

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:

December 13, 2023

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Junior Achievement Receives Nearly \$2 Million Department of Labor Grant to Prepare Young Adults for the Workforce

Workforce Pathways for Youth Demonstration Grant Will Support JA Initiatives in Five States

Colorado Springs, CO – Junior Achievement USA today announced that it recently received more than \$1.9 million from the U.S. Department of Labor as part of its Workforce Pathways for Youth demonstration grants. With the support of JA USA, Junior Achievement operations in five states are developing a Workforce Pathways program that will lead to a national offering. The JA operations are:

- California (JA of Northern California – The Bay Area)
- Indiana (JA of Southwestern Indiana – Evansville area)
- New York (JA of Western New York – Buffalo area)
- Pennsylvania (JA of Southeastern Pennsylvania – Philadelphia area)
- Virginia (JA of Southwest Virginia – Roanoke area)

The JA Area offices will deploy age-appropriate workforce readiness resources for youth between 14 and 21, primarily in rural areas. These resources will address soft skill development, career exploration, job readiness, work-based learning opportunities, and other experiences such as summer jobs and apprenticeships.

“Junior Achievement USA has a long history serving students from kindergarten through high school,” said Holly Garner, Vice President, New Channels, Head of Workforce for Junior Achievement USA. “In recent years, JA’s robust content and programs (including financial literacy and career readiness) have proven to be valuable for young adults, as well. With this

recognition, local JA Areas are increasingly tapped to take part in workforce conversations and this grant is an extension of that existing work.”

In support of the initiative, as well as JA’s desire to more effectively connect young adults to workforce and postsecondary education pathways, JA USA is launching several existing and new initiatives focused on this young adult space, covering the areas of:

- Coaching
- Credentialing
- Badging
- A talent marketplace complete with resume tools and connection to employment. (SmartResume)

The launch of JA’s Workforce strategy will support the creation of new partnerships between local workforce development boards and youth-serving out-of-school organizations, establishing new connections and strengthening the density of existing connections with local workforce partners, community organizations, and other nonprofits.

About the Grant

To support workforce development programs that prepare young people and help them access good-paying careers, the U.S. Department of Labor recently awarded \$14 million in grants to seven organizations in five states to deliver workforce services when youth are out of school.

The [Workforce Pathways for Youth](#) demonstration grants being made to parent organizations in Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Georgia and Virginia are intended to support recipients’ efforts to supply workforce readiness programming for historically underserved youth from ages 14 to 21 in 21 states and American Samoa.

Organizations will deliver job training and develop summer and year-round workforce pathway opportunities for youth and include strategies such as soft skills development, career exploration, job readiness and industry-based certifications. These strategies may also include proven earn-and-learn models of pre-apprenticeships and Registered Apprenticeships.

About Junior Achievement USA® (JA)

Junior Achievement is the world's largest organization dedicated to giving young people the knowledge and skills they need to own their economic success, plan for their future, and make smart academic and economic choices. JA learning experiences are delivered by corporate and community volunteers and provide relevant, hands-on experiences that give students from kindergarten through high school knowledge and skills in financial literacy, work readiness, and entrepreneurship. Additionally, Junior Achievement is expanding its reach to 18-to-25-year-olds to provide young adults with critical life skills, as well as to pre-K youth to ensure children get a solid head start. Today, JA reaches more than 4.4 million students per year in 102 markets across the United States as part of 12.5 million students served by operations in more than 100 other countries worldwide. Junior Achievement USA is a member of JA Worldwide. For more information, visit www.ja.org.

