The Lasting Impact of JA

One JA alumni tells her story of the impact the JA Company Program made in her life, and nearly 50 years later, students from Olympus High carry on the JA Company Program tradition . . .

“I participated in Junior Achievement when I was attending high school back in the 1970s! It was one of the most positive memories I have about my teenage years. My friend and I were assigned to work in a group with five other students who came from different schools in the Salt Lake City area. There were three businessmen who graciously gave up one evening a week to mentor us. We met at the Junior Achievement of Salt Lake offices and these men helped us form a real company. We elected a president, vice president in charge of production, vice president in charge of advertising, etc. We set up a bank account, sold stock, came up with a product to sell, and then produced the product and sold it. It helped me understand the economics of buying and selling goods. It also helped me understand how stock investing worked. True, our stock holders did not collect a huge dividend on their investment. In fact, I think it cost more to produce the check, than what was paid out to them on the check! However, not only did it help me understand economics of the business world, but it also gave me an extra boost in my self-esteem at a time when I really needed it! The crowning achievement was when my friend and I were chosen to represent our company at a Junior Achievement Conference in San Francisco, California, that spring. I will never forget the memories that were forged during that trip.”

Sincerely,
Patrice Hafen
Teacher - Stansbury Elementary School

JA Company Program is Junior Achievement’s longest running program, beginning in 1919 with the founding of the organization. JA Company Program unlocks the innate ability in high school students to fill a need or solve a problem in their community by launching a business venture and unleashing their entrepreneurial spirit. The program focuses on how to build and operate a company during the majority of meeting time, where students build and manage their business.

Students from Olympus High recently participated in the JA Company Program, setting up a business selling donuts to the student body. Not only did this group learn the basics of entrepreneurism, but they also learned a little bit about the power of philanthropy, and made the decision to donate all $500 of the proceeds raised to Primary Children’s Medical Center!

“The Junior Achievement project was probably the best assignment we received in this course because of how applicable the information was. Thanks to the project I was able to comprehend how a business can be started and managed more clearly. I really liked how each one of us had a responsibility to be accountable for because it never left anyone with the burden of completing the goals on their own. The whole class acted as a team and it helped me understand the importance of team interaction. I thoroughly enjoyed this project; it was fun, interactive and gave me the drive to continue to learn more about the business world.” – Erick, Olympus Student