



"How JA Changed My Perspective" -Jadyn Potter

Before participating in Junior Achievement (JA), I understood the basics of saving money, budgeting, and the importance of making smart financial decisions. However, I wasn't sure how to turn these basics into a concrete plan for my future. JA changed that for me. One lesson from JA that truly stood out was learning how to choose a career path based on my interests, strengths, and goals. This activity encouraged me to seriously consider what I enjoy and what kind of career would be the best fit for me.

Since I've always loved science and helping others, it made my dream of majoring in chemistry and eventually becoming a doctor feel more attainable. I realized how important it is to choose a career you're passionate about, not just one that pays well. Most people change their majors and careers multiple times, but choosing something that excites you can help you move forward with confidence, rather than doubt. JA also completely changed the way I think about money, work, and my future career. I learned that no matter which path I choose, having a plan and understanding how to manage my finances is essential.

As I begin my freshman year of college as a chemistry major, I know I'll need to budget carefully to afford school and prepare for medical school. Working a job and applying for scholarships will help, but I now see how important it is to manage these responsibilities thoughtfully. Since participating in JA, I feel more confident about making financial decisions and planning ahead.

These skills will be invaluable as I become more independent and take on greater responsibility for my own finances. Of all the skills I learned, budgeting stands out as the most useful. As a college and future medical student, budgeting will help me pay tuition and cover other necessities without unnecessary stress.

My view of entrepreneurship has also changed. I used to think it was just about starting a business, but JA showed me that it's really about solving problems, taking initiative, and making a positive impact. Even though I want to be a doctor, I now understand that entrepreneurial skills like leadership, communication, and critical thinking will help me succeed no matter what career I pursue. I would absolutely recommend JA to my friends. The lessons and skills you learn are valuable for anyone, whether they know what they want to do, or are still figuring it out.

For example, I've already created a budget for my school and personal life, including tuition, books, bills, and personal expenses, all thanks to what I learned in JA. To other students, I would say that JA gives you skills you can use for life, whether you're moving on to college, living on your own, or starting a family. My future goals include graduating from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock with a degree in chemistry, attending medical school, buying a house, and starting a family. JA has given me the confidence and practical skills to pursue these goals and turn them into reality.

Insights from Our Leadership: Kristen Nicholson

Q: What inspired you to join the Junior Achievement of Arkansas Board of Directors?

I joined the Junior Achievement of Arkansas Board because I believe financial literacy is one of the most powerful life skills we can give the next generation. It has the ability to change the trajectory of a person's life, regardless of where they start.



Growing up, I was never formally taught about personal finance. I didn't learn about budgeting, investing, credit, taxes, or how to make money work for me in school. Instead, I learned through trial and error, making good decisions, making mistakes, and figuring things out along the way. While those experiences were valuable, they also cost me time.

Looking back, if I had received a strong foundation in financial literacy as a student, I genuinely believe I would be at least ten years ahead of where I am today. Understanding how to manage money, invest early, and think long-term creates opportunities that compound over a lifetime

Q: Can you share a memorable moment or success story from your time with JA?

One of the most memorable experiences I've had with Junior Achievement was serving as a judge for the virtual pitch competition featuring high school entrepreneurs. I was genuinely impressed by the level of creativity, preparation, and confidence these students brought to the table.

They weren't just presenting ideas, they had developed thoughtful business plans, identified their target markets, and confidently pitched their businesses. They understood how to communicate their value and market themselves in a way that many adults struggle to do.

That experience reinforced the incredible potential young people have when they're given the right tools, guidance, and encouragement. Programs like Junior Achievement don't just teach business concepts; they help students build confidence, think critically, solve real-world problems, and see themselves as future entrepreneurs and leaders.

Walking away from that event, I wasn't just encouraged by what those students had accomplished; I was excited about what they'll accomplish in the future. It was a powerful reminder that investing in young people today creates innovators, business owners, and community leaders for tomorrow.

Q: What motivates you to continue volunteering your time and expertise to JA?

JA is giving students the head start that many of us never had. By teaching financial literacy, entrepreneurship, and career readiness at an early age, we're equipping young people with practical skills that will benefit them for decades. Being part of that mission is an opportunity to help create brighter futures, and that's a responsibility I'm proud to support.

Swing Fore JA: Tee Up for a Purpose!

Are you ready to make a difference while hitting the bays? Junior Achievement of Arkansas invites you to join us for our annual Swing Fore JA golf event! Gather your colleagues, friends, or family, and sign up your team today for a day of fun, friendly competition, and community impact.

Swing Fore JA isn't just about golf, it's about empowering the next generation of Arkansas leaders. Every team registration supports financial literacy, entrepreneurship, and career readiness programs for local students. Your participation helps JA reach more classrooms and inspire more young minds.

This year's event, held on **September 18, 2026**, promises exciting prizes, on-course contests, and the chance to network with fellow supporters and business leaders. Whether you're a seasoned golfer or just looking for a new way to support JA, there's a place for you at Swing Fore JA!



Don't miss out! Team spots fill up fast! Sign up today and help us drive success for Arkansas students!

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