



NEWS RELEASE

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Contact:

Stephanie Bell
Junior Achievement
(719) 540-6171
sbell@ja.org
Twitter: @JA_USA

JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT OPERATIONS WIN AWARDS FOR INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

*JA Worldwide and MetLife Foundation Reward Cutting-Edge Tools
for Inspiring Young Entrepreneurs around the Globe*

Colorado Springs, Colo. – Six Junior Achievement (JA) operations won MetLife Foundation’s 2011 Entrepreneurial Awards and grants of \$25,000 each for outstanding innovation and entrepreneurial spirit. One JA Area—Junior Achievement of Kentuckiana, in Louisville, Ky.—received an additional \$25,000 for exceptional achievement in these areas. The inaugural MetLife Foundation “Sowing the Seeds of Entrepreneurship” Awards also were presented to three JA operations. They received grants of \$10,000 each to advance their innovative but untested program concepts. The 2011 winners were announced on Wednesday at Junior Achievement USA™’s National Leadership Conference held in Boston.

Junior Achievement and MetLife Foundation have partnered for more than 10 years to honor and expand exemplary entrepreneurship innovations developed by JA operations around the world.

“MetLife Foundation recognizes the important role that Junior Achievement operations worldwide play in inspiring and preparing young people to succeed in a global economy.” Dennis White, president and CEO of MetLife Foundation. “We are pleased to join JA in honoring 10 operations whose exemplary

innovations and entrepreneurship are helping them reach more young people with effective, high-quality programs.”

The top award and \$50,000 went to Junior Achievement of Kentuckiana for “JA Real Jobs, Real World.” The program provides high school students with “regionalized” career exploration tools that feature local universities, employers and high-demand jobs. Learning is made relevant by showing the connection between education, income and prospects for the future. The program is designed for easy replication.

Additional 2011 MetLife Foundation Entrepreneurial Award winners include:

- Junior Achievement Belgium - Flemish, “Vlajo Challenge Program”
 - An innovative online game for students 14 and older, the program inspires and teaches entrepreneurship. Each player has to get a loan, rent a shop, buy and sell products, and function in a “plaza” of other stores. The teacher controls and evaluates the process. The game makes economics both attractive and interactive.
- Junior Achievement Colombia, “Enterprising Camps II”
 - Targeting disadvantaged young people (ages 15-17), the project encompasses five residential enterprise camps that inspire students to hone their skills and create their own opportunities. The innovative program intervenes at a critical stage in students’ development, guiding them to raise their expectations and stay in school. College scholarship, micro-credit and trade fair competitions engage and help motivate the participants.
- Junior Achievement of Georgia, “JA Remote Volunteer Initiative”
 - This multi-year pilot is committed to overcoming logistical barriers to serving students in outlying areas by teaching JA programs in a virtual, synchronous classroom. JA volunteers and students can interact from remote locations and experience the same high level of learning and effectiveness established by the traditional JA program delivery model.
- Junior Achievement Paraguay, JA Enterprising Women
 - JA Paraguay’s a large-scale, self-sustaining credit program helps low-income women develop the skills they need to generate income and contribute to their community’s economy. It promotes the creation of sustainable financial and social services, training and mentorship to help participants develop self-esteem, solidarity and success.
- Junior Achievement – Rocky Mountain, “Advanced Volunteer Training”
 - JA partnered with the Public Education and Business Coalition to develop a volunteer training and preparation process that significantly increases volunteer effectiveness in

the classroom, including integrating personal and professional experience into lesson plans, engaging diverse and bilingual students, and using JA materials.

- Junior Achievement of West Central Florida, “STEM – TEC Summer Career Institute”
 - The intensive, five-week program introduces high school students to STEM careers (high-demand jobs in science, technology, engineering and math) and empowers work readiness through five JA programs in combination with technology curricula and job shadowing. The experience assists students with decision making targeting the transition to college and the business world.

The inaugural MetLife Foundation “Sowing the Seeds of Entrepreneurship” Award winners are:

- Junior Achievement of Northern Indiana, “Technology-based Learning”
 - To answer the call from educators for technology-based applications for JA lesson implementation, JA will develop online program supplements and teaching tips that volunteers can access during classroom sessions. Volunteer training will incorporate hands-on computer and smart board technology to increase confidence and effectiveness in using the program applications.
- Junior Achievement of South Dakota, “Reverse Roles – Students Teaching Parents”
 - Sixth-grade JA students who have completed JA Economics for Success® will be trained to teach financial literacy to their parents/guardians and will be asked to turn in a homework assignment to their classroom teacher for a grade. There will be a follow-up evaluation at the end of the school year to review the impact that was made in students’ homes.
- Junior Achievement of Western Kentucky, “Empowering Girls to Be Entrepreneurial”
 - This after-school program to empower girls to become entrepreneurs will be delivered by local female business owners. The students (grades 5-12) will participate in JA programs, develop their own business ideas and compete for seed funding of their business plans.

“The innovation and creativity these JA operations have demonstrated show that core JA concepts really do translate to the business world,” said Sean C. Rush, president and chief executive officer of JA Worldwide. “The winners of this year’s awards prove that JA does indeed practice what it preaches in terms of driving innovation in program delivery and business processes. Their accomplishments are tangible demonstrations of JA’s ability to empower young people to own their own economic success.”

The MetLife Foundation Entrepreneurial Award is a significant way to recognize — and inspire — innovation across JA through funding current programs promoting entrepreneurship. MetLife has been a JA partner since 1972 and also supports JA at the local level through volunteer engagement and

board leadership. Building on its 92-year legacy, Junior Achievement continues to deliver innovation to inspire and prepare young people to succeed in a global economy.

About MetLife Foundation

MetLife Foundation was established in 1976 to carry on MetLife's longstanding tradition of corporate contributions and community involvement. The Foundation is committed to building a secure future for individuals and communities worldwide. Through programs focusing on empowering older adults, preparing young people and building livable communities, MetLife Foundation increases access and opportunities for people of all ages. Since it was established, MetLife Foundation has made more than \$500 million in grants and \$75 million in program related investments. For more information, visit www.metlife.org.

About Junior Achievement® (JA)

Junior Achievement is the world's largest organization dedicated to inspiring and preparing young people to succeed in a global economy. Through a dedicated volunteer network, Junior Achievement provides in-school and after-school programs for students which focus on three key content areas: work readiness, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy. Today, 124 individual area operations reach more than four million students in the United States, with an additional 5.8 million students served by operations in 121 other countries worldwide. For more information, visit www.ja.org.