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Junior Achievement Serbia

Belgrade, 11 June 2024

I am pleased to confirm that Junior Achievement Serbia supports the ten principles of the UN Global Compact with respect to human rights, labor, environment and anti-corruption.

We work hard to advance these principles within our sphere of influence, and continuously make a clear statement of this commitment to our stakeholders and the general public.

We also take part in the activities of the UN Global Compact where appropriate and feasible – through, for instance, participation in Country/Local Networks, involvement in specialized initiatives and work streams, and engagement in partnership projects.

The following document will show the ongoing commitment of Junior Achievement Serbia to the Global Compact initiative and its principles.

Sincerely,

*Mr. Darko Radicanin
Executive Director
Junior Achievement Serbia*

About us

Junior Achievement Serbia (JA Serbia) is the only accredited provider of entrepreneurship education services in Serbia. All JA Serbia's programs, verified by JA Worldwide and accredited by the Serbian Ministry of Education, represent best practices in developing entrepreneurial skills and knowledge of the market economy, especially in transitional economies like Serbian.

We are operating in the area where currently the Serbian education system has the most problems. The school system traditionally focuses on providing basic skills and doesn't teach students how to learn and specifically how to think entrepreneurially. Meanwhile globalization, the rapid development of technology and the lower cost of travel have changed the nature of work.

Serbian youth have a significantly higher unemployment rate than the national average (50% versus 27%). While their parents grew up in a country that had a positive international image, the youth of Serbia today find themselves living in a country with insufficient international integration. They are being educated in a system that is aligned with an obsolete economy. The future, to an even greater degree than the past, will be driven by innovation and entrepreneurship. It is time to adequately develop entrepreneurial skills, attitudes and behaviors in Serbian school system as well as outside the formal school system, and to reach people of all ages as part of a lifelong learning process. Before the entrepreneurial ecosystem can bloom, the system of education must embrace the idea that entrepreneurship is a "good thing". Students need to fully comprehend local, national, and global economics, the ways businesses interact and are interdependent, how to produce and sell a product, and how to use resources and money. They also need exposure to businesses and economics that can be provided through constructive relationship with business leaders.

Since its founding in 2002, JA Serbia has served more than **80,000 students**.

Our objectives

JA Serbia programs carry out the need of:

- Making informal entrepreneurship education available to every high school student
- Understanding the meaning of entrepreneurship. European Commission: Entrepreneurship is 'the mind set and process needed to create and develop economic activity within a new or an existing organization'
- Inspiring future leaders and business owners in Serbia to invest in the society through the education of young people
- Making foundation for Serbian SMEs at the European market level
- Strengthening Serbian business and economy for the future
- Creating fertile ground for fresh and perspective business ideas of young people who can make positive impact in the society we live in

General aims of JA Serbia are the following:

Contribute to the transformation of Serbian education system

Teachers will transform the way they teach: engagement with the outside community, project-based learning and student driven activities will help them find more challenging and rewarding teaching method.

Motivate young people to stay in school

Learning by doing and hands on projects such as mini-companies are the source of motivation and inspiration. Schoolwork becomes more interesting and stimulating and at the same time students feel more positive and self-confident. They have better career choices and a positive attitude towards the future.

Bring the education and business community closer together

Businesspeople and entrepreneurs will be aware of the positive impact they could have on the lives of young people and will encourage others to do the same. The teachers will realize that the relationship with the business community can achieve substantial impact and improve the quality of the education systems.

Increase employability and interest in entrepreneurship

Students will gain valuable work/life skills such as 'autonomy', 'independence', 'risk-taker', 'personal responsibility'.

Inspire innovation and creativity

Entrepreneurship educational program inspires innovation and creativity as young people get engaged with real problems in a positive way. They feel more motivated to find innovative solutions for tomorrow's complex social and economic challenges.

Program implementation

JA Serbia continues to implement program activities which needs contribute to the creation of the new generation of business leaders in Serbia. By partnering with businesses, schools and local authorities we are educating young people in the areas of economy, business skills, enterprise and employability skills which will prepare them for the facing the real business world challenges. Very important element in JA program implementation is involvement of skilled teachers, cooperation with government institutions, organization of competitions and conferences.

The programs challenge students to think about and use the business fundamentals in practical, ethical ways, and provide opportunity to apply them in challenging, hands-on, experiential learning activities. The program roster secures that entrepreneurship concepts and international (European) dimensions are addressed in the most effective ways. The impact of programs is regularly measured. All JA programs are implemented through the educational system in public and private schools, and available to all students, that is:

- Elementary schools: grades 1-4 (age 6-11)
- High schools: all grades (age 14-19)

There are two ways a student can start the JA journey:

1. Learn about JA program from his teacher or from other teacher in his school, and join the group
2. Get invited by the teacher to join the program implementation
3. Hear about JA Program on different media (TV, radio, newspapers, social networks, JAS webpage) and ask school principal or teacher to officially apply for the program.

Once the student is involved, he/she needs to follow teacher's directions in order to successfully pass the program. Students receive certificates of completed program at the end of the school year, as well as for the participation at the competitions and trade fairs. Several private universities accept JA Serbia certificates and give additional points to students based on their achievements. With the new Educational Strategy and recognition of informal education, it is expected that all universities should value students' merit in the JA programs.

High school programs	Elementary school programs
Student Company	Ourselves
JA Economics	Our Families
Enterprise without Borders	Our Community
Social Enterprise	Our City
JA Titan	Our Region
Business Ethics	Our Nation

In order to keep the teachers updated on the latest JA news and worldwide trends in education, maintain their motivation and get them to network with their colleagues, JA Serbia kept the tradition to annually organize a Teachers' Conference where the 100-150 of the most active teachers have the chance to participate.

Student impact

One of the best ways to 'advertise' entrepreneurship education is to expose people to a short, one-day JAS experience. Competitions, conferences and trade fairs are a perfect way to get young people into the spirit of entrepreneurship as well as to demonstrate to stakeholders including educators and business people the benefits of a learning-by-doing methodology. This is a highly effective tool for stimulating young people's interest in the current issues and challenges that are faced by the businesses and society— not always easily achieved in a traditional classroom setting. Such events are a powerful and motivating complement to the full-year entrepreneurship experiences. They appeal to the business sector by giving them a possibility to invest in education and be visible to a broader community.

Student Company Program

The most popular JA program - Student Company – went through the most visible changes in the past years. First of all, it has been recognized by the Ministry of Education as a powerful pedagogical tool based on practical experience and therefore placed on the official Calendar of Student Festivals and Competitions in the Republic of Serbia. Secondly, due to the increased number of newly founded student companies every year, JA Serbia decided to bring the competitions to the regional level and create a chance for every company to experience the most interesting aspect of this program. Now the students can participate in 2 national Social Entrepreneurship competitions, 6 regional and 2 national Student Company competitions.

Business Challenge Competitions

Certainly the most exciting JAS activity for students is the Business Challenge competition which attracts more and more people every year. Every year JA Serbia organizes 4 regional, 1 national and 1 international (Western Balkans region) competitions, directly engaging almost 1,000 high school students, teachers and business volunteers this way. Since the concept of the competition allows only 100 participants per event, the teachers had the hard time selecting the students so they came up with the solution – School Challenge. JA Serbia is helping more and more teachers to organize the competition at the school level and have a fair way of choosing the students for the regional competitions.

Brand and Outreach

One of the key success factors for JA Serbia is to become a recognized and respectable brand, appreciated by the private and public sector as an important resource and partner for young people to succeed. In order to increase its brand awareness, JA Serbia developed a communication strategy with the goal to raise sufficient awareness of the program, so that its educational value will be widely appreciated and sources of funding increasingly diversified. In case of entrepreneurship education, widespread public engagement is necessary to motivate people to take specific actions.

In addition, all JA Serbia events are created and held as brand awareness tools, and are very well covered by the media. Specifically in case of the local and regional events where all relevant media are broadcasting or publishing information about certain competition and even organizing special interviews with JA representatives, teachers and students as guests. The local media are particularly interested in students' success stories as they see it as a way to promote their region.

Operations and Governance

JA Serbia is a strong and well run organization. JAS operations and systems demonstrate a level of effectiveness unparalleled by any other youth-serving organization in Serbia. On the other hand JA Serbia is strongly participating in mutual activities at the European level. The JA Serbia Board will continue to drive strategies, objectives, and tactics that are appropriate and responsive to the needs of the Serbian communities.

JA Serbia staff members were actively involved in all the events concerning education, youth unemployment and entrepreneurship initiatives. This continuous advocacy campaign resulted in the integration of the entrepreneurship education and the Student Company program into the newly adopted national strategies:

- National Youth Strategy 2015-2025 (Ministry of Youth and Sport)
- Strategy for the development of SMEs, entrepreneurship and competitiveness 2015-20 (Ministry of Economy)
- Education Strategy 2020 (Ministry of Education)

Another acknowledgment was received from the European Commission. For two years in a row, 2013 and 2014, JA Serbia has been awarded as the national winner of the European Enterprise Promotion Awards and a runner-up at the European level. At the central events in Vilnius (2013) and Naples (2014) the work of JA Serbia was promoted among the European experts, high officials and successful entrepreneurs.

JA Alumni Club

The best promoters of all the benefits of the entrepreneurship education are undoubtedly JA Serbia alumni. These young people gathered in Alumni Club share the same vision and mission as JA Serbia and support all the activities throughout the year. As a way of thanking them and prolonging the education and experience given to them during high school days, JA Serbia organized annual Alumni Conferences in 2013 and 2014. These events brought together more than 200 former JA students “infected” by the entrepreneurial spirit and eager to spread it to younger generations. The result was the creation of two regional Alumni Centers in Novi Sad and Nis that operate on a local level and in cooperation with the Alumni headquarters in Belgrade. These motivated young people are actively working on engaging more schools in JA program.

Besides the support they give to the work of JA Serbia, the Alumni Club is also active in the JA Alumni Europe network and cooperates with other national alumni clubs. Every year Serbian alumni participate in European gatherings of former JA students.