

ANNUAL

IMPACT REPORT

2025–2026

Junior Achievement™ of Eastern Ohio

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Michele Merkel

BOARD CHAIR
Dr. Rajiv Taneja

Serving Ashtabula, Columbiana, Mahoning & Trumbull Counties

easternohio.ja.org



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Building What Comes Next

At Junior Achievement of Eastern Ohio, we measure success by more than numbers. We ask whether the young people we serve leave our programs more confident about money, more curious about careers and better prepared for the world of work. This past fiscal year, JAEO reached 7,651 young people across Ashtabula, Columbiana, Mahoning and Trumbull counties through 341 JA programs in 54 schools, guided by 226 volunteers and 205 educators.

Nearly six in ten of those young people qualify for free or reduced-price lunch. For many of them, JA is the first place they build a budget, hear a professional talk about a career path or pitch a business idea of their own.

Here is what drove our work this year:

- **Meeting Ohio's financial literacy requirement.** Beginning with the Class of 2026, every Ohio graduate must complete a half-unit of financial literacy. JA Financial Literacy, a one-semester, teacher-led course offered free to educators, helps schools meet that requirement with flexible, standards-aligned lessons and local support.
- **Bringing learning to life through hands-on events.** High school and college teams tested their investing skills at the JA Stock Market Challenge, and high school teams ran virtual companies at two JA Titan Competition events. Young entrepreneurs showcased their businesses at three JA Youth Market Day events, and middle school students pitched new ideas to Pizza Joe's and Conneaut Dairy Queen at two JA Innovation Challenge events.
- **Building the JA Discovery Center.** JA BizTown and JA Finance Park are coming to the Eastwood Mall. Pilot testing begins in spring 2027, JA BizTown opens fully in fall 2027 and JA Finance Park follows in fall 2028. Once fully operational, the center is projected to serve 10,000 young people a year.

Thank you for being part of this work. Your generosity and time give young people in Eastern Ohio the skills and confidence to shape their own futures, and we are grateful to build what comes next alongside you.

With gratitude,
Michele Merkel
President, Junior Achievement of Eastern Ohio

IMPACT SUMMARY

2025–2026 School Year

7,651
Young People Reached

341
JA Programs Delivered

76,254
Instructional Hours

54
Schools Served

226
Volunteers

205
Educators

59.2%
Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch

4
Counties Served: Ashtabula, Columbiana, Mahoning & Trumbull



Volunteers help bring every JA program to life.

SCHOOLS SERVED

2025–2026 School Year

7,651 young people | **341** programs | **54** schools | **4** counties

ASHTABULA COUNTY

967 young people
8 schools · 32 programs

A-Tech
Conneaut High School
Conneaut Middle School
Cork Elementary School
Geneva High School
Grand Valley Middle School
Jefferson Area High School
Pymatuning Valley High School

COLUMBIANA COUNTY

1,237 young people
7 schools · 60 programs

Buckeye Elementary School
David Anderson Jr./Sr. High School
East Liverpool Jr./Sr. High School
East Palestine Middle School
Leetonia High School
McKinley Elementary School
Southeast Elementary School

MAHONING COUNTY

2,784 young people
24 schools · 113 programs

Austintown Elementary School
Austintown Intermediate School
Boardman High School
Choffin Career & Technical Center
Damascus Elementary School
East High School
East Middle School
Holy Family School
Inspiring Minds Youngstown
Kirkmere Elementary School
Lowellville High School
Martin Luther King Elementary School
McKinley Elementary School
Northeast Ohio Impact Academy
Poland Seminary High School
South Range High School
Springfield Local High School
St. Charles School
St. Nicholas School
Struthers Elementary School
Struthers Middle School
Thornton Educational Services
Valley STEM + ME2 Academy
Western Reserve High School

TRUMBULL COUNTY

2,663 young people
15 schools · 136 programs

Bloomfield Middle/High School
Brookfield High School
Central Elementary School
Chalker High School
Champion Middle School
Girard Intermediate School
Hubbard High School
Hubbard Middle School
Lakeview Elementary School
Liberty High School
Lordstown High School
McGuffey PK-8 School
Mineral Ridge High School
Warren G. Harding High School
Willard PK-8 School



MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS

JAEO measures every program with JA USA's evaluation tools: pre- and post-program surveys of young people, educator surveys and participation data. We track reach, curriculum completion, growth in financial and career knowledge, and educator ratings of program quality.

90%
of young people connect their education to future careers

93%
of teachers see sustained higher engagement

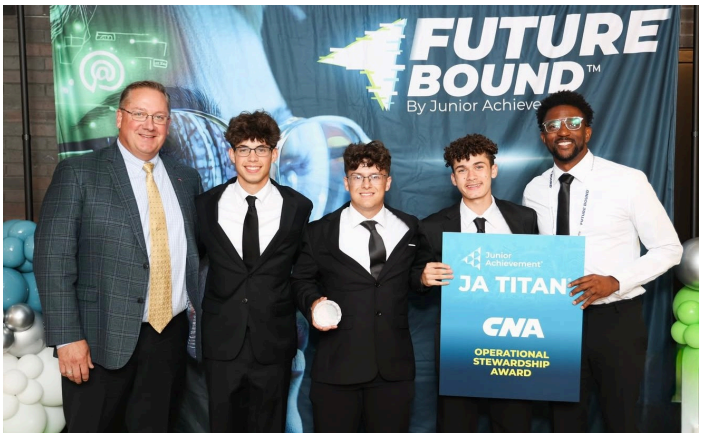
77%
of JA alumni are doing better than average financially

87%
of JA alumni continued their education after high school

Sources: JA experiential learning center evaluation data; 2026 JA Alumni Report (Ipsos for JA USA, 1,005 alumni ages 22–44).

PROGRAMS IN ACTION

Real-world skills. Real futures.



JA Titan & Future Bound

High school teams ran virtual companies at two JA Titan Competition events. East Liverpool High School's team took first place and advanced to the National JA Titan Challenge, where they earned the CNA Operational Stewardship Award at JA's Future Bound event.



JA Innovation Challenge

Middle school teams invented and pitched new menu ideas at two JA Innovation Challenge events, one with Pizza Joe's and one with Conneaut Dairy Queen. Winning teams get to see their ideas brought to life by the business they pitched.



JA Youth Market Day

Young entrepreneurs started a business, developed a product and sold it to the public at three JA Youth Market Day events. After completing a required JA Start My Business workshop, they handled their own setup, sales and customer interactions on each market day.



eighteen under 18

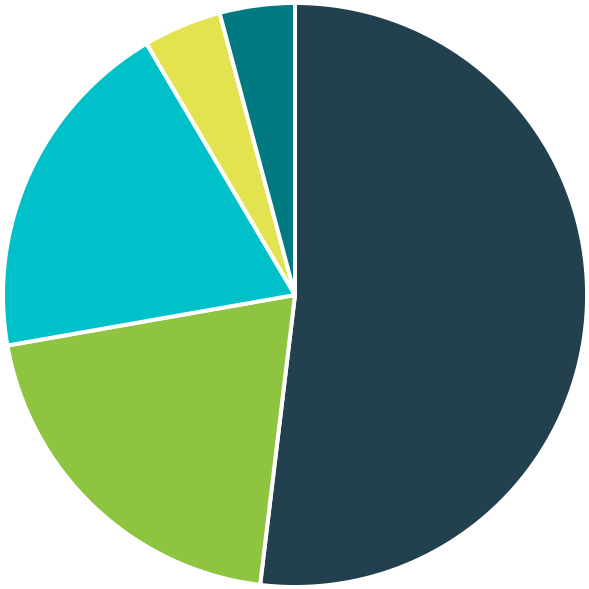
In partnership with the Gazette Newspapers, JA's 4th annual eighteen under 18 awards honored Ashtabula County's most extraordinary young people, ages 10 to 18, for their entrepreneurial spirit and leadership.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026

OPERATING REVENUE

$648,440



Grants & Foundations	$336,578	**51.9%**
Special Events	$131,802	**20.3%**
State of Ohio Funding	$125,000	**19.3%**
Investment Income	$28,099	**4.3%**
Gifts & Program Income	$26,960	**4.2%**

EXPENSES

$541,535



Staff Salaries & Benefits	$226,326	**41.8%**
Programs, Scholarships & JA USA Program & Support Fees	$107,026	**19.7%**
Outside & Professional Services	$82,250	**15.2%**
Facilities, Technology & Operations	$72,909	**13.5%**
Special Event Costs	$53,024	**9.8%**

JA DISCOVERY CENTER TOMORROW TODAY CAMPAIGN

Gifts received this year through the Tomorrow Today Campaign for the new JA Discovery Center at the Eastwood Mall. Shown separately from operating revenue.

$229,368

Unaudited figures from JAEO's accounting records.

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026

PLATINUM ($10,000+)

Cafaro Foundation
Farmers Charitable Foundation
The Fibus/Hendricks Family Foundation
The Frank and Pearl E. Gelbman Charitable Trust
Ohio Department of Education & Workforce
The Pollock Personal Foundation
Taco Bell Foundation
William M. Neckerman Jr. Foundation
The Youngstown Foundation

GOLD ($5,000–$9,999)

The Arnett Family Fund of the CFMV
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The JA Discovery Center at the Eastwood Mall

JA BizTown and JA Finance Park under one roof, projected to serve 10,000 young people a year. Pilot testing begins in spring 2027, JA BizTown opens fully in fall 2027 and JA Finance Park follows in fall 2028.

THANK YOU

To our sponsors, volunteers, educators and board members: because of you, young people across Eastern Ohio gained real-world skills this year. Here is how you can keep that work going.

Give

Bring JA programs to more young people across our four counties and help them build real-world skills.

Volunteer

Share your career story and help young people see what's possible right here at home.

Partner

Sponsor a JA Discovery Center simulation and put your company in front of tomorrow's workforce.

Junior Achievement™ of Eastern Ohio

Inspiring young people since 1952.

Scan to visit our website

Junior Achievement of Eastern Ohio
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