

# JA DEIB REPORT

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2024



Junior  
Achievement™



## **OUR COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND BELONGING**

Junior Achievement USA is committed to ensuring Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) is at the center of everything we do. We at Junior Achievement are dedicated to providing a positive, enriching learning experience free of bias that promotes greater economic opportunity and equity.

Junior Achievement welcomes K-12 students, volunteers, educators, staff, and other partners and stakeholders, regardless of race, religion, age, gender, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or any other legally protected characteristic.

This report summarizes some of the activities undertaken in the past 18 months to support this commitment.

# HELPING TO CREATE A MORE EQUITABLE AND JUST TOMORROW

Economic inequity has been a reality in the U.S. throughout its history, and it continues to this day. A 2020 study by the Brookings Institution shows that the median net worth of white families in America is ten times greater than that of Black families. Hispanic men earn nearly 15 percent less than their white counterparts for similar work requiring comparable skills and education. For Hispanic women, it is 33 percent less.

Junior Achievement is committed to creating a more equitable and just tomorrow by promoting economic empowerment through our learning experiences focused on financial literacy, work and career readiness, and entrepreneurship. Over the past decade, Junior Achievement has reached more than 20 million Black and Latinx students. A recent survey of JA Alumni by Ipsos shows the kind of impact Junior Achievement has had on these students:



## “Junior Achievement gave me confidence in new situations”



## “Junior Achievement influenced my decision to pursue further education”



## “Junior Achievement positively impacted my future choices and perceptions”



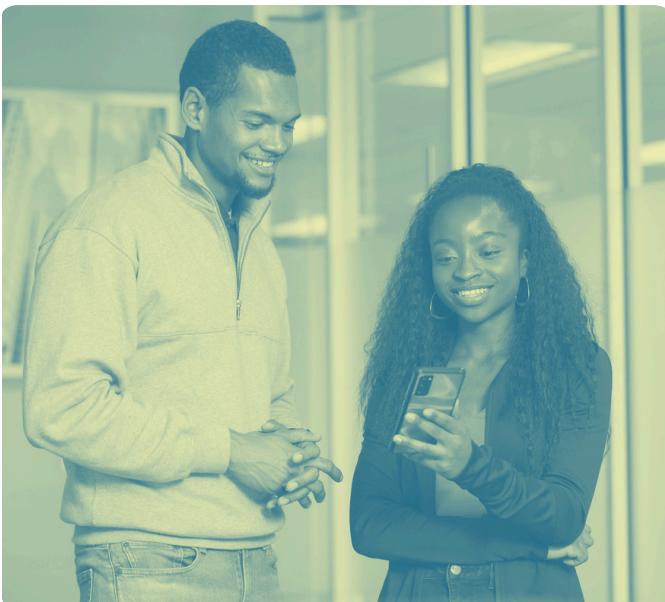
## Alumni who have started one or more businesses during their careers



Pew Research Center, February 7, 2020

Examining the Black-white Wealth Gap, Brookings Institution, February 27, 2020

The Hispanic-white wage gap has remained wide and relatively steady, Economic Policy Institute, July 2, 2018





Junior Achievement is committed to promoting Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging in every facet of what we do. In fact, the goal of becoming an organization more representative of the communities we serve is one of the main objectives outlined in the Junior Achievement's strategic plan. To help achieve this goal, Junior Achievement has undertaken the following actions:

- The creation of the Junior Achievement Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) Network. The JA JEDI Network is an employee-led group designed to foster diversity, equity, justice, and inclusion across the Junior Achievement network of offices. With nearly one in seven JA Associates participating in the JA JEDI Network, the group brings education, understanding, and a greater appreciation of DEI to a critical mass of JA Associates across the country.
- Launching initiatives to ensure that JA learning experiences are representative of the communities Junior Achievement serves. This includes enlisting DEIB subject matter experts to review JA educational materials, testing and updating JA digital and learning platforms to make sure they are accessible under the guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and translating JA programs to better meet the needs of ESL students.
- Forming partnerships with organizations that expand JA's engagement with diverse communities across the country.
- Being responsive in our organizational culture so that Junior Achievement is an "employer of choice," regardless of a candidate's socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, language, nationality, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, geography, disability, and age.

To highlight some of the specific activities related to actions, here are summaries from JA's areas of focus.

## Learning Experiences

At JA, we are committed to helping every young person feel inspired, skilled, and ready for their economic futures. To do that well, we acknowledge the diversity of young people, their neighborhoods, perspectives, families, and access to resources.

Addressing DEIB means making sure that each child can see themselves through the volunteers they connect with, the JA curriculum, and the experiences they engage with. We also want every young person to see their talent, assets, and potential. Using mission-centric language, metrics, values, and growth mindsets helps break down barriers and persist in this important work.

## JA Workforce Pathways

Under the workforce umbrella, JA USA created and launched the Coaching Program, prioritizing building trust and creating an inclusive environment. This program has been meticulously crafted with a deliberate focus on incorporating diverse perspectives, culturally sensitive approaches, and inclusive practices. Content creation underwent rigorous oversight by subject matter experts, followed by a comprehensive DEIB review to ensure alignment with our values and objectives.

## Content & Curriculum and Experiential Learning Centers

JA is adding closed captioning to all the videos in JA Finance Park Entry Student Self-Guided and updating the whole program for accessibility while creating Spanish translations of the JA Finance Park programs.

Additionally, as part of reprints and updates to 25 JA Learning Experiences, JA is working to ensure programs are more accessible to learners, incorporating input from subject matter experts to ensure content is not only more reflective of the young people we serve but is also accessible to students with different learning requirements. In addition to the accessibility work, updates include incorporating Spanish into JA's K-5 learning experiences and using real-life examples more relatable to students based on varying socioeconomic situations.





## **Human Resources & Talent Development**

Junior Achievement USA is committed to promoting a culture that embraces Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB). The work of Human Resources has revolved around modifying job descriptions to be less restrictive to qualified applicants, forging new channels with partners capable of expanding JA's employee engagement efforts into the communities it serves, and utilizing applicant review processes that help address unconscious bias. Likewise, JA USA's training team is dedicated to embedding the principles of DEIB into all aspects of our learning and development initiatives to foster an inclusive culture where everyone feels valued and empowered. Several initiatives are underway and include but are not limited to the following:

### **Compensation Resource**

The Career and Compensation Framework was developed for JA Areas as a resource to ensure competitiveness in talent acquisition and retention. By utilizing contemporary methodologies for salary range development, the framework promotes fairness and equity in compensation practices, ensuring that employees are fairly rewarded for their contributions based on market standards and organizational needs regardless of an employee's background. The framework establishes clear career levels and progression pathways, enabling employees to understand their growth opportunities within the organization and supporting their career development based on job competencies.

### **JA USA Inclusion Incubator**

The JA USA Inclusion Incubator is a unique, experiential learning program about inclusive leadership created in partnership with McKinsey Academy. The program, which incorporates virtual workshops, digital modules, small group discussions, behavioral impact measurement, and reinforcement, provides a meaningful experience that will help participants embed inclusive practices into their daily work at JA. All JA USA Associates have been invited to participate in the incubator, which is seen as foundational in positively impacting DEIB within JA USA.

### **LinkedIn Learning**

JA USA invested in LinkedIn Learning to offer a broad library of courses specifically focused on DEIB topics. The courses cover a variety of subjects, including unconscious bias, inclusive leadership, cultural competence, and strategies for creating an inclusive workplace. Courses are often led by industry experts and thought leaders in the DEIB field. This ensures that the content is not only accurate but also insightful and practical, providing JA Associates with valuable perspectives and actionable strategies.

## **Paradigm Reach**

To promote a culture of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging, JA USA has engaged Paradigm Reach, a modern, interactive blended learning platform that delivers impactful Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion training to any employee, anywhere, anytime. Areas of focus of this work include the utilization of inclusive leadership resources, online workshops and materials related to recognizing and honoring diverse communities, and the adoption of nomenclature that is more responsive to cultural differences and histories.

## **JA Career Pages**

JA USA updated its website career pages to be more responsive to the diversity of potential job applicants, including an emphasis on JA's DEIB commitments and values. The career pages have been made available as templates to JA USA's 100-plus offices across the country.

## **Training Accessibility**

To ensure that our training sessions are inclusive and accessible to everyone, we have added transcriptions for all virtual and E-Learning courses. Transcriptions provide a written record of the training content, enabling participants to review and reinforce their understanding, and ensure that individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing can fully participate in the sessions. Providing transcriptions aligns with our commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging by making our training programs accessible to a broader audience, including those with disabilities.

## **Collaborative Environments**

As we return to hosting onsite training events post-pandemic, it's important to set the stage for success and provide opportunities to build connections early, which will enrich the onsite training experience. We have incorporated virtual Meet & Greet sessions for onsite trainings, providing an opportunity for attendees to address any questions about the training, to connect with colleagues in advance, and to come prepared for the training. This opportunity creates a collaborative and supportive learning experience.

## **Promote and Encourage Engagement with DEIB Tools and Resources**

The training team continuously promotes the JA JEDI Network, Paradigm Reach, and LinkedIn Learning in all trainings, empowering staff with DEIB tools and resources.

## **Setting Up New JA Associates for Success**

As the number of JA staff continues to increase, the training team implemented a new JA 101 onboarding session for all JA new staff. This session kick-starts their JA journey and provides them with foundational information about JA. This opportunity fosters inclusivity and ensures that all staff have access to the same resources while offering an opportunity to begin building their JA network.



## Marketing

The Junior Achievement USA Marketing team is not only responsible for national awareness efforts around the organization and its mission but also for supporting more than 100 JA offices across the country. Efforts to highlight JA as an organization representing the communities it serves include:

### Perception Benchmarking Survey

JA USA enlisted the support of a third-party research firm to better understand internal and external stakeholders' perceptions of Junior Achievement as an inclusive organization. The results of this survey show that while the JA mission and learning experiences are inclusive in spirit, much work needs to be done in their practical application for JA to be considered a truly representative organization. These perceptions also carry over to other functions of the organization, including Marketing, HR, IT, Finance, and Operations. The findings from this survey are being incorporated into the DEIB plans for JA teams. Similar benchmark surveys will be conducted every 18 months going forward.

### Marketing Audit

JA has enlisted the help of a national marketing firm with a DEIB focus to conduct a comprehensive audit of JA's awareness activities and to make recommendations on how JA can be more representative of the communities it serves in its messaging and communications. The findings of this audit will be incorporated into JA's future marketing plans.

### Updated Content Calendar

JA updated its content calendar to ensure the organization is recognizing important holidays, celebrations, and milestones representative of the supporters, educators, volunteers, and students served by Junior Achievement.

### Commitment to Diversity Resources

To support JA Area offices in their marketing efforts, the JA USA Marketing Team has developed numerous resources, including a new "Commitment to Diversity" web page template for JA Areas to use on their websites, updated photo libraries of actual JA classes that are more representative of volunteers and students, and the creation of resources that are more accessible.





## Information Technology

The information technology (IT) team plays a critical role in enhancing the operational efficiencies of Junior Achievement. Given their capacity in promoting standardization of processes, they have utilized these proficiencies to support JA's DEIB focus in the following ways:

### Job Description Enhancement

We have completed a comprehensive review of our job descriptions in collaboration with HR to ensure alignment with DEIB principles. This initiative has resulted in job postings that are more inclusive and appealing to a diverse range of candidates, contributing to our goal of fostering a more diverse workforce.

### Pronoun Inclusion

In an effort to create a more inclusive environment, we've added a complete list of available pronouns to both BCRM and Dynamics 365 platforms. This small yet significant change demonstrates our commitment to inclusivity.

### Cultivating Inclusivity

Our ongoing efforts to foster a spirit of inclusivity within our team have continued to be a priority. By promoting open communication, active listening, and mutual respect, we're creating a workplace where everyone feels welcomed, valued, and empowered to contribute their unique perspectives.

## Operations

The Junior Achievement USA Operations team not only provides policy and procedures guidance to Junior Achievement's more than 100 offices across the country but also shares best practices. One area of focus has been ensuring boards of directors are representative of the communities JA offices serve.

## Board Data Collection

The JA USA Operations Team collects data on Board engagement and diversity. This allows JA Areas to benchmark their local results with other JA Areas.

## JA Area Board of Directors

When hiring a local president, the local JA Area selection committee is encouraged to refer to the DEIB Diversity Guidance. Using this guidance, along with local resources, will help ensure networking with representative groups for sourcing qualified candidates.

## Procurement

The JA USA Finance Team has created a procurement process that gives greater access to women- and minority-owned businesses. This process has been shared with JA Areas.



