

Retrospective Study Report

INTRODUCTION

JA Worldwide® (Junior Achievement) is the world’s largest organization dedicated to educating students about workforce readiness, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy through experiential, hands-on programs. Since 1919, more than 96 million students around the world have participated in Junior Achievement. In partnership with businesses and educators, JA Worldwide seeks to *inspire and prepare young people to succeed in a global economy*.

JA Worldwide is committed to ongoing, rigorous evaluation and quality assurance of all Junior Achievement (JA) programs. In the past five years alone, JA Worldwide’s investment of student outcomes research has exceeded \$3.1 million. While these evaluations have consistently demonstrated the short-term benefits associated with participation in Junior Achievement programs, (such as increased knowledge, improved attitudes, and skill development) little data has been collected to capture the long-term outcomes and sequential-learning benefits of JA.

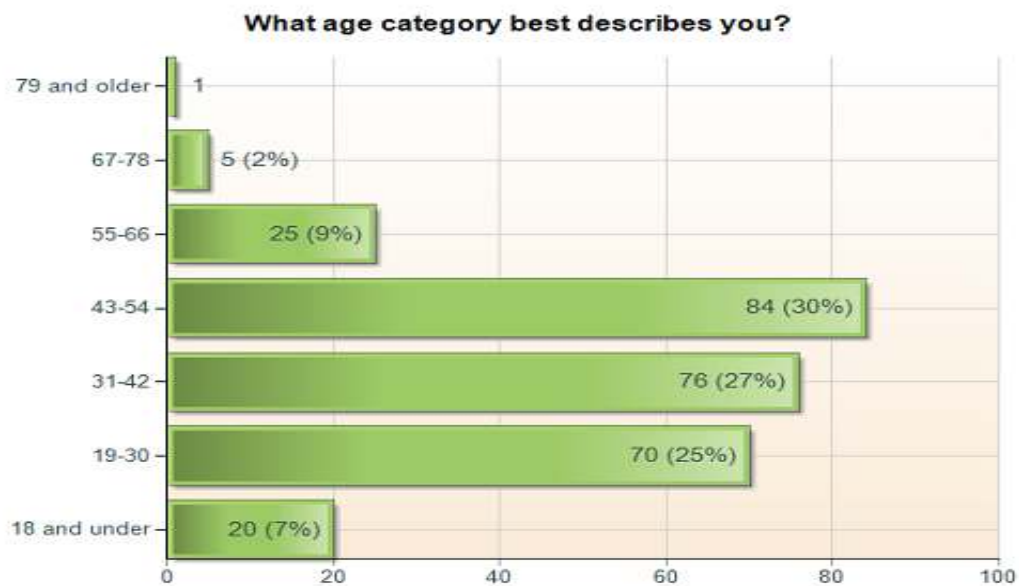
To capture this data, JA Worldwide launched a retrospective study, which looks backwards in time. For the study, individuals who formerly participated in Junior Achievement (JA Alumni) completed an online survey.

The following report synthesizes the survey responses received from January 31 – June 15, 2009.

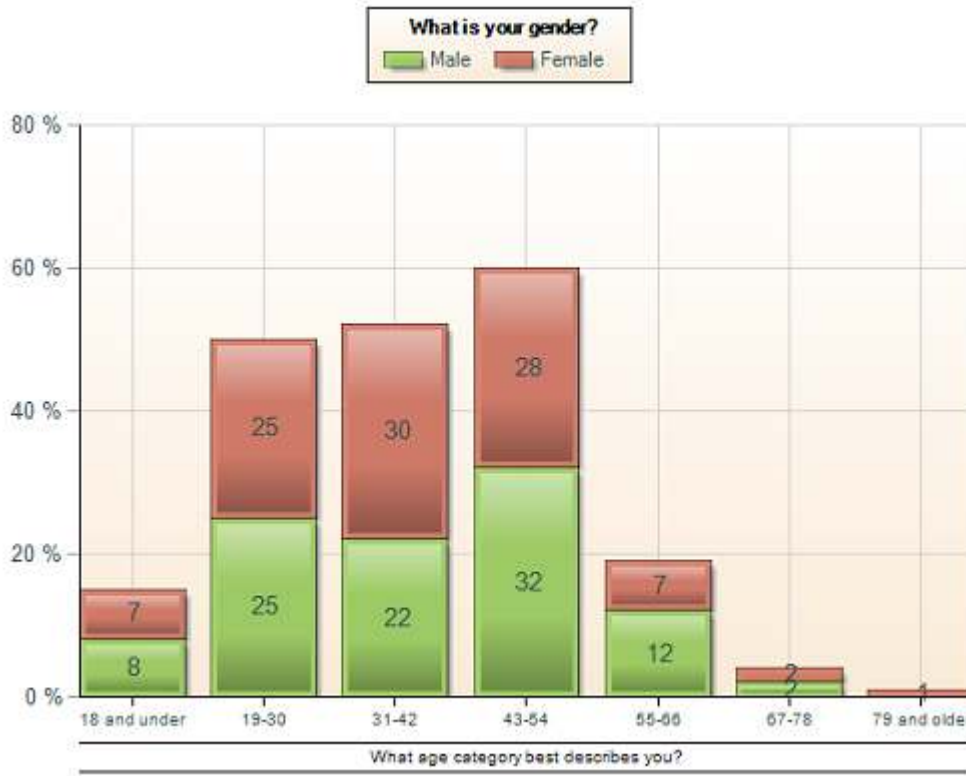
RESULTS

Sample

A total of 281 alumni have completed the survey since January 31. Of this, 38% of respondents were male and 62% were female. The following chart shows the breakdown by age category. The majority of respondents (68%) were age 31 or older.



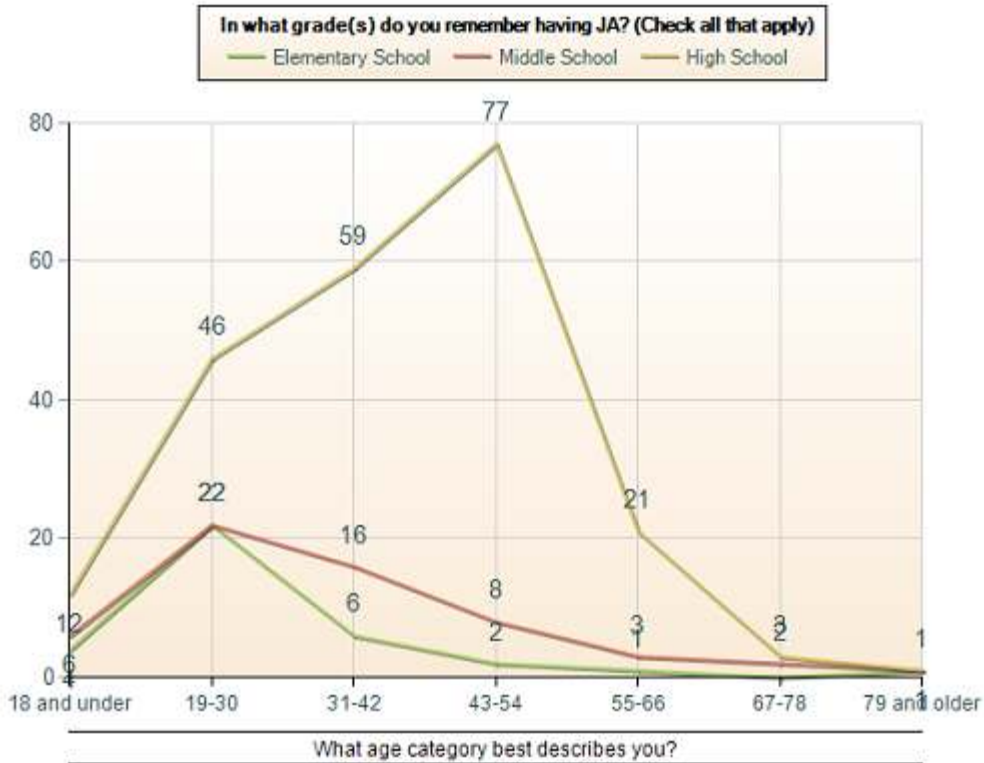
Comparatively, the gap between males and females was more pronounced for respondents between the ages of 31-42. There were significantly more females who completed the survey for this age group.



On average, respondents had participated in at least three JA programs. The overwhelming majority of respondents (80%) recalled having JA in high school.

In what grade(s) do you remember having JA? (Check all that apply)	
Elementary School	13% (n=36)
Middle School	21% (n=58)
High School	80% (n=222)

Looking at age categories, respondents between the ages of 43-54 were significantly more likely to have participated in JA during high school.

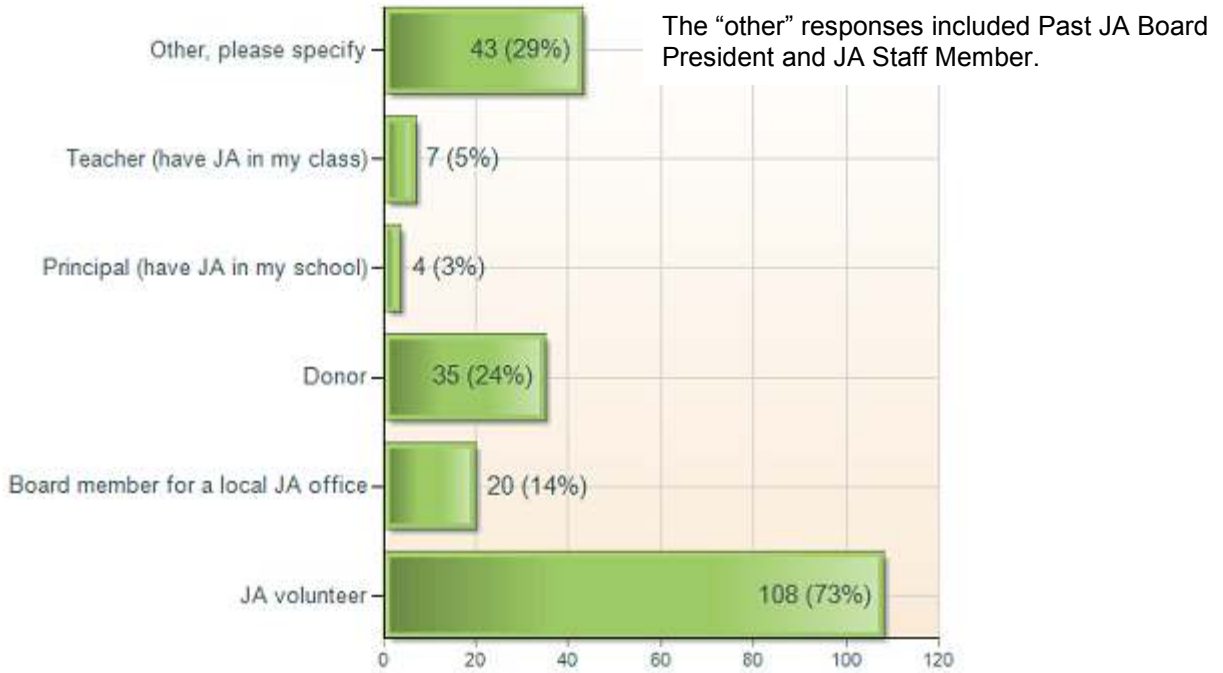


The majority of respondents (58%) reported that they participated in JA in an after-school setting. Of those, 46% had participated in JA more than 25 years ago when JA programs were primarily offered after-school. For respondents between the ages of 19-30, the majority had participated in JA in the classroom (54%).

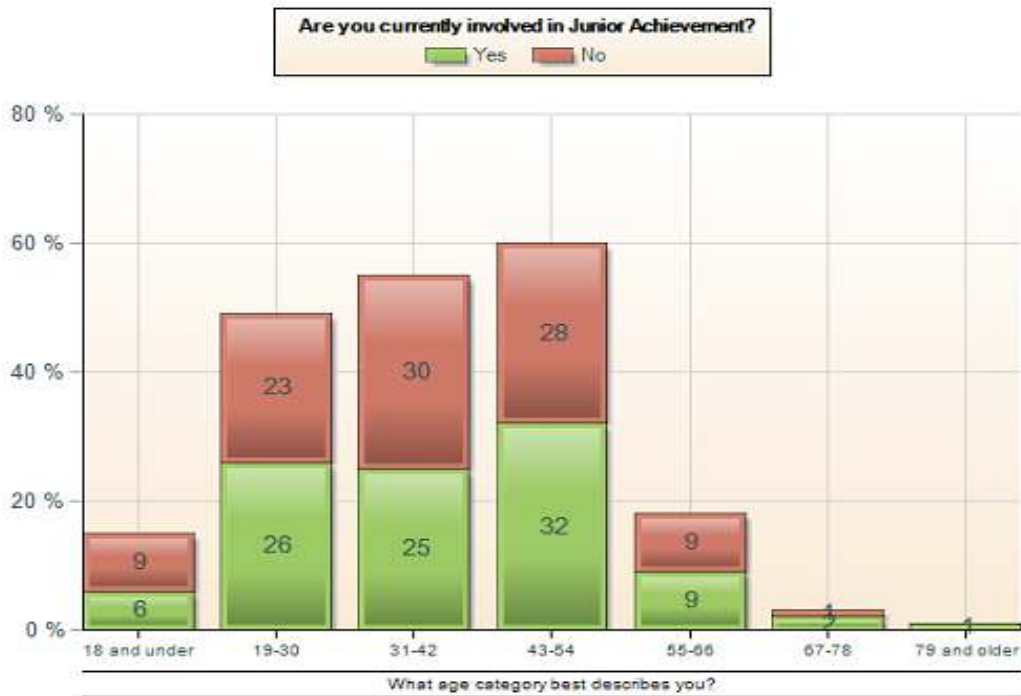
Did you participate in a classroom or after-school setting?	
Classroom	31% (n=81)
After-school	58% (n=154)
Both	11% (n=30)

The survey also asked respondents about their current level of involvement with Junior Achievement. As evidenced by the following chart, slightly more than half (51%) indicated that they were currently involved in JA, but their level of participation varied.

If you answered yes to question 9, how are you involved? (Check all that apply)



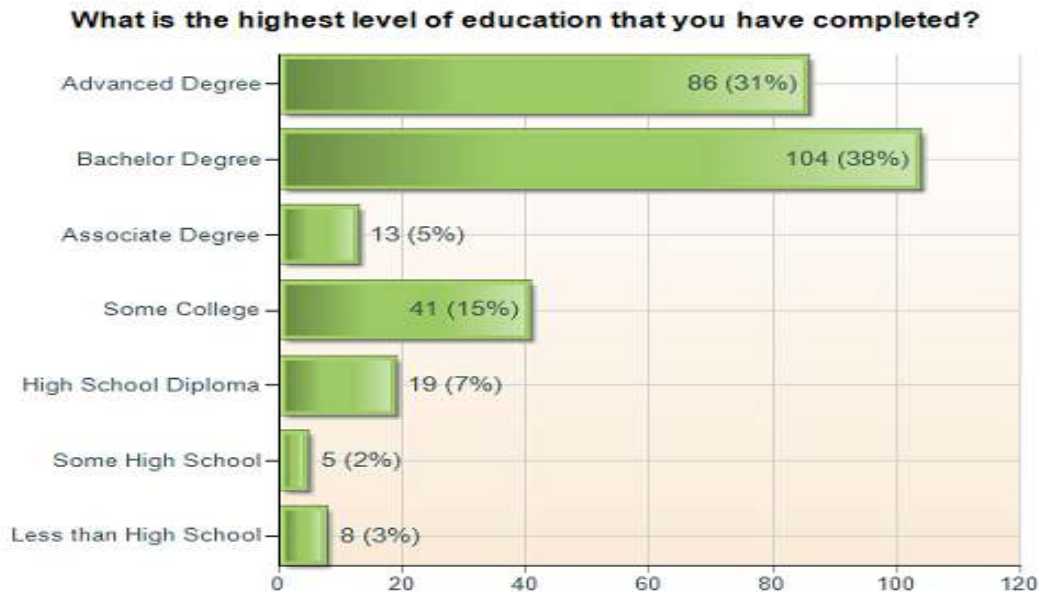
Comparatively, there were no significant differences in the level of involvement across the various age groups. Respondents between the ages 43-54 were only slightly more likely to be involved in JA.



However, the various types of involvement per age category did differ. Respondents between the ages of 43-54 were more likely to be on the board for the local JA office and more likely to be donors.

	18 & under	19-30	31-42	43-54	55-66	67-78	79 and older
JA volunteer	5% (n=5)	31% (n=33)	26% (n=29)	29% (n=31)	8% (n=9)	0% (n=0)	1% (n=1)
Local JA board member	10% (n=2)	0% (n=0)	20% (n=4)	60% (n=12)	5% (n=1)	0% (n=0)	5% (n=1)
Donor	0% (n=0)	9% (n=3)	17% (n=6)	60% (n=21)	9% (n=3)	3% (n=1)	3% (n=1)
Principal (have JA in my school)	50% (n=2)	0% (n=0)	0% (n=0)	25% (n=1)	0% (n=0)	0% (n=)	25% (n=1)
Teacher (have JA in my class)	14% (n=1)	14% (n=1)	29% (n=2)	14% (n=1)	14% (n=1)	0% (n=0)	14% (n=1)
Other	2% (n=1)	14% (n=6)	24% (n=10)	36% (n=15)	14% (n=6)	7% (n=3)	2% (n=1)

The survey also included items regarding the respondents' level of education and whether they currently own their business. The majority of respondents had a bachelor's degree or higher (69%). This is compared with 27% of the general population (2007 Census Bureau Projections).



Respondents were asked to report their current profession and position. Twenty-seven percent of the respondents held upper-management positions (CEO, President, Executive Director, Owner, etc), including:

- Commercial banker
- Restaurant/banquet
- Executive Vice President – Sales, marketing, and product development
- County Treasurer
- Certified Public Accountant – semi-retired
- Development
- President, Model Coverall Service, Inc.
- Global Director, Customer Service
- Executive Vice President for Organizational Development
- Distribution and Logistics Manager
- Secretary of State Michigan – elected official

Eighteen percent of the respondents currently own their business. In 2007, 9.6% of the U.S. population owned their own business (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 2006-2007).

Do you currently own your own business?	
Yes	18% n=51
No	82% n=229

The overwhelming majority (86%) of respondents currently owning a business remember having JA in high school.

	Do you currently own your own business?
	Yes
Elementary School	6% n=3
Middle School	18% n=9
High School	86% n=43

Respondents also were asked to identify in what state they participated as a Junior Achievement (JA) student and the JA office closest (in proximity) to them. The breakdown is provided in **Appendices A** and **B**.

Impact

The second section of the survey captured information from participants regarding the impact JA has had on their knowledge, attitudes, skills development, and behavior. Respondents rated on a scale of “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree” a number of statements.

As evidenced below, the majority of respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that JA helped them compete more effectively in a business environment (82%), helped prepare them for the world of work (86%), connected what they learned in the classroom with real life (82%), made them realize the importance of staying in school (68%), and helped them to more effectively manage their money (58%).

Junior Achievement...	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree/nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Helped prepare me for the world of work.	1% n=1	2% n=5	11% n=30	43% n=118	43% n=118
Connected what I learned in the classroom to real life.	1% n=3	1% n=2	16% n=43	41% n=112	41% n=113
Made me realize the importance of staying in school.	2% n=6	4% n=12	26% n=70	31% n=84	37% n=101
Helped me compete more effectively in a business environment.	1% n=4	3% n=8	14% n=37	38% n=103	44% n=121
Helped me to more effectively manage my money.	1% n=4	7% n=19	33% n=90	32% n=88	26% n=71
Prepared me to start my own business.	3% n=8	9% n=23	44% n=119	23% n=63	21% n=57
Helped me identify my future career path.	5% n=13	8% n=21	27% n=74	26% n=72	34% n=92

The overwhelming majority of respondents (94%) agreed that JA positively affected their future. When asked how, multiple responses were given. The following is a sample of responses.

Junior Achievement is a confidence-boosting educational experience that allows you to evaluate yourself and your social skills on a personal level, and to have a lot of fun, too.

The mentors exposed me to the possibility of college. I was also empowered to develop leadership skills so I could be successful in the workplace. It truly was the most powerful influence in HS that helped pave my future success as an adult.

It inspired me to think more like an entrepreneur and consider alternative ways of pursuing a future in business.

Taught me how to have confidence in running my own financial life. Gave me experiences that I would not have had that expanded my horizons. To see others in the world of work made me see that I could do the same.

It helped me build a strong foundation of experience with regards to the actual working business world. This foundation acted as a great stepping stone to my college classes and ultimately my first job with a small business owner.

Junior Achievement helped me figure out the direction that I needed to take after high school. Learning about business, entrepreneurship, and leadership helped me realize I can overcome challenges and get what I want in life by working hard.

It made me aware of business opportunities and led to my buying a business later in life.

Taught me about the very basics of how to run a business. I'm able to reference those basics as I hear about the global financial problems. I have a basic understanding due to my hands-on education running a JA business in high school.

I learned the fundamentals of business at an early age – that's much better than learning them later in life.

JA opened up the business world to me

[JA positively affected me] in many ways...I met lifelong friends, I made important business contacts, I learned about running a business and economics, and I gained self-confidence.

My contacts through JA have helped me gain employment and provided lifelong friends.

Survey respondents also were asked to rate their agreement to whether JA strengthened specific skills. As evidenced in the table below, the majority of respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that JA strengthened the following skills: teamwork (89%), problem-solving (87%), decision-making (88%), critical thinking (83%), budgeting (71%), interpersonal communication (84%), and job interviewing (55%).

JA strengthened the following skills for me:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree/nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Teamwork	1% n=3	1% n=2	9% n=24	40% n=110	49% n=134
Problem-solving	1% n=3	1% n=3	11% n=29	46% n=126	41% n=113
Decision-making	1% n=3	1% n=2	10% n=26	40% n=110	48% n=132
Critical thinking	1% n=3	1% n=4	15% n=40	42% n=114	41% n=110
Budgeting	1% n=3	4% n=12	23% n=63	38% n=105	33% n=90
Interpersonal communication	1% n=2	1% n=3	14% n=39	38% n=104	46% n=125
Job interviewing	3% n=9	7% n=19	35% n=95	22% n=60	33% n=89
Resume-writing	8% n=21	15% n=42	49% n=133	14% n=39	14% n=37

Self-Efficacy

The last section of the report asked respondents to rate their degree of confidence in five key areas: competing in a business environment, effectively managing their finances, successfully completing a job interview, starting a business, and effectively working in a team. The next phase of the evaluation study, planned for fall 2009, involves comparing the rate of confidence of former JA students in completing these tasks to a control group who have not participated in JA.

How much confidence do you have that you could...?	No confidence at all	2	3	4	Complete confidence
Compete in a business environment.	1% n=3	1% n=2	5% n=12	23% n=60	70% n=180
Effectively manage your personal finances.	1% n=3	2% n=6	7% n=19	25% n=64	64% n=165
Successfully complete a job interview.	1% n=3	2% n=5	3% n=7	14% n=36	80% n=202
Start your own business.	2% n=4	5% n=14	16% n=40	27% n=68	51% n=130
Effectively work in a team	2% n=4	0% n=0	3% n=8	13% n=33	82% n=211

Alumni Interest

At the end of the survey, respondents were asked to rank in order of preference (1=most preferable to 5=least preferable), the benefits that should be offered to Junior Achievement (JA) alumni. The results are provided below in order of preference.

- 1st preference: Invitations to local JA events and volunteer opportunities
- 2nd preference: Online Alumni Directory
- 3rd preference: Alumni Quarterly Newsletter
- 4th preference: Social Networking Site
- 5th preference: Alumni merchandise

Discussion

In summary, 281 JA alumni completed an online survey between the dates of January 15 – June 15, 2009. The purpose of the survey was to measure the long-term impact of JA program participation from the perspective of former student participants. The survey asked respondents to provide information about their previous JA experience, and the impact this experience has had on their skill development and behavior for the future.

As evidenced by the results detailed in this report, Junior Achievement is inspiring and preparing young people to succeed in a global economy. The majority of respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that JA strengthened skills necessary to compete effectively in the workforce, including: teamwork, problem-solving, decision-making, critical thinking, budgeting,

interpersonal communication, and job interviewing. More than eight out of 10 (82%) “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that JA helped them compete more effectively in a business environment, and helped prepare them for the world of work.

Next steps for the study include: 1) additional advertising among the JA network to increase the number of survey participants, 2) comparing the results of the self-efficacy measures to adults who have not participated in Junior Achievement. These steps will help increase the credibility and validity of future findings.

Appendix A - JA Office Closest in Proximity

Please identify the JA office closest (in proximity) to you.

AL-Mobile	1% (1)
AL Greater Birmingham	0% (0)
AL Huntsville-North AL	0% (0)
AL Lanett-East AL - West GA	0% (0)
AK	0% (0)
AZ	2% (3)
AR	1% (1)
CA Los Angeles-Southern CA	3% (4)
CA Sacramento	0% (0)
CA San Diego/Imperial Co.	1% (1)
CA San Francisco-Bay Area - Northern CA	1% (2)
CA San Jose-Silicon Valley & Monterey Bay	1% (2)
CO Colorado Springs-Southern CO	2% (3)
CO Denver -Rocky Mountain	2% (3)
CT Bridgeport-Western CT	0% (0)
CT Hartford-SW New England	1% (1)

CT Stamford/Norwalk-SW CT	1% (1)
DE	0% (0)
FL Cocoa Beach-East Central FL	0% (0)
FL Fort Lauderdale-South FL	1% (1)
FL Jacksonville-Florida's First Coast	0% (0)
FL Miami	1% (1)
FL Naples-SW FL	1% (1)
FL Orlando-Central FL	0% (0)
FL Pensacola-NW FL	3% (4)
FL Tampa/St. Petersburg-West Central FL	1% (1)
FL West Palm Beach-Palm Beaches	0% (0)
GA	1% (2)
HI	1% (1)
ID	0% (0)
IL Chicago	2% (3)
IL Decatur-East Central IL	1% (1)
IL Peoria-Central IL	0% (0)
IL Rockford-Rock River Valley	0% (0)

IN Elkhart	0% (0)
IN Evansville-SW IN	0% (0)
IN Fort Wayne-Northern IN	0% (0)
IN Indianapolis-Central IN	1% (1)
IN Richmond-East IN	0% (0)
IN Terre Haute-Wabash Valley	1% (1)
IA Eastern IA - Cedar Rapids, Waterloo, N. Liberty	0% (0)
IA Des Moines-Central IA	0% (0)
IA Heartland/Quad Cities	0% (0)
IA Sioux City	0% (0)
KS Topeka-NE KS	0% (0)
KS Wichita	0% (0)
KY Bowling Green-South Central KY	0% (0)
KY Lexington-Bluegrass	0% (0)
KY Louisville JA of Kentuckiana	1% (2)
KY Owensboro	0% (0)
LA Baton Rouge & Acadiana	1% (1)
LA New Orleans	0% (0)

LA Shreveport-Northern LA	0% (0)
ME	0% (0)
MD Baltimore-Central MD	3% (5)
MD Salisbury-Eastern Shore	0% (0)
MA Boston-Eastern MA	1% (2)
MA New Bedford/Fall River-Southern MA	0% (0)
MA Springfield-Western MA	7% (10)
MA Worcester-Central MA	0% (0)
MI Battle Creek and Kalamazoo	0% (0)
MI Detroit-SE MI	0% (0)
MI Grand Rapids-MI Great Lakes	1% (1)
MI Jackson-MI Edge	0% (0)
MI Lansing-Mid-MI	0% (0)
MI Midland-Central MI	1% (1)
MI Saginaw-Northern MI	0% (0)
MI St. Joseph/Benton Harbor-Berrien & Cass County	0% (0)
MN Twin Cities-Upper Midwest	3% (5)
MS	0% (0)

MT Montana	0% (0)
MO Kansas City-Middle America	0% (0)
MO St. Louis-Mississippi Valley	0% (0)
NE Lincoln	0% (0)
NE Omaha-the Midlands	0% (0)
NH	0% (0)
NV Las Vegas-Southern NV	0% (0)
NV Reno-Northern NV	0% (0)
NJ	0% (0)
NM	0% (0)
NY Albany-NE NY	0% (0)
NY Buffalo-Western NY	0% (0)
NY New York -NY	9% (14)
NY Rochester	1% (1)
NY Syracuse-Central NY	1% (2)
NY Westchester-Hudson Valley	1% (2)
NC Charlotte-Central Carolinas	1% (1)
NC Greensboro-Central NC	0% (0)

NC Raleigh-Eastern NC	1% (1)
OH Akron/Mansfield/North Central OH	1% (1)
OH Canton-East Central OH	2% (3)
OH Cincinnati/Dayton-OKI Partners	1% (2)
OH Cleveland	1% (2)
OH Columbus-Central OH	18% (27)
OH Middletown	1% (1)
OH Springfield-Springfield & Clark City, OH	0% (0)
OH Toledo-NW OH	0% (0)
OH Warren/Youngstown-Mahoning Valley	0% (0)
OK Oklahoma City-Greater OKC	0% (0)
OK Tulsa-Eastern OK	0% (0)
OR-Portland-Columbia Empire	0% (0)
PA Lancaster-Central PA	0% (0)
PA Philadelphia-Delaware Valley	1% (1)
PA Pittsburgh-SW PA	0% (0)
PA Reading-Berks County	0% (0)
PA Scranton-NE PA	1% (1)

PA York-South Central PA	0% (0)
Puerto Rico	0% (0)
RI	0% (0)
SC Charleston-Coastal SC	0% (0)
SC Columbia-Central SC	0% (0)
SC Greenville	1% (2)
SC Spartanburg	0% (0)
SD Sioux Falls-SD	0% (0)
TN Chattanooga	0% (0)
TN Cleveland-Ocoee Region	0% (0)
TN Kingsport -Tri-Cities TN/VA	0% (0)
TN Knoxville-East TN	0% (0)
TN Memphis-Memphis and The Mid-South	0% (0)
TN Nashville-Middle TN	0% (0)
TX Austin-Central TX	1% (1)
TX Brazoria County	0% (0)
TX Dallas	0% (0)
TX El Paso-Desert SW	0% (0)

TX Forth Worth-Chisholm Trail	0% (0)
TX Houston-SE TX	1% (2)
TX Longview-East TX	0% (0)
TX Midland-West TX	0% (0)
TX San Antonio-South TX	1% (1)
UT	1% (2)
VA Lynchburg-Lynchburg	0% (0)
VA Norfolk-Newport News-Greater Hampton Roads	0% (0)
VA Richmond-Central VA	3% (4)
VA Roanoke-SW VA	0% (0)
WA DC- the National Capital Area	1% (2)
WA Seattle-WA	0% (0)
WA Spokane - Inland NW	1% (1)
WI Wisconsin	2% (3)
WV Charleston-WV and Advantage Valley	0% (0)
Other	3% (5)

148 total responses

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Appendix B – State Respondents Participating in JA

In which state did you participate as a Junior Achievement (JA) student?

Alabama	0% (1)
Alaska	0% (0)
Arizona	1% (3)
Arkansas	0% (1)
California	5% (14)
Colorado	2% (5)
Connecticut	2% (6)
Delaware	0% (0)
Florida	3% (7)
Georgia	1% (4)
Hawaii	4% (10)
Idaho	0% (0)
Illinois	3% (9)
Indiana	4% (11)
Iowa	1% (3)
Kansas	0% (1)
Kentucky	1% (4)

Louisiana	6% (16)
Maine	0% (1)
Maryland	3% (8)
Massachusetts	8% (23)
Michigan	6% (16)
Minnesota	3% (7)
Mississippi	0% (0)
Missouri	1% (2)
Montana	0% (0)
Nebraska	1% (3)
Nevada	0% (0)
New Hampshire	0% (0)
New Jersey	0% (0)
New Mexico	0% (0)
New York	9% (25)
North Carolina	1% (2)
North Dakota	0% (1)
Ohio	19% (53)

Oklahoma	0% (0)
Oregon	0% (0)
Pennsylvania	1% (4)
Rhode Island	0% (0)
South Carolina	1% (2)
South Dakota	1% (2)
Tennessee	2% (5)
Texas	3% (9)
Utah	0% (0)
Virginia	3% (9)
Washington	0% (0)
West Virginia	0% (1)
Wisconsin	3% (7)
Wyoming	0% (0)
Washington DC	0% (1)

276 total responses

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