



# May Newsletter

## Making an Impact This May

May is here, and with it comes a season of celebration, reflection, and gratitude. As students wrap up the school year and look ahead to what's next, we're taking a moment to recognize the incredible educators who make it all possible. In honor of Teacher Appreciation Month, we extend our heartfelt thanks to the teachers who bring Junior Achievement programs to life in their classrooms every day. Your dedication to preparing students for success in work and life is what drives our mission forward, and we are so grateful for the impact you make across our community.

## Teacher Appreciation Spotlight



***Dawna Hawkins***  
***Bookkeeper/Principal***  
***Secretary***  
***Federal Programs***  
***Otter Creek Elementary***

"I am deeply committed to student growth and real-world readiness, creating meaningful connections between our school and the local community. Playing an



***Dr. Mary V. Perkins-***  
***Jacobs***  
***JAG Specialist***  
***Little Rock Southwest***  
***High School***

"It has been an honor to have Junior Achievement as a partner for over 15 years working with my Jobs for Arkansas Graduates (JAG) Program at Little Rock Southwest



***Jennifer Boogaart***  
***EAST Facilitator***  
***John Tyson Elementary***  
***School of Innovation***

" My experience with Junior Achievement started around 2021 with an all-district email I almost overlooked. At the time, I was leading an after-school club at John Tyson Elementary, and I

active role in expanding educational opportunities beyond traditional instruction is important to me. Junior Achievement provides a powerful learning experience that truly engages students and helps them understand how today's lessons matter beyond the classroom".

and formerly J.A. Fair High School. Junior Achievement have been able to lay a foundation for the scholars when it comes to the financial literacy, communication skills, organizational skills, problem solving skills, social networking skills, personal and professional skills they will need to be successful in life. They have the opportunity to see that the foundation goes beyond the classroom with the various speakers from the business industry. They have been able to learn the difference between short- and long-term goals with building a plan and how to achieve them. Scholars have received certifications in Career Success and Financial Literacy. With the help of Junior Achievement, they are able to use those skills. The skills that they learned will help them position themselves for a better career once they graduate from high school, college or go straight into the workforce. Thank you, JA, for going above and beyond".

knew I had to bring JA in to teach financial literacy. What started as a small club quickly grew into something much bigger. I realized these lessons were too important to reach just a few students, so we expanded through JA in a Day to serve our entire K-5 school. For the past several years, our students have gained hands-on, real-world skills that help them prepare for their futures and connect with our community. I'm so thankful I read that email. This partnership has made a lasting impact on more than 2,200 students, and it has been incredible to see our own students give back, like when our EAST program created a video for JA. I'm truly grateful for the opportunities JA continues to provide our school and our students".

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## Recent Events



The Hero Bowl for JAARK was more than just bowling—it was a testament to the spirit of community, generosity, and teamwork. We would like to extend our deepest gratitude to everyone who took part in this incredible event, making it a resounding success.

We would like to thank our Honorary Chair, Olivia Smith-Keneipp, and our presenting sponsor, First Horizon Bank for their dedication to JA's mission!

A special thank you to our committee members: Erica, Lynn, Kyle, Lindsey, Marie, Ann, Susan, Brandon, whose generosity made it possible for us to host the event and maximize our impact.

Thanks to everyone's involvement, we were able to raise both awareness and critical funds for JAARK, advancing our mission and supporting those in need. We raised \$49,901.71 to impact student's lives in Northwest Arkansas! The Hero Bowl's success is a direct reflection of your passion and dedication.

## Upcoming Events

We're excited to celebrate success at the JA Hall of Fame Business Luncheon this week! This highly anticipated event brings together business leaders, professionals, and community members for an afternoon of networking, inspiration, and opportunity.

Neill Linebarier, Honorary Chair, whose leadership, vision, and dedication have been instrumental in bringing this celebration together—honoring outstanding leaders while helping advance opportunities for students across Arkansas. Helping guide us through this year's JA Hall of Fame celebration is Alisha Curtis, our 2026 HOF Emcee, where Heather Baker, President & Publisher of AY Media, will be our Experian Keynote & Presenter. All scholarships awards are made possibly by the Experian Youth

Scholarship Sponsor, Experian! This amazing occasion is powered by our presenting sponsor, Arkansas Attorney General, Tim Griffin.

The HOF Business Luncheon is the perfect occasion to connect with peers, gain valuable insights from our distinguished speakers, and celebrate the achievements within our business community. Whether you are looking to expand your network or simply enjoy a great meal in good company, this luncheon is not to be missed.

It's not too late to support the occasion by making a donation. Your contribution helps us continue to bring valuable opportunities and events to our business community.

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## Step Into the Classroom



JA in a Day (JAID) is a powerful opportunity to make a lasting impact in just one school day. Volunteers step into local elementary classrooms to lead engaging, hands-on lessons in financial literacy, career exploration, and entrepreneurship, helping students connect today's learning to tomorrow's opportunities.

This spring, we will be at **George Elementary on May 12, 2026**, from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

We are seeking enthusiastic volunteers ready to inspire confidence, spark big dreams, and help shape a student's future in just one day.

**If interested, please contact Erica Weston at [eweston@jaark.org](mailto:eweston@jaark.org).**

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