Dear Friends,
The 2019-2020 school year was unpredictable, to say the least! In the fall of 2019 and early winter 2020, we were on track to surpass our goals for program outreach. And then the pandemic hit…

Doubtless, it has been a difficult time for the students and families we serve. In response, we are reaffirming our commitment to serve the communities most in need. Our top priority is to show local students that we are here for them, no matter what. We are dedicated to providing life-changing programs and resources to schools, students, and educators in whatever delivery model they need—in-person, remote, or self-guided.

While programs and experiences may look somewhat different, our mission remains the same. In fact, with the urgent economic challenges due to the pandemic and systemic social and economic inequities, the work of Junior Achievement is needed now more than ever to empower students and support educators with experience-based learning, innovative and effective programs, and role models from the community.

Junior Achievement of Greater Fairfield County aims to narrow the opportunity gap and to help our kids build a better future for themselves and their communities.

Thank you for your continued support of our young people.

Gratefully,

Michael Steinharter
Board Chair

Bernadine Venditto
President

Bernadine Venditto
President

Michael Steinharter
Board Chair
Mission
Our mission is to inspire and prepare young people to succeed in a global economy.

Vision
Through programs focused on financial literacy, work and career readiness, and entrepreneurship, students develop critical skills, such as communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking, that will enable their future personal and professional success. We work with local youth and community members to achieve greater social and economic equity and to help close the opportunity gap. Volunteer role models act as mentors to students and help to empower young people to own their future success.

Core Values
• Belief in the boundless potential of young people
• Respect for the talents, creativity, perspectives, and backgrounds of all individuals
• Focus on the power of partnership and collaboration
• Proactive commitment to honoring differences and connecting through shared values

Financial Summary

2019-2020 Total Expenses: $993,213  
2019-2020 Total Revenue: $1,095,164

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Pathways to Success

- **Financial Literacy**: students who participate in JA are more confident in their ability to manage their finances and make sound choices
- **Work and Career Readiness**: students who participate in JA are better prepared to enter the workforce and understand what it takes to succeed in their chosen career
- **Entrepreneurship**: students who participate in JA learn to think entrepreneurially in business and in life

**Service Territory***

27 towns, 4 geographic service areas, thousands of lives touched

*Service territory shows where we can provide program. The towns and schools receiving our services vary from year to year.*
Program Highlights

JA programs show students how money, careers, and business ownership work. Our programs are taught by dedicated volunteers, who act as role models and share their life experiences with participants. Programs empower young people to be productive stakeholders in their communities, inspire them to be innovative thinkers and problem solvers, and prepare them to make prudent life and career choices. We are committed to providing opportunities for all students so that they can believe in themselves and own their economic success.

When the pandemic hit and schools closed, our primary focus was on the educational needs of our students. We quickly pivoted to provide online resources for students, educators, and parents, and we revamped all programs for virtual delivery.

Three Program Models

In-Person  Virtual  Self-Guided

New Program Offerings

Virtual LinkedIn Workshop: Microsoft employees taught Derby High School seniors how to utilize LinkedIn effectively when creating their own professional brand and seeking career opportunities. Students learned how to create engaging LinkedIn profiles to help them, as they get ready to head out into the working world or on to college.

Virtual Career Fair: Held in collaboration with the Danbury Student and Business Connection, the virtual career fair featured videos from ten professionals across a variety of industries. More than 70 students from Shelter Rock School in Danbury participated.

Virtual Career Preparedness Program: Students from Bridgeport’s Central High School completed a newly developed career preparedness program by a virtual volunteer via Microsoft Teams. The program focused on effective communication, conflict management, micro-messaging, building a resume, job searching, and interviewing.

Career Exploration Fair: After educators identified manufacturing as a high-growth field in their communities, Ansonia and Derby high schoolers participated in the fair and interacted with representatives from the manufacturing sector.

While the school landscape looks very different, we remain committed to providing essential programs dedicated to financial literacy, work and career readiness, and entrepreneurship.
Impact

Local JA alums praise our programs for helping to build their confidence and to achieve their greatest potential.

**IMPACT**

Simply put, our programs change lives.

A study of JA alums released in May 2020 by Ipsos, one of the world’s leading market research firms, shows that Junior Achievement is making a difference.

- **87%** agree it exposed them to new ways of thinking
- **83%** agree that the program broadened their horizons
- **83%** said that JA made them think of new work opportunities or career paths
- **82%** say it motivated them to succeed professionally
- **85%** say the JA program helped them believe they could achieve their goals

51% of JA alumni have college degrees (vs. nationwide average of 33%)

4-in-5 alumni credit Junior Achievement for influencing their decisions about further education and impacting their professional and personal development!

“Junior Achievement really shaped how I considered the rest of my college and career path, and now the career I am headed in is an intersection of technology and business. Honestly, none of that would have been possible without my first realizing that I was interested in that through Junior Achievement.”

Tanusri Balla

“I knew I wanted to do something in business, but I never really had the confidence to do so, especially considering where I came from. No one in my family has pursued business, and I didn’t really think I was enough for it. My JA experience taught me that you really can become whatever you want to be. Through learning and competing against other like-minded individuals…it gave me the validation that I can do something like this and I can move forward with what I want to do with my life.”

David Perez
**2019-2020 Impact**

**Students by Age Group**

- Elementary School: 3,371 (53%)
- Middle School: 1,629 (26%)
- High School: 1,314 (21%)

Total Number of Students: 6,314

**Number of Volunteers:** 458  **Number of Contact Hours:** 32,000  **Number of Schools Served:** 60

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

Junior Achievement emphasizes systemic solutions that help break the poverty cycle and achieve lasting, positive change. Our programs are proven to give students the tools they need to increase their chances of achieving economic security as adults.

While Junior Achievement programs are beneficial to all students regardless of demographic, we place an emphasis on under-resourced schools where systemic social and economic inequities are most present. Our programs aim to narrow the education opportunity gap by giving young people knowledge and power so that they can re-imagine a better future for themselves, their families, and their community.

We are committed to contributing to a more equitable society and accordingly, will continue to prioritize outreach to underrepresented and under-resourced populations.

**2019-2020 Student Demographics**

- White: 43%
- Hispanic or Latino: 35%
- African American: 14%
- Asian: 5%
- Multi-Racial: 3%
- Native American: 0%
- Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: 0%

- Low or Moderate Income: 46%
Why Do You Support JA?

JA Alum
“JA programs incite passion in different kids and … get kids excited about creating their own product and actually getting it onto the market and seeing people’s reactions … Our mentors were super inspiring in how they fed off our excitement over products and being creative.”

– Courtney Xu, Cornell University Class of 2021

Volunteer
“Junior Achievement is showing kids what they can be. It inspires that belief in themselves to be anything they want to be.”

– Anne Keane, Manager, Investment Process & Controls, Prudential Annuities

Donor
“Pitney Bowes and our employees are delighted to support JA and their efforts to inspire and prepare young people to succeed in a global economy. We congratulate the entire JA team for their dedication, and we applaud all of the students for their active participation in this enriching learning that builds financial literacy, work-readiness and entrepreneurship skills.”

– Kathleen Ryan Mufson, Director Global Corporate Citizenship & Philanthropy President, Pitney Bowes Foundation

Student
“It boosted my confidence and allowed me to discuss important decisions, such as career choice, with experienced working women.”

– Tahera, Central High School Student

Educator
“Career Day was an event that went beyond every expectation. In every room, students were engaged and invested in what the presenters had to say. They wanted to participate again because they found it engaging, personal, and valuable. Thank you to all of the volunteers and Junior Achievement. Our gratitude for your time and energy goes beyond words.”

– Educator, Central High School
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How to Get Involved with JA

- **Volunteer** to teach a program or make a video about your professional experiences.
- **Get involved** with JA Inspire Virtual, an online interactive career expo that will introduce middle and high school students to a cross-section of high-demand jobs and industries.
- **Join** a committee or join the board.
- **Donate** to JAGFC to be a partner in our work.

We invite you to get engaged with JA and our life-changing programs.