown University and earning a J.D. and Master in Public Administration from Harvard University

His most recent book,

Letters to an Incarcerated Brother

, will be released in paperback on

April 1, 2014

. Harper will host each of MassMutual's FutureSmart Challenges to engage participating middle school students in fun, interactive educational modules designed to spark interest and provide tangible, memorable financial knowledge on such topics as:

1. What it costs to survive, live and thrive
2. The impact of education and career on income
3. What you spend your money on matters, highlighting the difference between 'needs' and 'wants'
4. How you pay for things matters, highlighting the costs of consumer debt
5. The importance of saving and the power of time, highlighting the concept of compound interest

"Financial education is a personal mission of mine, and I'm excited to bring this dynamic program from MassMutual to middle school students in these local communities," said Harper. "There's a connection between education and building a life you love and can afford, and I aim to motivate students to start thinking about this so they are better prepared to achieve wealth in every aspect of their lives."

At each MassMutual FutureSmart Challenge, NBA team representatives will share their thoughts on education, careers and finances. The teams will also provide entertainment that may include dunk teams, cheerleaders, dance teams, etc.

MassMutual Scores a Slam Dunk with New FutureSmart(SM) Challenge

Written by Australian Business

In conjunction with each FutureSmart Challenge, Harper will address community leaders and MassMutual representatives will share an overview of the findings of the [2013 MassMutual State of the American Family Study](#) at an invitation-only forum.

Junior Achievement classroom curriculum led by local MassMutual representatives, NBA team representatives and Junior Achievement affiliate volunteers will follow each of MassMutual's FutureSmart Challenge events at a later date in each community, as well as the opportunity for income-eligible families to apply for coverage through [MassMutual's LifeBridge\(SM\) Free Life Insurance Program](#).

MassMutual FutureSmart Challenge tour schedule:

- January 28, 2014, Dallas Mavericks – American Airlines Center
- February 10, 2014, Atlanta Hawks – Philips Arena
- February 12, 2014, L.A. Clippers – Staples Center
- March 11, 2014, Phoenix Suns – US Airways Center

For more information, please visit <http://www.massmutual.com/>.

About MassMutual

Founded in 1851, MassMutual is a leading mutual [life insurance company](#) that is run for the benefit of its members and participating policyowners. The company has a long history of [financial strength](#)

and strong performance, and although dividends are not guaranteed, MassMutual has paid dividends to eligible participating policyowners consistently since the 1860s. With

[whole life insurance](#)

as its foundation, MassMutual provides products to help meet the financial needs of clients, such as

[life insurance](#)

,
[disability income insurance](#)

MassMutual Scores a Slam Dunk with New FutureSmart(SM) Challenge

Written by Australian Business

,
[long term care insurance](#)

,
[retirement/401\(k\) plan services](#)

, and
[annuities](#)

. In addition, the company's strong and growing network of financial professionals helps clients make good financial decisions for the long-term.

MassMutual Financial Group is a marketing name for Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Company (MassMutual) and its affiliated companies and sales representatives. MassMutual is headquartered in Springfield, Massachusetts and its major affiliates include: Babson Capital Management LLC; Baring Asset Management Limited; Cornerstone Real Estate Advisers LLC; The First Mercantile Trust Company; MassMutual International LLC; MML Investors Services, LLC, Member [FINRA](#) and [SIPC](#) ; OppenheimerFunds, Inc.; and The MassMutual Trust Company, FSB.

For more information, visit www.massmutual.com or find MassMutual on [Facebook](#) , [Twitter](#) , [LinkedIn](#)

,
[YouTube](#)
and
[Google+](#).

SOURCE MassMutual

RELATED LINKS <http://www.massmutual.com>