



# NEWS RELEASE

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**Contact:** Jennifer Gryniewicz, Regional Director of Philanthropy & Stewardship  
[jgryniewicz@jawis.org](mailto:jgryniewicz@jawis.org) | Cell: 414.914.3134 | [Wisconsin.ja.org](http://Wisconsin.ja.org)

## BMO Empowers Wisconsin Youth with \$345,000 Donation to Junior Achievement

**MILWAUKEE** – Junior Achievement of Wisconsin (JA) is pleased to announce that BMO has made a \$345,000, three-year donation, one of the largest gifts ever received by the non-profit organization. The donation provides \$115,000 each year, beginning with the 2024-25 school year, and focuses on financial literacy education and skills-building lessons for underserved youth across Wisconsin.

The mission of Junior Achievement of Wisconsin (JA) is to inspire and prepare young people to succeed by recruiting and training community volunteers to teach students aged 5 - 25 about financial literacy, entrepreneurship, and work readiness. JA programs support the organization's vision of a world where students have the skillset and mindset to build thriving communities.

"The confidence and support of BMO means so much to the Wisconsin students we serve. This multi-year gift provides stability for our programs that focus on giving students in low-to-moderate income families the tools to achieve their dreams," said Julie Granger, President of Junior Achievement of Wisconsin. "BMO's gift also ensures that our JA Titan Business Challenge scholarship competition and the Young Entrepreneur (YE) of the Year events are supported for years to come."

JA elementary and middle school lessons help students develop habits of smart money management and career planning for the future. Older students dive deeper into the complexities of life planning such as living within one's means, student debt, investment strategies, risk management, inflation, credit, and career goals. JA recently began offering financial literacy education to low-income students on Wisconsin university, college, and technical campuses.

The JA Titan Business Challenge scholarship competition teaches high school students how to run a successful business. Students compete to see which team can run the most successful virtual business, making all the decisions a CEO makes in the areas of pricing, production, marketing, capital improvements, R&D, and charitable giving. The Young Entrepreneur (YE)

Competition allows teen entrepreneurs to pitch their businesses to a team of celebrity judges who award scholarships based on business success, growth potential, and social involvement. Other considerations will be the entrepreneur's age when the business was started, strategic direction, innovation, personal integrity, leadership, and any special challenges the young entrepreneur had to overcome.

"Education is the foundation for a strong future, and BMO's partnership with Junior Achievement is all about giving young people the tools they need to succeed. Over the years, we've been able to help bring financial literacy and economic education to hundreds of thousands of students across North America. It's a reflection of our Purpose, to Boldly Grow the Good *in business and life*, by helping the next generation make real financial progress," said Jon Schumacher, Managing Director, BMO Commercial Bank.

In addition to the generous corporate donation, BMO also encourages employees to volunteer their time and teach Wisconsin students about managing money and preparing for a successful career. In the past 5 years, nearly 100 BMO employees have taught JA learning experiences to more than 4,750 Wisconsin students.

Anyone interested in becoming a Junior Achievement supporter or volunteering to teach JA lessons can find information on the organization's website at <https://wisconsin.ja.org>.

### **About Junior Achievement of Wisconsin**

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 brought life lessons to more than 123,000 students in the 2023-24 school year.

### **BMO Gives. Good grows here.**

Helping communities thrive by supporting the organizations that sustain them and encouraging employee giving and volunteerism is at the heart of BMO's Purpose, to Boldly Grow the Good *in business and life*. In 2023, our social impact included more than \$84 million donated to hundreds of charities and non-profit organizations across North America to help drive progress by enabling individuals to thrive and communities to prosper. Our colleagues spent almost 62,000 hours volunteering in the community and contributed more than \$31 million of donations through our annual employee giving program. For more information, please visit [BMO.com](https://www.bmo.com)