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### Junior Achievement of New Mexico and State Farm Connect Students to Local Career Pathways



*Albuquerque, New Mexico -- Junior Achievement of New Mexico's (JA of NM) JA Job Shadow program connects students to local career pathways, thanks to funding from State Farm. Many students feel intimidation regarding their lack of professional workplace experience, meanwhile, businesses are concerned about the labor shortage and lack of applicants for positions within their company. JA Job Shadow brings classes of high school students to local businesses to explore career pathways, understand company culture, and network with professionals.*

Many New Mexican high school students lack access to resources that can help them identify and prepare for the multitude of career opportunities and pathways within various companies and businesses. Additionally, employers express increasing concern about hiring from an unprepared workforce. JA Job Shadow provides a solution to these needs by introducing students to real workplaces and employers, inspiring them to prepare for their future professional success. Through funding provided by State Farm, JA of NM has collaborated with 18 companies to provide nearly 700 students critical exposure to real workplaces and careers within local businesses.

During a JA Job Shadow event at Albuquerque Public Schools Headquarters on April 17, local State Farm agents presented a grant award to JA of NM for JA Job Shadow. Students listened in as each agent shared their personal and career journeys, each highlighting a unique personal pathway to their current success, all emphasizing humble beginnings right here in New Mexico.

When hosting a JA Job Shadow event, businesses act as host sites for high school students to participate in first-hand, real-world work experiences. Students can tour facilities or departments; converse with professionals in a group setting; and practice the skills they have learned from previous JA program sessions. Host sites design mock interviews, networking opportunities, and work-specific projects for a



truly immersive student experience. JA of NM provides transportation to and from the host site and supports businesses in planning for the event. 93% of students report that participating in JA Job Shadow made them see more possibilities for their future.

Junior Achievement of New Mexico, founded in 1993, inspires and prepares young people for economic success by offering volunteer-taught programs that foster critical financial literacy, career readiness, and entrepreneurship skills to thousands of New Mexico's K-12 students annually. During the 2022-2023 school year, 329 Junior Achievement of New Mexico volunteers partnered with 284 educators to teach 8,777 students statewide. Junior Achievement of New Mexico volunteers spent a combined 37,000 hours, nearly \$1 million worth of volunteer time, educating students on topics such as managing personal finances, preparing for a job or career, and starting a business. To request a JA Job Shadow program or to become a JA Job Shadow host, visit [www.newmexicoja.org](http://www.newmexicoja.org)

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