

Volunteer Letters

I had so much fun teaching Mrs. Grimm's class this fall. The students were great. I seem to have made quite an impression on my daughter in the class, because she has now started her own business (nearly). She has researched, advertised and collaborated to form her Backpack Bedazzling Business. She is setting prices, taking into consideration her expenses and projected profits and has everything listed on her own website! Yes, she has created her own site and promises to teach her parents how she did it. Yes, she is only 9 years old.

I have always believed in the message that JA imparts to our children, but I never expected my daughter to blossom so much as an entrepreneur in 4th grade!

I am scheduled to work with Mr. Nauman's class after the first of the year, and am excited to start.

Have a great holiday,

Submitted by Asalyn

*Thank YOU so much for allowing my classmates and me the opportunity to be involved with JA. The experience was definitely one of the **coolest things** I have been fortunate enough to be involved with **thus far** in my college career.*

I am not sure what my schedule for next semester will be with my job and school, but as soon as I figure it out, if I have some extra time I would love to participate again! I really appreciate your organization!

Submitted by Allison

I taught my first class on January 17, 2008. What a fun experience! The first graders were precious and they really seemed to enjoy learning about wants and needs. They grasped the concept quite readily and were able to discern the difference. What surprised me was that they enjoyed the activity where I gave them a piece of blank paper and asked them to draw themselves or someone else doing a job. The classroom was so quiet as they worked on their pictures. I let a few of them tell the class about their pictures and they were so proud. We did "JA in a Day" and after my last lesson the kids wanted me to come back the next day. It was a gratifying experience for the students as well as for me. I enjoyed doing something that I believe is important for them to understand.

Submitted by Annie

I had a memorable experience as volunteer teaching on behalf of JA. I was very impressed by the quality of the training package as well as the enthusiasm of JA's training staff. The teaching material was a big help. My teaching day was smooth and interactive. And most of all, the kids loved it.

Submitted by Julia

I teach 5th grade JA to four classes each year. Each year I use the pen-making lesson as a lesson in synchronicity, as well. It never fails, the first class always produces the fewest combined pens and the last class always makes the most. I go from one class to the next. It is not like they have a chance to talk to the other classes and give them tips on pen making. Just like monkeys in Africa and Madagascar both "learn" a new skill for acquiring food at the same time; the 5th graders at Fox Elementary learn how to better make pens by the other classes doing it!

Submitted by Pat

Hi Junior Achievement © My name is Stevie. I am a junior now at Southern Illinois University of Edwardsville. Last year, I participated in your Junior Achievement Program for my CI 200 class at Westhaven Elementary School. It was really a great opportunity for me because it gave me a great experience and early practice on being a teacher. Junior achievement was a great opportunity for me to get out in the field of teaching and to be around a great group of students and teachers, and to get an early experience on how wonderful teaching is. Working with Junior Achievement is wonderful because all of the people with Junior Achievement are outstanding people to work with, and working with all of the school students and teachers is wonderful. Junior Achievement does an outstanding job with their program and with the work that they do. I want to thank all of the Junior Achievement staff for giving me a great experience of teaching and a wonderful opportunity to meet and work with

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wonderful people. I sure hope to work and participate in Junior Achievement sometime again soon. God Bless You all and Have a Blessed, Enjoyable, Happy New Year@!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Sincerely and best wishes,
Stevie

Just to let everyone know I love the JA Program. It gives one the opportunity to go out there and experience the "real classroom."

This program has is set up with a wonderful team of people. I had a chance to get to visit several schools in St. Louis, MO and Illinois. The children that I worked with were in grades one through six. I loved going out into the classrooms, getting to know the teachers and the students. I achieved many goals that I had set for myself. I remember taking on three classrooms in one semester. In 2003, JA chose me as the first Outstanding College Student of the Year. I received an award and a \$500 scholarship.

It was great. I give many thanks to Ms. Katie Pagano for all her help and support. I truly recommend that people chose to do the JA program. You will love it just as much as I did.

Submitted by Miya

JA In-A-Day - November 2, 2007

Periodically, Pfizer colleagues volunteer their time for Junior Achievement of Mississippi Valley. "JA In A Day" is one of those activities. For an entire day, our colleagues take over teaching duties at a local school to help educate children in our community about the business world. The latest outing is taking place today, November 1 at Ridge Meadows Elementary School.

7:58 a.m.

I'm checking my email before we get on the bus, but my mind keeps wandering to my JA students. "What if this, what if that..."

I'm excited and nervous all at the same time. I hope I don't bore them! I hope I can keep up with them! I am really not sure what I'm getting myself into today. I am wondering now why this sounded like such a good idea to volunteer...

11 a.m.

I'm teaching fifth graders today. The teacher is very kind. The room is very warm and inviting. And the kids are very intensive. So much so that they began asking questions that, we were a little surprised at.

We were talking about sole proprietorships, partnerships, corporations. In addition, they were already moving into things about stock options and publicly traded companies and getting way ahead of us. So, we had to kind of keep bringing them back.

But it's great, because they're very interested and they all seemed somewhat disappointed when they had to take a break for their music class.

So, that's where we're at so far.

1 p.m.

We just took a break for lunch and the class is going really well.

I am so surprised. We discussed mass production versus unit production, and I actually had a team six kids go through unit production and six kids go through mass production, and we talked about the differences. And why it works better in some instances than others. And where the hold-ups were, and what you could do to fix some of those lessons and how it all tied back in to the earlier lessons.

They were so engaged! I was actually looking forward to moving on to the next activity, when I realized it was time for a lunch break.

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So, I've been in there now prepping for my next activity. Feeling a little less nervous than I was this morning. But definitely, this is really turning out to be a fun day. And I'm hoping the kids walk away having had as much fun and learning as much as I have.

3:15 p.m.

We just wrapped up and the last part of our session was intense and furious.

We had a lot more time, and the kids put together their own business plan. We talked about advertising and we talked about resources—it was just a great summary of everything we had talked about today.

As the teams were trying to collaborate, make decisions, and just pull everything together, there was lots of discussion. It was all very high energy, but it took a lot of time. It was really interesting. The comments were interesting, the dialogue was great and it just ended up being a really good experience. I hope to do it again soon.

Submitted by Lisa

I really enjoyed my experience as a JA volunteer. I was very nervous at first but as soon as I got into the classroom, I was at ease. I observed and taught five lessons for a Kindergarten class. The teacher I worked with was very flexible and let me observe around my schedule. The students were great too. I got to go along on a field trip to an apple orchard and attend their Christmas Party as well. The drawings and colorings that the children did for me are some of my most treasured keepsakes. I would recommend JA for anyone that wants to be a teacher or just wants to help out.

Submitted by Ashlee

I served as a volunteer last year during my 5th grade son's "Enterprise Village (now JA BizTown)" Junior Achievement experience. The entire 5th grade from his elementary school participated, and I truly believe everyone who attended had a wonderful time - that includes all of us volunteers AND the children. I served as the "mentor" for the kids publishing our town newspaper (a great choice, as I have a journalism background). It was a complicated and fairly confusing assignment for all of us, but the kids rose to the challenge and completed a beautiful newspaper, which was well received by their fellow townspeople.

*Everyone wanted a copy as a souvenir of their experience at JA. I myself have saved several! :-)
Overall, I was extremely impressed with Junior Achievement. The campus/building is lovely and the programs well thought-out and conducted. Every staff member with whom I had contact was friendly and knowledgeable. I would highly recommend any of the programs to people desiring a unique and memorable learning experience for children and adults. Thank you very much!*

Submitted by Tracie

I was always willing to be a volunteer as long as I did not have to stand in front of the class and actually present the lesson. But after a few years of behind the scene help, I decided to come out of my shell. I signed up to present to a couple of first grade classes and before it was all done I had 2 first grade, 1 kindergarten, and 1 fourth grade classes! I cannot tell you how much I enjoyed presenting these lessons. The kids were all excited about hearing and participating and I couldn't wait to get to the next class and do it again! Thank you for the opportunity to taste what it is like to be a teacher. I had been considering that idea and now realize that I really do want to pursue that avenue for my future.

Submitted by Jeneen

Parkway West High School (about 1984)

It is really a fulfilling joy to be a Junior Achievement volunteer consultant. The feedback that comes to the consultant grows in the heart and challenges the brain. Young people are eager to learn, yet they often challenge the consultant beyond our peers.

As the assigned volunteer consultant for a class of high school juniors and seniors, it was my job to encourage learning, understanding and performing good business practices. The class consisted of a mix of well-to-do, minority and underprivileged students. For the first few weeks of the class, I arrived

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in business suit attire. As you will see, apparently there were mixed feelings about the reception of my attire by the students.

In this class, 4 or 5 students in a clique at the side of the room were busily engaged in discussions of their own. To me they seemed disinterested in the activities that were being presented. Meanwhile the class formed a company, officers were chosen and the other necessary preliminaries occurred. Then we began discussion of the products to sell.

About this time, I had a side-painting job that required my direct travel to the job site immediately after class. I would not have time to return home to change clothes. Therefore, I donned my painting coveralls with many splotches of paint everywhere. When I entered the school, I had so much paint on the coveralls it was obvious I was an amateur and not a professional painter.

When I walked into class that morning, the entire class was aghast at my attire. At first, I was at a loss about how to react. After a little jeering such as "We thought you were a businessman," I asked, "Did my brain change because I am wearing work clothes?" There was no reaction; just gaping mouths. I continued, "If I had come here the first day dressed like this, would you have thought of me as a businessman?" Then I asked, "Does your attire affect the way you want others to think about you?" To this day, I am not sure if the intended message got through. As a result, interesting events followed.

From that instant, one of the clique members began to take informal leadership duties. He, in effect, became the informal leader of the class. From that day on there was no clique at the side of the room. Rather, the entire class all worked as a team. I was amazed!

Of all my JA experiences, this experience stands out most prominently. Whether true or not, I felt I positively affected the lives of several students that semester. I hope the message to the students was that great ideas and great leaders can come from anywhere, any ethnic group, or any economic level. The important thing is just anyone can originate a good idea. This incident changed me.

Submitted by Carl (Involved with JA for 15 years)

My colleague and I (who both work for First National Bank of St. Louis) spent six weeks working with 2nd graders at Flynn Park Elementary in University City. We had such a great time working with them, that we weren't quite ready for it to be over when the scheduled classroom sessions were finished. So, we invited the class to our Bank for a field trip! On May 10th, the class showed up at our bank and got a tour of the whole facility including the main vault, safe deposit area, and drive-up. The class then got to meet the President of the Bank, Mr. Bagy, who gave each child a gold dollar. We ended the trip with pizza in the bank's boardroom! A great time was had by all, and Jeff and I can truly say it was one of the most rewarding experiences of our professional careers. We will definitely be back!

Submitted by Tim

I volunteer for JA each year in hopes of helping both students and children within the St. Louis community. I seem to receive back so much more! The enthusiasm and support I receive from the students and teacher about the JA program is unbelievable. JA makes it so easy to be an effective volunteer!

Submitted by Chris

I thought the day at BizTown was just terrific for the kids. What a nice professional environment for learning. The variety of businesses needed to run a town was perfect. The business transactions and the amount of interaction that took place during those 5 hours were simply amazing to watch from start to finish. I worked in the Mayor's office, and we had printer problems at first and difficulty getting out payroll checks, and other forms and reports. The stress at not meeting payroll was evident. But we were rescued by the technician and alternative printing was set up. Not an atypical situation. This was real life, I told the kids. I was impressed at how fast the kids figured out what they had to do, improvising when necessary to cover for missing employees. This is a great experience they all remember.

Submitted by Julie

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This was my first time volunteering for JA with my employer, Ameren UE. My experience was challenging and fun teaching at Stevens Middle School. I learned a lot from the students with learning the value of education and life itself. I look forward in the future of having another opportunity volunteering for JA.

Submitted by Shawana

I absolutely loved doing the JA program. I was unclear about what age group that I was going to be teaching later down the road, but after spending time in a first grade classroom and seeing how involved the children were with the lesson it helped me make up my mind.

Submitted by Nichole

I went to JA with my granddaughter's school. I worked in the warehouse. WOW what a day! I found that the students really were on top of what they needed to do. They did decide that the adult life was really busy and they had a lot of responsibilities. They all agreed that they enjoyed their day, however being a kid was so much easier. My granddaughter and I had a great day. We didn't get to work together but we met for lunch and a short shopping trip. We loved Build-a-Bear! We had an awesome day.

Thanks so much
Brenda

I volunteered for this program because I am an Elementary Education major and I wanted some more experience. I was assigned to 1st grade in Lake St. Louis and I loved every second of it! I believe I had Our Families and both the kids and I loved it!

Submitted by Kimberly

Some time after my son completed JA, we were driving down the road. He started a conversation with, "Don't be mad, but. . ." He went on to tell me he could no longer remember how to balance a checkbook.

This was wonderful news to me. Not only did I know that he had paid attention and learned something, but he knew enough that it bothered him that he could not recall how to do it after a time. How familiar this should sound to us all!

I told him not to worry, it happens to us all when we don't do something for some time. However, when the time comes, he will be able to learn it again.

I highly recommend JA for any students.

Submitted by Nancy

It is always so wonderful to see how quickly children attach to someone in a teaching role. My first day with my 2nd grade class from this semester, I had 3 kids tell me they loved me and one invite me to her birthday party. ☺ The excitement and joy they gave me when I arrive is what keeps me coming back. Working with adults day after day, you forget what it's like to be a child and the true enjoyment of learning something new!

Submitted by Katie

Being a Junior Achievement volunteer was a great experience! I've participated in JA for two years and I have absolutely loved both of my experiences. My first year as a JA volunteer was for a college education class. I taught JA to a first grade class, and although the children were younger than what I want to teach, I would not trade the experience for anything. My second time teaching JA was also for an education course requirement. I taught JA the second time to a fourth grade class. This experience was wonderful. I definitely recommend volunteering for

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Junior Achievement no matter your past experience with children in a classroom. The JA lessons and materials provided are outlined so specifically that there is no way to "mess up." Everything is there for you! Both of my experiences teaching JA were really fun and definitely provided me with an experience that I wouldn't trade for anything!

Submitted by Stacey

What a difference JA has made in my life! I never knew when I volunteered for JA 4 years ago that it would become such an important part of who I am. I have too many memories and stories to share all of them. But what I would like to share is the inspiration I get every time I teach. Each child has something to share. Not only do the kids learn I too experience a new outlook to my life. I've learned to explore my imagination, and look at the world with a different perspective. When I listen to the kids it never ceases to amaze me at how much they know compared to when I was their age. Sometimes I am disheartened by how young of an age these kids are exposed to issues. But when I walk out of that classroom I feel as if I have made a difference. I have showed them how special they are, a promise of choices they never may have thought about before. I truly believe that one day, many years from now a few of those kids may run into something I discussed with them and they will remember my advice and from that gain a sense of responsibility, confidence and hopefully become a better person. Junior Achievement has given me hope for the future and I am proud to say I am part of the Junior Achievement family. I celebrate the difference I have made in my community and JA is the catalyst that took me down my path.

Submitted by Carla

At the beginning of Fall 07, I started my first set of education classes, until then I had been a psych major. I had never even imagined working with children; I'd never even been around many. Junior Achievement became my first experience working with kids and I was scared to death! During the first lesson, I literally shook through the whole thing and could barely talk. Who knew 3rd graders could be so scary!

However, the lessons were put together so well and gave me so much interaction with the students that I soon was at ease. After that first lesson I couldn't wait until the next, I had so much fun, despite the nervousness. I taught three separate classes and loved EVERY one. JA was the best possible first experience I could have had as far as working with students and I recommend it to anyone wanting to go into teaching. It will not only give you a great first experience, it will let you know what you're getting into and also get you involved with seasoned teachers, which comes in real handy later on in your program!

Submitted by Delana

I met Jayln almost three years ago in the Site based program. We had an initial meeting to be sure we were a good match and I knew right then that this would be a great experience. Jayln was an awesome kid, bright, funny, competitive and very sweet. For a year and a half I visited him every Friday. We played board games, basketball, walked and talked about everything. Though his home life went through lots of changes, Jayln always seemed well adjusted and looked at life in a very positive way. I loved all of the time that we had together, but Jayln moved away last year. I was surprised not only at the news, but also by my own reaction. I guess I didn't realize how close we had become and how much I enjoyed getting to know him and hanging out with him. Though I have missed him this year, I absolutely love remembering all the goofy stuff we talked about and did. It was a fabulous experience that I can't imagine will be exceeded any time soon.

Submitted by Anita

This past October (2007), I was involved with Junior Achievement. I am a student at Saint Charles Community College as an Elementary Education major. For one of my education classes, we were assigned 15 hours of observations/ Junior Achievement volunteering. I was able to teach a third grade class at Immanuel Lutheran School in St. Charles. The lessons on "Our City" were laid out and easy to follow. The JA experience helped me as a prospective teacher and I thank you for my experience!

Submitted by Heather

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I had the awesome opportunity to volunteer with JA during 2 trips that my son took to Enterprise Village (now JA BizTown), one with a performing arts school and one with a public school. Our experience was not only fun-filled but educational also. I as a parent enjoyed watching not only the enthusiasm of my own child, but the enthusiasm of the other students who participated. While they were having so much fun running a particular business, they were actually learning everyday concepts of what it is like in the "Real World". A lot of those concepts are now apart of my own sons everyday life. How cool is that? Thank you JA for being intentional about what you do. Your Facility and People are simply AMAZING!!!!!!!

With Thanks and Gratitude- Rebecca

JA (especially Rawn Ford of St. Louis, MO), I thank all of you for giving me the opportunity to share my experiences and stories of how (McDonnell Douglas/The Boeing Aircraft Company) allowed me to volunteer with Junior Achievement. I volunteered with the evening program with the school high school with Bob and Barry and one of my granddaughters attended one year, later she helped also with the classes before she graduated from high school.

I then proceeded to do the in-school volunteering with the third grade classes (one of my granddaughters was in one class). It was a great start for me as I developed a great rapport with the students, and I thoroughly enjoyed the students, plus one year my granddaughter was in one of the third grade classes.

Submitted by Mary

I love teaching JA. All of the students really look forward to your weekly visits. The students really pay attention to me and grasp the concepts. They make teaching JA fun. You can take a group of very shy students and before you know it, they are eager to participate. I have taught JA to a special education class and I am scheduled to do the same class again this year. This class was at first a challenge, but within two lessons, they were all participating and having fun. JA makes the lessons easy and fun for the working volunteer and the students make it worth your time.

Submitted by Anna

I participated in JA as a teenager and became involved as a volunteer about 14 years ago doing the 8th grade program Enterprise in Action. To be honest I was a little scared to be in a room with 8th graders. It offered me a chance to teach my own son's JA class and that was one of the most rewarding experiences I've had.

I went to the new volunteer meetings for the first 3 or 4 years and picked up lots of great ideas. Since I had an investment background I was able to mix that in with business and economics into what became a FUN program for me to deliver. It's now on autopilot, so I don't have much prep work these days.

I know I make an impact because my former students will come up to me around town and say hello. I don't recognize very many of them, but they know me!

Along the way I have gotten to know some very special teachers and I look forward to being with them each year.

I also need to acknowledge my Employer, Edward Jones Investments who allows me the flexibility in my schedule to do the JA program.

Submitted by Tom

During the 2006 - 2007 school year I volunteered for 2 sessions of Junior Achievement -- 2 classes (5th grade) in the fall of 2006 at Sappington Elementary School, and my daughter's 4th grade class at Trautwein Accelerated Elementary in the spring of 2007.

Both sessions were an absolute joy -- watching the students taking in all the information and at the end of each class, having them wish I was there longer and looking forward to the next week. To watch them eagerly create and work on their "own business" - then speaking in front of their classmates explaining what type of business they will have and what motivated them to create that

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type business. I still have some of the business cards that several students created and wanted me to keep. To assist in opening the minds of the kids to begin thinking about the future and hopefully to keep them on the path for success, knowing what is needed in the business world, and not to give up on a dream -- truly made my day.

I was overwhelmed by the number of students at both schools who didn't want the session to end, who were sad and gave me hugs at the end of the last class. I did give them my work e-mail to write if they had questions in the future. I most likely will not hear from them being the age group they are, but letting them know they have that option was very satisfying.

I have told many individuals of all ages what a wonderful organization Junior Achievement is for the students. Thank you for allowing me to tell you about my experience with Junior Achievement.

Submitted by Pat

I started with Junior Achievement at the South County location on Tesson Ferry in 1986 and continued to my Senior year of high school in 1989. One of my fondest memories was of our company group making a commercial for Junior Achievement. I was the scared to death kid hiding my face. Also of the instructor Ken Lewis. He made it fun and so we always had high sales. When I went on to college, I received a scholarship from Junior Achievement to Hickey School.

I now have the pleasure of volunteering my time for this great cause. I was unable to teach class this year due to my schedule but I hope to continue in the following years.

Submitted by Susan

Accomplishments and goals are a very important part of our lives. To achieve either one of these takes a dedication, time, effort, faith and whatever we can put into it. I find great satisfaction in all these areas when I can give to someone the things I want in life. Being a part of JA gives me the satisfaction of accomplishing the goals I set forth in life and that is helping someone get a good start in life. I have been on submarines, drove across the nation, and even accomplished some of my goals I never thought I could. Still the most life changing I accomplished was helping a child get started in his/her life. This world was created on love and it will take love to accomplish any goal you have in life. Thank you for the opportunity to give to someone a helping start on their life.

Submitted by Timothy

I volunteered with the JA program at St Francis of Assisi school in Oakville, MO. Last fall a parent came into the bank and asked for me. I identified myself and asked if I could be of assistance. She informed me, her daughter had attended my JA class in 2002. She enjoyed the program and kept her material. She graduated that year from high school and went on to college. She chose to major in accounting. She told me her daughter chose that field of study due to our discussions in class and said I had sparked her interest. I felt honored to have made such a strong impression on a student simply by sharing my time and knowledge of banking. She returns to the bank periodically updating me on Maureen's progress. She always thanks me for my gift of giving. JA has given me the opportunity to share my love of teaching and meeting new challenges. I look forward to each class and plan ahead just in case my students try to outshine me.

Submitted by Lucinda Ann

I would just like to say that as a volunteer, I feel like I get just as much out of this program as the students. The students are wonderful and I really enjoyed their interest and enthusiasm. I was so nervous the first year I signed up for this program... just the thought of facing a entire class of kids was overwhelming but after a few minutes in the class, all of my fears melted away and I had a wonderful experience. I'm looking forward to participating in this for many years to come.

Submitted by Chelli

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My first JA experience was in 2007 at a local middle school in a 7th grade classroom. I was thoroughly impressed with the enthusiasm and the intelligence of the students that I worked with. They showed a great deal of interest in the materials that my co teacher and I presented. In fact, most of them were in competition with each other as to who would speak first when we asked questions about the subject matter.

Their teacher set the tone for learning at the beginning of the session by introducing us and describing what would occur during the day. The teacher also intervened when necessary during our presentation, to provide disciplinary activities.

The most touching moment for me was at the end of the day as we thanked the students for their cooperation. They asked us if we would return the next day for a follow up session. This was to me a strong indication that either they enjoyed our presentation or they wanted another day away from their usual routine. In either case, I was touched.

Also, they sent me a copy of their class picture signed by each student.

This I will treasure forever.

Submitted by Delores

I just wanted to share my first experience with JA because it was so wonderful. I was lucky to have a group of kindergarten students who were so polite and so interested in whatever I had to say. They loved the JA stories, the crafts they did and didn't want the 5 week program to end. When the time finally came to say goodbye, each student came up to me and gave me a big hug. The teacher handed me a booklet that the students had made for me. There were pictures of our 5 weeks together and each student had written a wonderful note to me telling me what a good time they had and what they liked best. I will never forget this.

Submitted by Debra

I have had the pleasure of volunteering with JA through a couple different areas while working here at CITI in the past 5 or more years. I have taught Bryan Hill JA for 3 or 4 years. I taught financial education at Beaumont High, and I have had the pleasure to work at Enterprise Village (now JA BizTown) for 3 years with the local students. It is such a joy to give what I can to help further the education of our future generation.

I am currently signed up to work JA at Bryan Hill again 2/13/08. I am looking forward to doing as much volunteer time as I can to help JA out again this year, I love volunteering for your organization.

Submitted by Darlene

I have only volunteered with Junior Achievement for two semesters now, but so far it has been the happiest two semesters of my life. I LOVE IT! I started with 7th grade around April 2007, and it went really well. Then I talked to 3rd and 4th grade around September 2007, and that was WONDERFUL. I can't wait to go back. The kids are so loving.

They asked me to take their Flat Stan to work and take pictures. I did, and they hung them on the wall of their school. I started this for selfish reasons. I wanted to get better at public speaking. Now I am doing it for selfish reasons still; because it makes me so happy to see the awesome kids. They are so smart and eager to learn. It is quite incredible. This has taught me so many things. They think I am so cool.

I get excited every week to go back and talk to them. I usually have tears in my eyes after the last class. I get so attached so quickly, but I am also excited to start the next group of kids. I have told ALL my family and friends about the organization. They think it is the greatest thing. This has given me an opportunity to feel so good about myself, and also help kids learn about business. The teachers have also been great.

If not for them being interested in Junior Achievement and helping schedule around the classes, then this would never be possible. So far I have dealt with AMAZING teachers that even participate in the sessions! It has been a great experience. Thanks so much for letting be a part of it.

Submitted by Cheryl

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I had a lot of fun with JA! I had a Kindergarten class, and they were great! The children were always happy to see me, and they loved telling me stories! I knew I always loved children, and JA showed me that I love teaching too!

Submitted by Lauren

In the spring of 2006, I was teaching a Junior Achievement class to a group of 1st graders. This young group was very excited and enthusiastic to learn about jobs and businesses in our community. On previous visits I had discussed with them jobs that people have to help out the community, so that day we were talking about businesses and their importance in helping people make money to pay for things they need and want. I started out my lesson by asking the main idea question, "What is a business?" Many of the children in the class raised their hands to answer. I chose one little girl, and she confidently stood up and stated that "A business is like when someone walks up to you while you are talking to a friend and tries to get all up in your business." I was floored. I had no response. I had to fight back the urge to laugh, because she was right that is how people use that word these days as a slang terms to explain someone's personal life. However, I could not explain it like that to a bunch of first graders. So, I took a moment and decided to explain that yes that is one kind of business, but I wanted to know what it means to own a business. After that the lesson continued without further talk about personal lives. Yet, on the last day during the assessment/game session when asked what is a business the same little girl said, "Well it is a place where people work to get money for things they need or want, but it can also be like butting in to someone's business." I suppose someday this new definition of "business" will be added to the dictionary, "to butt into someone else's business."

Submitted by Elizabeth

Junior Achievement truly makes a difference. For me, being able to impact the lives of our youth at such a critical age is paramount to developing productive citizens. The last three years have been exciting seeing children grow in a ten week period. They develop a sense of motivation for what they want to do in life. I would challenge anyone to find time to get involved and educate our kids today. Junior Achievement provides an excellent platform to do this and I am honored yearly to remain a part of the program.

Submitted by Terrence

My experience as a JA volunteer occurred in June, 2007. I worked under the expertise of Ms. Jenny Eickhorst, as an instructor for two summer camp sessions, at JA BizTown and Young Entrepreneurs camps, and at a day-long visit by Herbert Hoover Club students.

Never having worked for Junior Achievement, I wasn't sure what to expect. I was pleasantly surprised when I discovered that helping the children learn how to develop their entrepreneurial skills to run their small businesses was both educational and enjoyable!

I was amazed at how quickly the kids in the camps grabbed hold of business and economic concepts, and at how much fun they had taking charge of "their" businesses. Their self-confidence grew daily, as did their sense of competition and working as a team member.

Whenever I speak of my experiences at JA, I feel the surge of enthusiasm that I felt while working with the children that summer. Junior Achievement is an excellent organization that teaches children to build both their business knowledge and their self-esteem. I highly recommend that all children get involved with JA!

Submitted by Jean

Junior Achievement truly makes a difference. For me, being able to impact the lives of our youth at such a critical age is paramount to developing productive citizens. The last three years have been exciting seeing children grow in a ten week period. They develop a sense of motivation for what they want to do in life. I would challenge anyone to find time to get involved and educate our kids today. Junior Achievement provides an excellent platform to do this and I am honored yearly to remain a part of the program.

Submitted by Terrence

Volunteer Letters

I was so nervous to teach Junior Achievement but it was a life changing experience. I had so much fun getting involved in the children and watching them learn. It was very easy to follow the lesson plans and incorporate them into real life situations. It was a joyous experience I will always remember.

Submitted by Toni

Volunteering with Junior Achievement was great. I loved the students and there readiness to learn. I enjoyed teaching the students about the community and talk about it all the time to my friends. I want to thank Junior Achievement for giving me the opportunity to volunteer with you!

Submitted by Meshawna

I was trying to remember how long it has been volunteering with JA, but I am at 4 years since 2004. I have retired from the Air Force active duty 20 years, but enjoyed the time with JA. I have taught 2nd - 4th grade, but this year wanted a challenge with 1st graders. So, I am taking on two classes this spring 2008. I have continued volunteering with the program while working with Lockheed Martin. The program has great format structure with lessons and books for each appropriate grade. I love teaching with the children seeing their reactions to the city, community, and business ties together for their understanding with games, vocabulary, and hands-on lessons. I pray to continue support with a great JA program.

Submitted by Yolanda