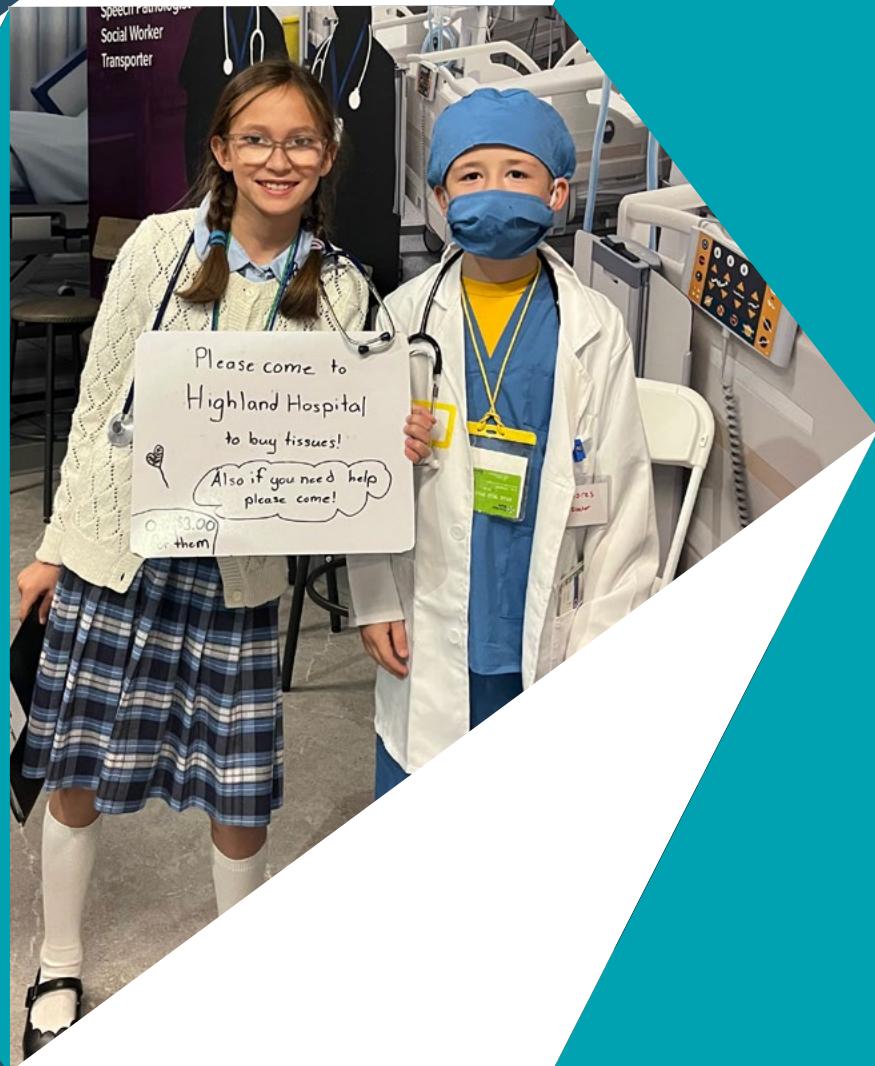


# Impact Report

## 2025



**discovery**  
C E N T E R



Junior  
Achievement™

**PAYCHEX**®

## A Sequential Program Experience Aligned with New York State Portrait of a Graduate and Next Generation Learning Standards



Today's students are growing up in a world that's changing faster than ever. New technologies, industries, and ideas are transforming what's possible, and the need for adaptable, confident and engaged young leaders has never been greater.

Junior Achievement is helping students rise to that challenge. By connecting classroom learning to the real world, we're giving them not just skills but the confidence and curiosity to imagine their futures.

One of the most powerful examples of this work is the Paychex Junior Achievement Discovery Center, located at Kodak Center in Eastman Business Park. Inside this authentic "mini-city," students are immersed in our local economy as they take on real-life adult roles—exploring careers, performing jobs, managing money, and practicing the many essential soft skills that will drive their future success.

The Paychex Junior Achievement Discovery Center is a powerful example of what's possible when an entire community comes together—educators, industry leaders, entrepreneurs, government partners, nonprofits, and individuals—united by a shared commitment to the next generation. Together, we are equipping young people with the tools, confidence, and inspiration they need to pursue economic mobility and long-term success.



We extend our deepest gratitude to every stakeholder who has supported the Discovery Center's remarkable growth since its opening in January 2024. Whether you contributed your time, talent, or treasure, your belief in the boundless potential of our young people is strengthening our community for years to come.

**Patricia Leva**  
President & CEO

### JA Biz Town

(4-6 grade)

Features 13 classroom-based lessons that prepare students for their future roles as citizens, workers, and consumers in our economy. Students are introduced to fundamental business practices and civic responsibilities, develop money management skills, and learn essential workforce soft skills. The program culminates with students interviewing for jobs with employers represented in the Discovery Center and then stepping into those roles to run the Rochester economy for a day.

### JA Finance Park Entry

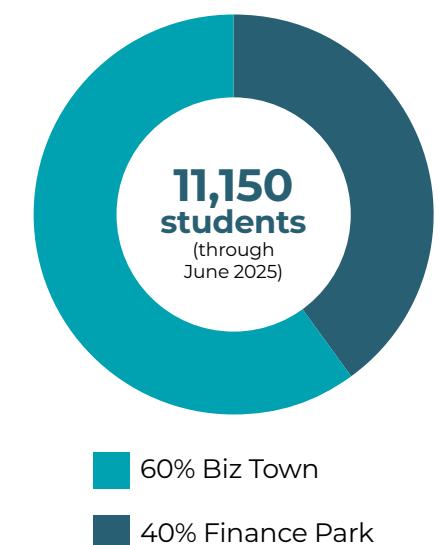
(7-8 grade)

Includes 13 classroom-based lessons that explore the connection between careers and income, with focused learning objectives around budgeting, saving, investing, credit, taxes, and entrepreneurship. Students are assigned a "persona" and spend the day at the Discovery Center creating a realistic budget and making informed purchasing decisions.

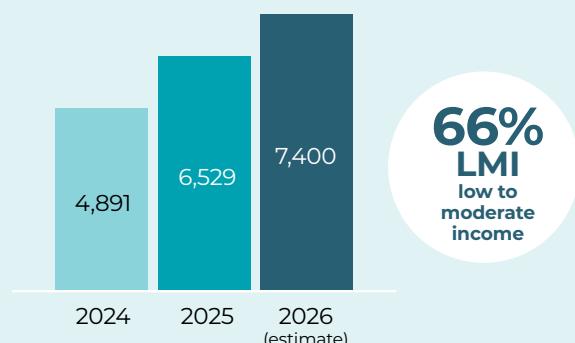
### JA Finance Park Advanced

(High School)

Builds upon the JA Biz Town and JA Finance Park Entry experience with 8 classroom-based themes that focus on the long-term choices and consequences associated with careers and income. Learning objectives deepen and students once again spend a day at the Discovery Center applying their knowledge—practicing real-life decision-making and experiencing what it means to navigate life as an adult.

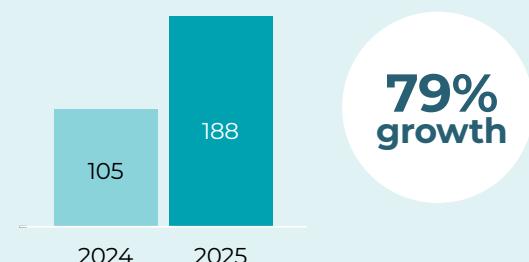


## Participating Students



**66%**  
LMI  
low to  
moderate  
income

## Educators Engaged



**79%**  
growth

## Participating Schools



**100%**  
school  
return  
rate

**131,599** student instructional hours in 2025

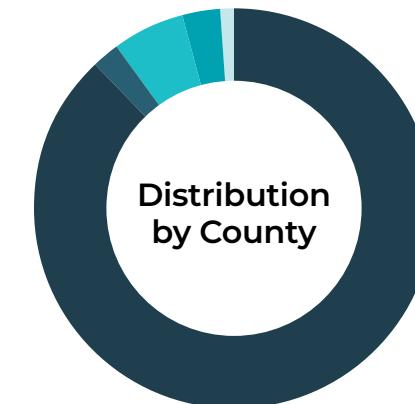
**"We had a parent who was unsure about how the experience would go for his daughter, but when she got home, she was so excited, he brought her to the bank to open a savings account. That's what we want to instill in our students, and that would not have happened in an everyday classroom in elementary school."**

*-Dena Olson, K-5 Instructional Specialist,  
Spencerport Central School District*

## Partnership With Education

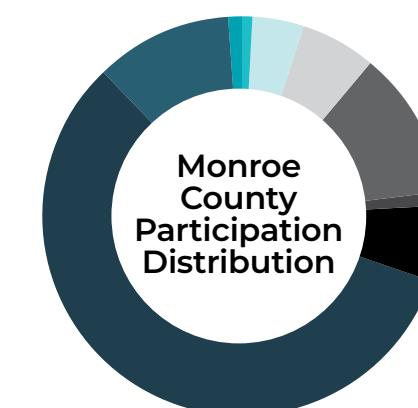
### Education Partners

Caledonia-Mumford Central School District  
Cato-Meridian Central School District  
Early College High School (Batavia)  
EnCompass: Resources for Learning  
Gates-Chili Central School District  
Geneseo Central School District  
Grand Island Central School District  
Hilton Central School District  
Kendall Central School District  
Keshequa Central School District  
LeRoy Central School District  
Livonia Central School District  
Monroe Community College (Summer Camp)  
Mt. Morris Central School District  
Nazareth Elementary School  
Pavilion Central School District  
Pittsford Central School District  
Port Byron Central School District  
Rochester City School District  
Rochester Preparatory High School (Uncommon Schools)  
Salt and Light Homeschool Co-op  
Spencerport Central School District  
St. Agnes Elementary School (Avon)  
St. Francis de Sales-St. Stephen Elementary School (Geneva)  
St. John Fisher University (Summer Camp)  
St. Lawrence Elementary School  
St. Louis Elementary School  
St. Mary's Elementary School (Canandaigua)  
St. Pius X Elementary School  
St. Rita Elementary School  
The Charles Finney School  
Wheatland-Chili Central School District  
Vertus High School  
Victor Central School District



Distribution  
by County

Monroe 88%  
Livingston 6%  
Cayuga 3%  
Genesee 2%  
Erie & Orleans 1%



Monroe  
County  
Participation  
Distribution

RCSD 57%  
Greece 12%  
Spencerport 11%  
Gates 6%  
Pittsford 6%  
Diocese of Rochester 4%  
Charter Schools 1%  
Hilton 1%  
Wheatland Chili 1%

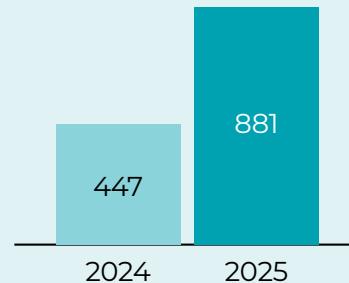
**"This was such a fun experience because it was very helpful by telling us and showing us what a real adult with a job would do. Our business didn't go into debt, instead we made a profit with over three hundred dollars! It made it really fun because our group was hardworking and put our minds together to create a great business that succeeded! I had so much fun at JA BizTown and I would love to go back!"**

*- JA BizTown Student, Wolcott Street School*



# Community Impact

## Volunteers Engaged



97%  
growth

## Top 10 Corporate Volunteer Companies

(by number of unique volunteers):

1. Paychex
2. Five Star Bank/Courier Capital
3. M&T Bank
4. Citizens Bank
5. LiDestri Foods
6. Deloitte
7. RG&E
8. St. John Fisher University
9. MVP Health Care
10. PwC

## Leadership Sustaining Program Sponsors

Anderson & Associates Wealth Management  
Apogee  
Daisy Marquis Jones Foundation  
Davenport-Hatch Foundation  
ESL Charitable Foundation  
Flynn  
Forma Network Solutions  
Glover Crask Foundation  
JPM Chase Foundation  
William and Sheila Konar Foundation  
Lisk Morris Foundation  
M&T Charitable Foundation  
Florence M. Muller Foundation  
Helen and Ritter Shumway Foundation  
Louis S. and Molly B. Wolk Foundation

**"It was my first time volunteering for JA and I'm so glad that I did. I volunteered with teammates at Paychex that I had never met before, which alone was great growth experience. I loved seeing [the students'] enthusiasm and hearing their opinions. And it was awesome seeing the seriousness they had in their roles and the activities they got to do. I think my favorite moment was when the townhall closing meeting was getting ready to start, one of the students picked up their things and said "thank you, Jessica." It made my day. It wasn't simply that they thanked me, it was the genuine joy and good connection I had built with them."**

– Jessica, Paychex Volunteer

## Storefront and Kiosk Sponsors

Architecture and Engineering Consortium:	Colliers Engineering & Design	LaBella	Stanec
	CPL	M/E Engineering	SWBR
	Fisher Associates	Passero	



## A Community Asset

The Discovery Center serves as a community asset and has been host to multiple businesses and non-profits, as well as other JA student-based events and competitions. It is estimated that approximately 3,000 individuals have attended over 40 different events in the Discovery Center in the last two years.



JA Young Women's Leadership Summit

## Student Impact

The JA Biz Town and JA Finance Park programs are externally evaluated nationally for efficacy and have been scientifically proven to increase skills, confidence and student engagement.

Locally, in collaboration with the evaluation team at JA USA, JACUNY conducts pre and post student testing to ensure increases in skills and knowledge as well as shifts in attitudes and behaviors.

**585**  
student-matched surveys  
(9.5% sample)

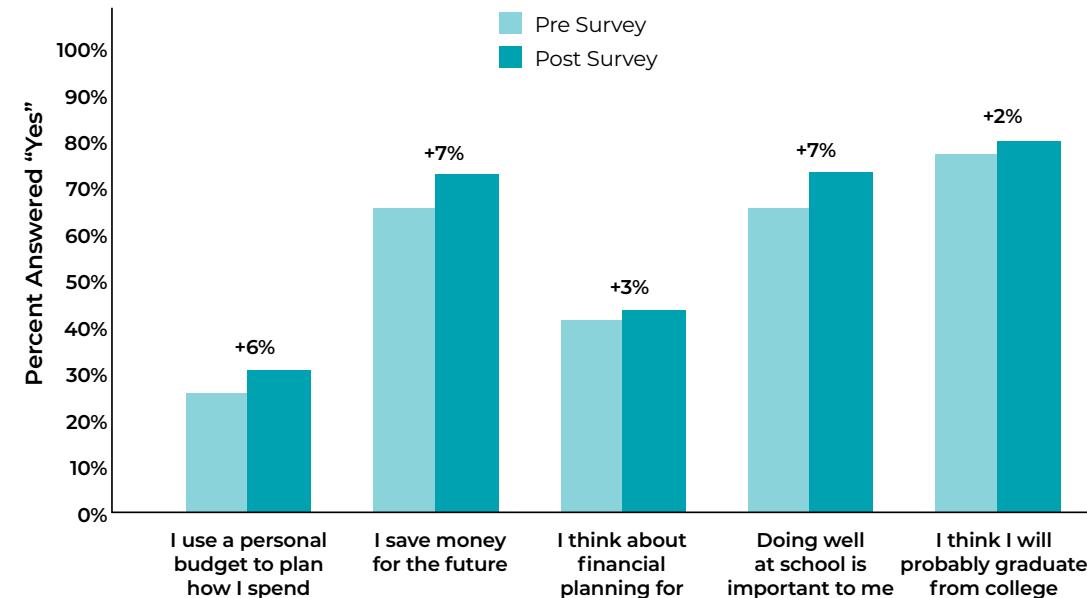
**72%**  
of overall students  
demonstrated higher scores  
on knowledge-based  
questions after participation

Improvements  
were noted in  
**100%**  
of participating districts –  
urban, suburban and rural



## JA Biz Town

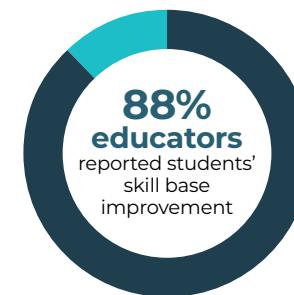
### Answered Favorably Pre vs Post Survey



The simulation also provided every student the chance to "vote" as part of their civic duty, and the results were clear:

**95% students** of JA Biz Town want to return

**90% students** would share their experience with a friend



Strongly agreed or agreed 88%  
Neutral 12%

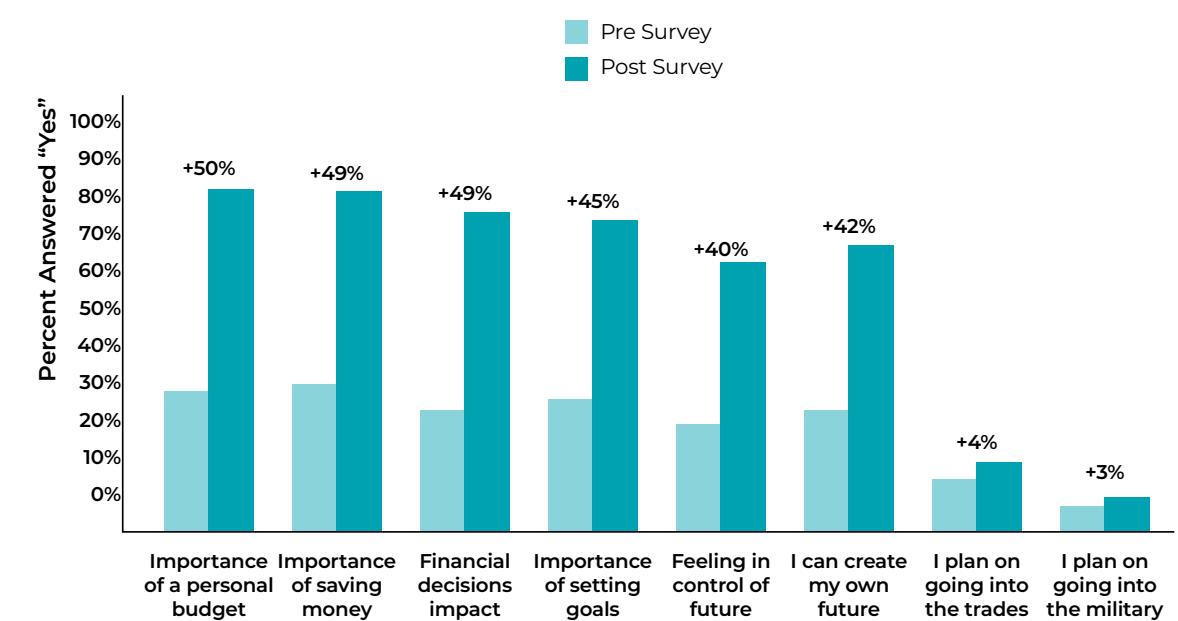
88% of educators agreed or strongly agreed that students' skill base improved as a result of the experience, across all 5 essential measured skills—**teamwork, decision making, problem solving, financial literacy and entrepreneurship**.

**"Some students just aren't able to apply lessons they learn in the classroom, regardless of the curriculum or the method. In the Discovery Center, they put lessons into action – into play – and all of a sudden start asking the right questions. They say things like 'Oh, that's what that means!'"**

– Tricia Gonzales, Instructional Coach, K-12, Rochester City School District

## JA Finance Park

### Answered Favorably Pre vs Post Survey



Educators emphasized the effectiveness of the Discovery Center simulation in creating an engaging and memorable financial learning experience:

#### 40-50% increase

Many students nearly doubled their pre-program levels of financial literacy attitudes and self-confidence.

**100% of educators** agreed that the students were engaged in the activities and discussion with volunteers

**100% of educators** agreed the simulation experience reinforced the curriculum well

**"I loved seeing the reactions of students as they experienced the cost of living here in Rochester. Through budgeting and shopping they quickly realized how much planning and prioritizing goes into managing everyday expenses. It was powerful to see students make real-world financial decisions; some had to rethink their habits on the spot!"**

– JA Finance Park Teacher, Mariel Spano-Russel, East Lower School, RCSD

May 16th, 2025

Paychex  
Junior Achievement of Central Upstate NY  
Two Hundred West Ridge Road  
Rochester, NY 14615

Dear Paychex:

Our school recently visited JA *BizTown*, a mini-town offered by Junior Achievement that students operate for the day. Your company sponsors a business at JA *BizTown*. We want to thank you for contributing so that we could have a great day of fun and learning.

What I enjoyed most about your business was how we could interact with other businesses and we could experience what the real world feels like. Another thing that I enjoyed about your business was how much we as the students learned about work and how productive work is supposed to be. We learned about responsibility and hard work in your business and we learned about how difficult work really is.

Your company helped our school enjoy JA *BizTown* because of your philanthropy. We appreciate your generosity. Thank you! Thank you for teaching us about the real world and we are grateful for *biztown* giving us this opportunity to experience work. Hope your company keeps growing!

Sincerely,  
Destiny R



**Junior  
Achievement**<sup>TM</sup>  
of Central Upstate New York