

JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT: AN OVERVIEW

by

Lisa Garcia
Program Manager
Junior Achievement of Black Hawk Land, Inc.
Cedar Falls, Iowa

Stephen Becker
Elementary Program Coordinator
Junior Achievement of Black Hawk Land, Inc.
Cedar Falls, Iowa

Introduction

Junior Achievement is a nonprofit organization financed by over 100,000 businesses, foundations, and individuals. Since its founding in 1919 by Horace A. Moses, president of Strathmore Paper Company, Junior Achievement has contributed to the economic and business education of young people in over 1,000 communities in the United States and other countries. Each Junior Achievement area is managed by a professional staff and volunteer board of directors. In the United States alone, over 70,000 business people contribute their time to Junior Achievement.

Objectives

- Provide positive role models and create opportunities for dialogue between community members and students.
- Assist students to understand the social, personal and economic costs of dropping out of school.
- Enhance understanding of the challenges, opportunities and responsibilities of government, business and citizens in a free enterprise system.
- Supplement existing social studies curriculum with hands-on economic and business messages.

Methods

- Volunteers from the community lead activities during school hours with training a materials provided by Junior Achievement.
- Hands-on activities encourage participation and understanding; teacher reinforces message; Junior Achievement staff insures the quality of every program.

The Impact

- Community volunteers have sustained classroom contact with students helping them learn and understand their place in the economy, from a local to global perspective; see the relevance of education to their future; and explore career opportunities.
- Business and education partnerships help prepare the future work force.

Student Benefits

- Students gain a better understanding of education's impact on success in the work place.
- Students apply vital economic terms and concepts to the world of work as well as their personal lives.
- Students gain knowledge of consumer, business and government roles in the free enterprise system and their impact on the world economy.

Elementary Programs

Students entering school today may have difficulty preparing for the future in our rapidly changing economy. For this reason, Junior Achievement developed a new series of seven exciting, action-packed programs for the elementary school.

- Ourselfs--Personal economics.
- Our Families--Families and their economic responsibilities.
- Our Community--The responsibilities of and the opportunities available for community members.
- Our City--City planning, economic development and urban business.
- Our Region -- State economics; business interdependence; and human, natural and capital resources.

- Our Nation -- The American free enterprise system.
- Our World -- Different economies, world resources and the importance of trade interdependence.

Middle Grade Programs

Junior Achievement developed middle school programs to help students recognize their role in the economy and determine the relevance of education as it relates to their economic well-being. The programs build on the elementary school messages, helping students recognize education as they key to success.

- Project Business -- Economic concepts and their basic application to middle school student lives -- from personal to global economics.
- The Economics of Staying in School -- A study of the personal and economic costs of dropping out of school.

High School Programs

Today's students are tomorrow's work force. It is imperative that they are trained now with the skills they will need to become productive workers. The high school program complements Junior Achievement's elementary and middle school curriculum.

- Project Economics -- An in-school supplemental economics program for students in ninth-grade economics classes.
- Applied Economics -- A semester-long course to study and apply economic principles using Junior Achievement textbooks and workbooks, a student company and a computer simulation.
- Company Program-- An after-school program including hands-on experiences in running a company from the sale of stock to liquidation.
- Success Now -- A school-to-work transition program designed to prepare high school students with valuable pre-employment skills.
- Business and Economic Careers -- A joint project of the National Urban League and Junior Achievement helping minority students learn how to prepare for the challenges and opportunities in college and the world of work.

For more information on Junior Achievement, contact your local Junior Achievement Office or Junior Achievement inc., National Headquarters, One Education Way, Colorado Springs, CO 80906, Tele: 1-719-540-8000.