



NEWS RELEASE

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JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT STUDENTS FROM CANTON, OH, WIN 2025 DE LA VEGA GLOBAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AWARD

FlameGuard, created after a tragic fire, receives global recognition

Colorado Springs, CO – On March 11, the 2025 De La Vega Global Entrepreneurship Award was presented to FlameGuard from JA of North Central Ohio (Canton, OH). FlameGuard is dedicated to fire safety, a mission born from the tragic 2023 Jackson Township fire that claimed the lives of Jeffrey and Talia Hawk and their children, Amelia and Javen. The team aims to protect loved ones and save lives through enhanced fire safety measures, creating safer living environments for all. Zach Ferguson, FlameGuard's Chief Financial Officer, stated, "It really means a lot for us to be able to help people in our community and spread the message that house fires can happen to you."

The De La Vega Global Entrepreneurship Award, established in 2021 by tech-legend Ralph de la Vega, former President and CEO of AT&T Mobile and Business Solutions, is the highest global honor for the JA Company Program. This prestigious award recognizes the winning JA Company of the Year student teams from JA Worldwide's six regions—JA Africa, JA Americas, JA Asia Pacific, JA Europe, INJAZ Al-Arab/JA MENA, and Junior Achievement USA—who automatically become finalists.

Joshua Lehman, President of Junior Achievement of North Central Ohio commented "The success of FlameGuard is a testament to the resilience and ingenuity of our young entrepreneurs. Their dedication to improving fire safety in our community not only honors the memory of those lost in the tragic Jackson Township fire but also ensures a safer future for all residents. We are incredibly proud of their achievements and the positive impact they are making in North Central Ohio."

FlameGuard's flagship product is a fire safety kit, available in two versions: a 1-story kit for \$69.99 and a 2-story kit for \$129.99. Each kit includes a fire extinguisher, fire blanket, smoke detector, burn gel, heat-resistant gloves, and a respirator mask. The 2-story kit also features a 13-foot ladder.

The JA Company Program, the world's oldest hands-on entrepreneurial experience, empowers students to develop real companies that create products or services to meet specific needs. Students build, market, and deliver products, earning real profits along the way. Competitions begin at the local level, with some teams advancing to national and regional contests. Prior to launching the De La Vega Global Entrepreneurship Award, which is presented by JA Worldwide, the highest accolade a JA student company could achieve was first place at one of JA's six regional competitions.

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 4.6 million students per year in nearly 100 markets across the United States as part of 19.9 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.

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