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NEWS RELEASE

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BMO Harris and Komatsu Fund Pilot Program for Youth Apprenticeships

New Junior Achievement Program Prepares High School Students for Career Training

Milwaukee, WI. Junior Achievement has developed the JA Technical Scholars program to increase awareness of Youth Apprenticeship programs. A new three-year pilot program, sponsored by BMO Harris Bank and Komatsu, will offer 1,200 high school students in Southeast and Northwest Wisconsin the opportunity to enroll in Junior Achievement pre-apprenticeship education programs.

Youth Apprenticeship programs were developed by the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development for high school juniors and seniors. The student employment opportunities provide in-class training and on-the-job learning for specialty careers. Students can move on to a Registered Apprenticeship upon graduation to continue their journey to receiving nationally recognized certification.

“With standards-based curricula and a network of classroom volunteers around the state, Junior Achievement has the unique infrastructure in place to help high school students be prepared for a more productive Youth Apprenticeship experience,” said Michael Frohna, President of Junior Achievement of Wisconsin. “We are grateful to BMO Harris and Komatsu for providing the funds that allow us to partner with schools on this innovative pilot program,” added Frohna.

In the Spring of 2022, the JA Technical Scholars pilot program will be delivered to freshman or sophomore students who are identified as Youth Apprenticeship candidates by their local schools in two Wisconsin areas – Metro Milwaukee and rural northwest Wisconsin counties between Eau Claire and La Crosse. Students will complete Junior Achievement lessons that focus on career exploration and essential job skills development. The pilot program was designed to become a pipeline into Youth Apprenticeships, with Junior Achievement volunteers providing greater depth of knowledge for

students before they begin work at an apprenticeship. The volunteers who will teach the *JA Technical Scholars* lessons will come from the companies who are supplying the apprenticeships.

After a successful pilot program is achieved, the goal is to expand the program statewide, adding the development of a certificate of completion recognized by companies offering Youth Apprenticeships, a special “cord” recognition at high school graduation, and teacher/counselor onsite visits for firsthand exploration of technical jobs.

“At BMO, our commitment to supporting organizations that make a positive impact on the communities we serve is an essential part of our purpose to boldly grow the good in business and life,” said Kara Kaiser, Head, U.S. Corporate Real Estate. “That’s why we are proud to support the *JA Technical Scholars* program with its focus on preparing young people for their post-secondary path.”

Heavy equipment manufacturer Komatsu, whose new global headquarters for mining is under construction in The Harbor District, said it is proud to be part of this latest Junior Achievement initiative. “We believe it is important that we work together with our community to expand the talent pipeline in our area,” said Greg Elliott, Chief Human Resources Officer and EVP at Komatsu Mining. “The training Junior Achievement will offer these students is a new path to well-paying jobs and a future career.”

High school teachers or school district administrators who are interested in bringing *JA Technical Scholars* to their students can reach out to Brooke Tabbert at btabbert@jawis.org (Southeast Wisconsin) or Susan Peterson at speterson@jawis.org (Northwest Wisconsin).

About Junior Achievement

Junior Achievement is the world’s largest organization dedicated to providing young people with the skills and confidence to own their economic future and contribute to the economic viability of their families, communities, and country. Junior Achievement’s programs - in the core pathways of career readiness, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy - ignite the spark in young people to experience and realize the opportunities and realities of tomorrow’s workplace. Junior Achievement has been providing educational programs for Wisconsin students since 1941. In the past 4 years, the 12 area offices of Junior Achievement of Wisconsin have used a dedicated core of more than 13,400 volunteer mentors to impact 440,000 Wisconsin students. Junior Achievement is committed to inspiring all students to think big, aspire to a career where they will excel, and apply entrepreneurial thinking to the workplace.

About BMO Harris

BMO Harris Bank provides a broad range of personal banking products and solutions through more than 500 branches and fee-free access to over 40,000 ATMs across the United States. BMO Harris Bank’s commercial banking team provides a combination of sector expertise, local knowledge, and mid-market focus throughout the United States. For more information about BMO Harris Bank, visit the [company fact sheet](#). Accounts are subject to approval. BMO Harris Bank N.A. Member FDIC. BMO Harris Bank is part of BMO Financial Group, a highly diversified financial services provider with total assets of CDN\$971 billion as of July 31, 2021.

About Komatsu

Komatsu develops and supplies technologies, equipment and services for the construction, mining, forklift, industrial, and forestry markets. For a century, the company has been creating value for its customers through manufacturing and technology innovation, partnering with others to empower a sustainable future where people, business and the planet thrive together. Front-line industries worldwide use Komatsu solutions to develop modern infrastructure, extract fundamental minerals, maintain forests, and create consumer products. The company's global service and distributor networks support customer operations to enhance safety and productivity while optimizing performance. To learn more visit www.komatsu.com.