



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Junior Achievement of Central Florida Awarded Grant to Launch Youth Civic Engagement Initiative**

**Orlando, FL — October 7, 2025** — Junior Achievement of Central Florida (JACF) is proud to announce it has been awarded a grant from Central Florida Foundation to launch a groundbreaking civic education initiative titled “Connecting Gen-A With Tools to Change Their World.” This innovative program is designed to empower youth ages 13–18 with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to engage in civic life, understand government, and vote thoughtfully.

The initiative will be integrated into JACF’s existing JA Inspire and 3DE by Junior Achievement programs, which currently serve thousands of middle and high school students across Orange and Osceola counties. Through immersive experiences, mock elections, and real-world consultancy projects, students will explore the impact of civic engagement and develop leadership and advocacy skills.

“This project is about turning apathy into action and confusion into clarity,” said Kate Hammond, Vice President of Education at JACF. “We’re excited to help students see how their voices and votes matter – and to give them the tools to make informed decisions.”

Key components of the project include:

- A mock election experience for middle school students during the Inspire career expo, supported by local volunteers and civic organizations.
- A senior consultancy challenge for high school students, where they will work with civic partners like the Orange County Supervisor of Elections to develop strategies for increasing youth voter engagement.
- A curriculum toolkit and facilitator guide for educators and youth leaders.
- A scalability plan to replicate the project across other Junior Achievement areas.

The project will reach approximately 4,000 middle school and 200 high school students, with a focus on underserved communities. More than half of the participating students come from low-income families, and several partner schools are Title I designated.

Funding from Central Florida Foundation will support staffing, curriculum development, technology, and program delivery. Additional support has been

pledged by the Orange County Supervisor of Elections and other community partners.

This project was made possible by the 2025 Thrive Venture Philanthropy Cohort, with additional support from the Heintzelman Employee Club Fund and Community & Social Connection Impact Fund at Central Florida Foundation.

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### **About Central Florida Foundation**

As our region's community foundation, Central Florida Foundation serves as a launchpad for high-impact philanthropy. Championing the collective power of head, heart, and dollar, we coordinate the commitment and investment of philanthropists, nonprofits, and community partners to target today's most critical challenges and those on the horizon to truly transform our community. The Foundation also offers expert giving advice, a personalized approach to managing charitable funds, and the capacity to convene collaboration across sectors. Learn more at [cffound.org](http://cffound.org).

### **About Junior Achievement of Central Florida**

Junior Achievement of Central Florida (JACF) empowers the next generation by equipping young people with the knowledge and skills needed to achieve economic success. Through hands-on programs and community partnerships, JACF inspires students to dream big, prepare for the workforce, and make smart financial decisions. For more information about Junior Achievement of Central Florida, please visit [www.jacentralfl.org](http://www.jacentralfl.org) or contact:

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