

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:

June 15, 2026

For More Information, Contact:

Ed Grocholski

Junior Achievement USA

ed.grocholski@JA.org

(719) 540-6165

Teen Entrepreneurs and Innovators Achieve National Recognition at Future Bound by Junior Achievement

Students from Across the Country Earn National Honors

Colorado Springs, CO — On Wednesday, June 10, Junior Achievement (JA) announced award winners at the 2026 **Future Bound**[™] by Junior Achievement Awards Gala. **Future Bound by Junior Achievement**, held at Boston University in Boston, MA, showcased the talents and achievements of young entrepreneurs and innovators nationwide. The event featured four dynamic competitions, each highlighting the ingenuity and creativity of over 300 students.

Future Bound includes four unique competition tracks: JA Company of the Year, JA Social Innovation Challenge, JA Stock Market Challenge, and JA Titan Challenge.

JA Company of the Year Competition Showcases student teams presenting and pitching their student-run businesses, where they are evaluated on various aspects of business performance and innovation.

JA Social Innovation Challenge This is a competition where students are challenged to identify a social problem and develop a creative solution as a business enterprise, which they then present to a panel for review.

JA Stock Market Challenge This is a competition where students engage in a fast-paced challenge of investing and trading fake funds in the real market, creating draft portfolios as teams, and finalizing their stock selections to test their investing skills.

JA Titan Challenge Showcases students who take on the role of business CEOs, making strategic decisions in areas like production, marketing, and R&D to compete for the title of JA Titan of Business.

The students competing at Future Bound underwent rigorous evaluation encompassing their business performance and individual team members' personal and professional growth. The competition's key components included producing a self-produced annual report and commercial, captivating live virtual presentation to a distinguished panel of business leaders, and insightful interviews with esteemed judges.

The Future Bound Awards Gala, held on Wednesday, June 10, served as the platform for presenting the coveted awards, including:

- **JA Company of the Year:** Awarded to the student businesses that most effectively demonstrated their companies' achievements, as well as the personal development of each team member.
 - First Place – **EVO** (Elkins Very Own) – JA of Southeast Texas, Inc.
 - Second Place – **Joe Flynn Photography** – JA North, Inc.
 - Third Place – **Talk of the Town** – JA of Southeast Texas, Inc.
- **JA Social Innovation Challenge:** Awarded to the student projects that reflect diverse solutions that address real-world challenges.
 - First Place – **ColorFresh** – JA of New York
 - Second Place – **Forget-Me-Not** – JA of the Space Coast
 - Third Place – **All Kids Swim** – JA of San Diego County
- **JA Stock Market Challenge:** Awarded to the student team that achieves the highest return on their investment.
 - First Place – **Eagles of Wallstreet** – JA of Greater Miami
 - Second Place – **Men in Black** – JA of OKI Partners
 - Third Place – **Roaring Kitty** – JA of Angelina County/JA of Dallas
- **JA Titan Challenge:** Awarded to the student team that best demonstrates capability in financial decisions, marketing, research and development, and corporate social responsibility to earn the title of JA Titan of Business.
 - First Place – **Kaboom** – JA of Washington
 - Second Place – **Caribou1** – JA of Maine
 - Third Place – **PVHS2 – Team** – JA of the Heartland
- **Chick-fil-A Community Impact Award:** Awarded to the JA Social Innovation team that has created a standout solution focused on impacting a local community need.
 - **ColorFresh** – JA of New York
- **Citizens Future-Ready Workforce Award:** Awarded to the JA Company Program team that demonstrates forward-thinking leadership by expanding access to skills and opportunities, helping build the diverse, future-ready talent pipeline.
 - **Sparkbyte** – JA North Central Ohio
- **CNA Operational Stewardship Award:** Awarded to the Titan Challenge team that prioritized employee well-being, managed production responsibly, and maintained operational excellence.
 - **EastLiver Pool 2** – JA of East Ohio
- **Delta Air Lines Social Impact Award:** Awarded to the JA Company Program team that created a solution to address a local, national, or global social concern.
 - **Heavy Hugs** – JA North Central Ohio
- **FedEx Global Possibilities Award:** Awarded to the JA Company Program team that best exhibits the principles of global connectivity.
 - **Sparkbyte** – JA North Central Ohio
- **Jim Sweeny Entrepreneurship Award** presented by the Junior Achievement Staff Alumni Network: Awarded to a JA Company Program individual in recognition of their accomplishments, the role they played in their JA Company and their Entrepreneurial potential.

- **Lana Nguyen, Team** – JA of Southeast Texas, Inc.
- **Johnson & Johnson STEM Innovation Award:** Awarded to the JA Social Innovation team that used innovative science, technology, engineering, and math applications to create a positive community impact.
 - **NextUse** – JA of Southeast Texas
- **Pacific Life Foundation Responsible Innovation Award:** An award for the JA Titan Challenge team that best demonstrated excellence in responsible innovation.
 - **PVHS1** – JA of the Heartland
- **RSM Enduring Excellence Award:** Awarded to the JA Stock Market Challenge team that achieves outstanding results through holding onto their investments without selling frequently or making emotional decisions based on short-term market fluctuations.
 - **Huskies of Wall Street** – JA of the Desert Southwest
- **RSM Resilience Award:** Awarded to the JA Stock Market Challenge team that experiences the greatest recovery from an early setback in the challenge, showcasing resilience and smart adjustments to their strategy.
 - **Sophrosyne Advisors** – JA of the Space Coast
- **Staples Sustainable Investing Award:** Awarded to the JA Stock Market Challenge team that made the highest gains through their investments in environmentally sustainable businesses/stocks.
 - **A.5** – JA of Greater Fairfield County

We are deeply grateful for our visionary and presenting sponsors' commitment to empowering young entrepreneurs and fostering a culture of innovation. Thank you, Pacific Life Foundation, Chick-fil-A, CNA, Delta Air Lines, and Staples. We also want to acknowledge these additional supporters who helped make the event memorable for the students: Citizens, FedEx, Johnson & Johnson, RSM US Foundation, Achievement Foundation, Farmers Insurance®, Intercontinental Exchange, Rita & Herbert Z. Gold Charitable Trust, State Farm Insurance, Junior Achievement Staff Alumni Network, and Z Zurich Foundation.

About Junior Achievement USA® (JA)

Junior Achievement is education for what's next. As a strategic partner working in collaboration with educators, employers, investors, leaders, and the communities they serve, we are dedicated to helping students achieve academically today and economically tomorrow. As a leader in experiential learning operating on a national scale with over a century of experience, we are driving toward lasting change. This means ensuring a generation of students has the transferable skills and competencies needed to navigate a rapidly changing world. By delivering career-connected learning, we are invested in accelerating economic mobility through education. By helping students become confident, capable, and connected today, we can ensure they have access to opportunity-filled futures tomorrow. Junior Achievement reaches more than 4.8 million students annually across nearly 100 U.S. markets, and is part of JA Worldwide, which serves over 19.9 million students in more than 100 countries. Learn more at www.ja.org.