



## NEWS RELEASE

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**JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT OF WASHINGTON AWARDED \$114,270 TO HELP MORE  
WASHINGTON STATE YOUTH FOLLOW THEIR DREAMS**

*Seattle, WA.* Junior Achievement of Washington (JA) is pleased to announce that this academic year JA received two grants totaling \$114,270 provided by the Taco Bell Foundation to support JA programs for youth in Western and Central Washington. The funding contributes to providing over 13,000 students with the opportunity to engage in experiential learning programs through *JA Finance Park®*, empowering Washington State students to graduate high school and achieve their dreams. The *JA Finance Park* curriculum teaches students to set a career path and establish personal and professional goals and milestones, leading to successful, self-sufficient adult lives.

“We are thrilled to play a part in the Taco Bell Foundation’s investment in America’s youth,” said Natalie Vega O’Neil, President and CEO of Junior Achievement of Washington. “When you come across another organization committed to championing education and empowering this nation’s next generation of leaders, you know there’s a special energy there. This mission we’re sharing is one with an enormous upside for our young people, our communities, and our country at large.”

JA of Washington is one of more than 350 youth-serving organizations that will receive a portion of the \$5 million in grants being presented by the Taco Bell Foundation’s philanthropic arm this year. The awarded grants are an example of the Taco Bell Foundation’s goal to empower young people to channel their passions and go on to achieve their dreams.

“Young people have always been the heart and soul of our brand,” said Frank Tucker, Chief People Officer at Taco Bell and President of the Taco Bell Foundation. “Expanding our impact in this community is one of the best ways we can support the passions of young people and create opportunities that help them unlock and reach their potential.”

### **About Junior Achievement**

Junior Achievement is the world's largest organization dedicated to giving young people the knowledge and skills they need to own their economic success, plan for their future, and make smart academic and economic choices. JA programs are delivered by corporate and community volunteers and provide relevant, hands-on experiences that give students from kindergarten through high school knowledge and skills in financial literacy, work readiness, and entrepreneurship. Today, JA reaches 4.8 million students per year in more than 100 markets across the United States, with an additional 5.6 million students served by operations in over 100 other countries worldwide. Visit [www.ja.org](http://www.ja.org) for more information.

### **About Junior Achievement of Washington (JA)**

For 65 years JA of Washington has been a part of Washington communities - working with schools and businesses - to build strong, viable partnerships that serve young people. Guided by the basic beliefs of integrity, respect and excellence, JA's purpose is to inspire and prepare young people to succeed in a global economy. JA fulfills its purpose via educational programs that focus on financial literacy, entrepreneurship and work readiness.

Driven by the passionate power of its volunteer citizens, JA programs are taught by community and business mentors - individuals committed to the success and healthy development of young people. Long established as a key component of its successful program dynamic, JA recognizes the positive impact of mentorship and its power to build pathways to sustainable, productive futures for young people. For more information visit [www.jawashington.org](http://www.jawashington.org).

### **About Taco Bell Foundation**

Taco Bell Foundation, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) public charity that helps America's young people follow their dreams and reach their full potential. Since 1992, the Taco Bell Foundation has helped more than 3.5 million youth across the country and has awarded more than \$72 million in grants and scholarships, focused on education and career readiness. In 2015, Taco Bell and the Taco Bell Foundation launched the Live Más Scholarship, a program aimed at empowering the nation's next generation of dreamers, innovators and creators – those whose passions don't fall into the conventional “academic” or “athletic” qualifying categories of traditional scholarship programs. In May of 2018, the Taco Bell Foundation awarded more than 300 employees and other deserving recipients with \$3 million in Live Más Scholarships. For more information visit [TacoBellFoundation.org](http://TacoBellFoundation.org).

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