



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:

Contact:

Jeremy Race

Junior Achievement of Southwest New England

jrace@jaconn.org

Collaboration and Mentorship Benefits Hartford Students

JA Partnered with Smith Brothers Insurance and Boys & Girls Club of Hartford, to teach young people the power of entrepreneurship

Hartford, CT., November, 2022- Junior Achievement USA (JA USA) has been in the business of inspiring youth for over 100 years. Today, JA has three pillars, Financial Literacy, Work Readiness, and Entrepreneurship. This past summer Junior Achievement of Southwest New England (JA) challenged 10 high school students to dream big through entrepreneurship programming. .

Over the course of six weeks, students in the *JA Entrepreneurial Challenge*, hosted by The Boys & Girls Clubs of Hartford and taught by Smith Brothers Insurance volunteer mentors, learned what skills they would need to start their own business. Volunteers from Smith Brothers Insurance walked students through idea creation, business planning, and sales pitches. The program concluded with students presenting their businesses to a panel of judges, *Shark Tank* style.

“The power this kind of long term program has is unmatched. We know, thanks to comprehensive longitudinal data, that 143% of JA students are more likely to start their own businesses. This program takes young peoples’ dreams and teaches them how to make it a reality. It connects our students with professionals in the local economy and gives them the resources to hit the ground running.” says Jeremy Race, President & CEO of Junior Achievement of Southwest New England.

The impact reaches far past the students, the volunteers became mentors to these students. Creating relationships that last long beyond the program dates.

“It is hard not to be passionate about helping the students when you see their passion for the work they are doing. In terms of our big purpose at Smith Brothers of helping others, we look at it as a way to give back to the community by helping foster the next generation of creators and entrepreneurs” says Joe Smith President & CEO of Smith Brothers Insurance, LLC.

“My dream for anyone who comes through the doors of this Boys & Girls Club is that they can dream to be anything they want to be in life. And that they stay here in our community and contribute in a way that is so meaningful,” says Sam Gray, President & CEO of Boys & Girls Clubs of Hartford.

With more JA entrepreneurial programming starting in 2023 (than ever before) there has never been a more powerful time to teach young people the skills they need to be successful entrepreneurs, showing them firsthand the value of business and job creation.

About Junior Achievement of Southwest New England

Junior Achievement is the world’s largest organization dedicated to giving young people the knowledge and skills they need to own their economic success, plan for their future, and make smart academic and economic choices. JA programs are delivered by corporate and community volunteers, and provide relevant, hands-on experiences that give students from kindergarten through high school knowledge and skills in financial literacy, work readiness, and entrepreneurship. Today, JA reaches more than 3.3 million students per year in over 100 markets across the United States, with an additional 5.2 million students served by operations in 100 other countries worldwide. Visit <https://jaconn.org>

If you would like to find out more information about this topic or about joining Junior Achievement of Southwest New England, to make a difference in a young person’s life by volunteering this school year, please contact President & CEO Jeremy Race at jrace@jaconn.org.

About Smith Brothers Insurance LLC.

Smith Brothers Insurance is an independently operated, Top 100 Broker in the U.S committed to helping businesses and families manage risk and uncertainty. We help solve risk challenges, identify preventable losses, secure insurance solutions, help should a loss occur, and work with you to achieve your goals. Founded in Hartford, Connecticut in 1971 by brothers, Bob and Brian Smith, Smith Brothers Insurance has expanded to more than 200 professionals. Smith Brothers is licensed in every state in the U.S. and protects risk all over the world. Headquartered in Glastonbury, Connecticut, our offices are throughout Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and New York.

About Boys & Girls Club of Hartford

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Hartford fills the gap between school and home and touches the lives of thousands of youth each year, providing a welcoming and positive environment. Founded by four women in 1860, the Boys & Girls is the nation's first Club. We have nine locations in the Hartford area neighborhoods and schools, making it convenient for our families. The Boys & Girls Club's mission is to enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to realize their full potential as productive,

caring, and responsible citizens – putting them on pathways to a GREAT Future. For more information, please visit bgchartford.org.