



# Social Mobility and Escaping Poverty

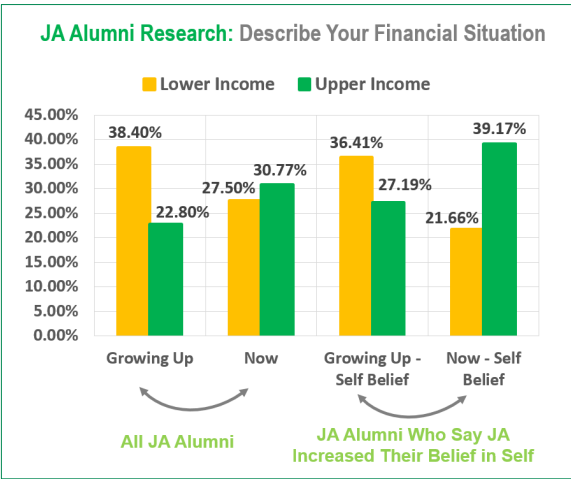
## The Challenge

It's commonly assumed, and proven **through research**<sup>1</sup>, that household income impacts the social mobility of children within that household. The children of middle to upper income families have more advantages in education, greater exposure to opportunities, and a better understanding of career readiness and money management than children from lower income homes.

Children raised in households with lower incomes or who experience impoverished living conditions are at distinct disadvantages. However, there is also **research**<sup>2</sup> that indicates children who move from unsupportive neighborhoods to supportive ones, even if they are of a lower income, have a better chance of positive social mobility and escaping the cycle of poverty.

## The Role of JA

There are external factors that can help foster a sense of self-efficacy (or "I Can") in young people which can result in beneficial behaviors that lead to future success. These factors are measured in knowledge of and attitudes toward particular behaviors. JA's proven programs and volunteer role models provide students with the positive realizations and reinforcement of career aspirations, an understanding of money management, and exposure to the benefits of business ownership that help overcome negative, competing environmental factors (peer pressure, lack of understanding or support in community, etc.). The JA experience helps foster the self-belief and sense of purpose necessary for young people to overcome challenging circumstances.



## Proof of Impact

Research shows that JA alumni have higher education attainment and median household income than the general U.S. population. When asked to consider their household financial situation growing up compared to now, there is a notable shift from lower income to middle and upper income. For those JA alumni who say the main impact of their JA experience was to foster "self-belief," the shift from lower to upper income is even more pronounced.

The JA experience promotes positive outcomes which lend themselves to promoting greater social mobility.



<sup>1</sup> <http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2015/07/america-social-mobility-parents-income/399311/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/04/upshot/an-atlas-of-upward-mobility-shows-paths-out-of-poverty.html>