



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

JA Inspire

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Presented by 

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GM Lockport Operations partners with Junior Achievement of WNY to offer Career Exploration Program

(Buffalo, NY) – Junior Achievement of WNY is pleased to partner with GM Lockport Operations and showcase their support at the Lockport Leadership Team recognition event held August 17, 2019.

In the spring of 2019, over 100 volunteers from local business and community organizations dedicated their morning to engage with 500 Middle School students at the Buffalo Niagara Convention Center. Students from 13 Western New York schools had the opportunity to explore high-growth, high-demand careers and what it takes to attain (and keep!) those jobs through Junior Achievement’s JA Inspire program.

Local business leaders, including General Motors, and school administrators reached out to JA to talk about workforce development because JA is seen as a bridge between business and education. Most students do not have access to learn and explore WNY industries. JA Inspire offers students the opportunity to learn about careers from industry representatives in time to begin planning for their high school course work and better prepare themselves for life after high school graduation. For businesses, higher education, and apprenticeship programs, this was an opportunity to engage with WNY’s future workforce. The program was made up of soft skills student workshops presented by business community volunteers, a keynote address featuring Ram Ramanujam, GM Tonawanda Engine Plant Director, local business panel discussion on career planning and high demand jobs, and a Career Fair with 40 interactive stations representing a variety of career clusters.

General Motors Components Lockport and Tonawanda Engine Plant partnered to become the presenting sponsor of this program. “We’re happy to be supporting the community in which live and work with these grants,” said Ken Johnson, GM Lockport Operations plant director. “The Lockport team believes that supporting causes like these strengthens western New York. They help people overcome life barriers, prepare youth to reach their full potential and set an example of responsible environmental stewardship. We’ve been an integral part of Lockport and western New York well over 100 years and appreciate the opportunity to do what we can to improve the community.”

“What students are learning in school is going to be important for them in high school and beyond in their careers. At JA Inspire, students have the opportunity to see a little bit of everything and we’ve

designed a very diverse cross section of careers to explore” explained Laurie Mahoney, President of Junior Achievement of Western New York.

Mary Champoux, Assistant Principal at Catholic Academy of Niagara Falls, shared that “when her students returned to school, they wanted to share the videos of their role play in the workshop session and share all the "take-aways" they had in their bags, and listen to who went to a particular career station. I just sat back and relished the moment. The impact on my students was very notable and the comments were so positive.”

For additional event details, visit <https://www.juniorachievement.org/web/ja-wny/ja-inspire>

About Junior Achievement of Western New York

Junior Achievement is the world’s largest organization dedicated to educating students in kindergarten through 12th grade about financial literacy, entrepreneurship, and career & work readiness through experiential, hands-on programs. In the 2018-2019 school year, Junior Achievement of WNY enriched the lives of 16,089 students in 174 schools and community organizations throughout the eight counties of Western New York. JA’s success is due to its many generous supporters and more than 745 volunteers. For more information about Junior Achievement and how you can make a difference in a child’s life, visit our Web site at www.jawny.org , follow us on Twitter at @JAofWNY, or like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/jaofwny.



The Team from GM Lockport Operations offered hands on activities to over 500 middle school students.



Representing General Motors on the panel were: Raiyan Siraj, Mitchell Vogatsky and J.R. Baker



Pictured in the check presentation, from left: Lisa Roy and Laurie Mahoney, Junior Achievement of WNY; Dave Barnard, UAW Local 686 President; Ken Johnson, plant manager GM Lockport Operations; Connie Brown, United Way of Greater Niagara; Judy Bennett and Darcy Tone, Environmental Education Foundation of Soil and Water Conservation; and Jodi West, personnel director, GM Lockport Operations.

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