



NEWS RELEASE

For more information, contact:

Monica Caudillo

Development Manager

Junior Achievement of Southeast Texas

713.337.4771

mcaudillo@jahouston.org

JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT OF SOUTHEAST TEXAS ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT OF LONGSTANDING PRESIDENT, RICHARD W. FRANKE, SPANNING 33 YEARS OF LEADERSHIP

HOUSTON, TX, February 23, 2018 – Richard W. Franke, president of Junior Achievement of Southeast Texas, Inc., has announced he will retire June 30, 2018. Franke joined Junior Achievement (JA) in 1985, as Executive Director for JA of East Central Indiana based in Muncie. He relocated to Houston in 1989 to lead development operations here for a decade before becoming President of JA of Mississippi Valley, St. Louis. In 2007, Franke was recruited to return to Houston as President.

During his 33 year career with JA, Franke, in addition to his local leadership roles, participated in the development of many of the organization's key education programs which today benefit millions of children throughout the United States and the world.

Throughout his career, Franke's leadership contributed to dramatic increases in students, schools, and volunteers participating in JA programs. His passion for teaching the values and importance of Free Enterprise began as an entrepreneur and JA volunteer in Muncie Indiana. "I was an Air Traffic Controller who knew nothing about business. However, I needed to do something to support my family during the 1981 PATCO air traffic controller strike. I started one of the first balloon delivery/singing telegram businesses in the country. When we became somewhat successful, JA seemed to be a perfect way to give back. I quickly discovered that while teaching kids basic business principles I myself was learning as well." After selling his business Franke joined JA as the local executive director in Muncie.

Franke led several successful capital campaigns during his career in Houston, and St. Louis. In 2008, following Hurricane Ike, he launched efforts which enabled the comprehensive renovation of the JA headquarters and the Albert and Ethel Herzstein Center. Franke is credited with the creation of the first mobile version of the JA Finance Park program - Capital One/Junior Achievement's Finance Park – that is used in southeast Texas and throughout the US. This financial literacy program is an extension of the facility-based program Franke introduced to JA in St. Louis.

Franke's JA experience and leadership abilities are respected throughout JA Worldwide. Elected by his peers, he has twice served as Chairman of the JA Presidents' Roundtable. He is recipient of JA's highest staff honor the Charles R. Hook Award for outstanding strategic leadership, growth and fiscal responsibility. Franke was also honored with JA's Global Leadership Award, which honors the expansion of free enterprise education initiatives around the globe.

Greg Garland, chairman and CEO of Phillips 66 and the chairman of the board of directors, thanked Franke for his service to the organization. “Rick’s a pretty humble guy but he has amassed one of the largest and most prestigious board of directors in the nation. Together with a great staff, the organization has consistently exceeded expectations. That takes more than just a great cause, which JA is. It is the result of exemplary vision and leadership. Rick’s passion for the mission and focus on not just teaching good business but practicing it epitomizes his career.”

Franke’s plans are to remain in the Houston area to help build a new entrepreneurial business with his wife Gwen of 45 years. Together they are building a business with and for their daughter, Chef Sarah. Murdoch’s Backyard Pub is an eclectic restaurant in northwest Houston.

About Junior Achievement of Southeast Texas

Junior Achievement of Southeast Texas is the greater Houston area’s largest organization dedicated to inspiring and preparing young people to succeed in a global economy. Through a dedicated volunteer network of nearly 13,500 role models, JA of Southeast Texas provides in-school and after-school programs for students in grades K-12 which focus on entrepreneurship, work readiness, and financial literacy. Today, JA of Southeast Texas anticipates reaching 330,000 students in more than 900 schools this school year. For more information, visit www.jahouston.org. Also, follow us on Twitter: @ja_set

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