2021-2022 JA Company Program After-School® FAQs

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What is JA Company Program?

JA Company Program is a program for local high school students, grades 9-12. In this program, students are organized into "companies", and undergo every step in the process of creating and running a business. With the help of corporate mentors, the students create a product or service, raise capital, advertise and sell their product, and liquidate at the end of the program. Students can be elected into leadership roles and organized into appropriate departments/functions. This is an excellent way for high school students to get "real-world" experience in running a business, while being mentored by seasoned professionals!

Is the 2021-2022 JA Company Program be a virtual program? How will the program meet?

Due to the ongoing COVID Pandemic and specifically the increase in cases from the Delta Variant, this year's JA Company Program will be a virtual experience. Many of our host sites' offices remain closed and/or are currently not allowing guests. Meetings will take place via Video Conferencing. There will be no required in-person commitments; however, we hope to offer some optional in-person opportunities starting in January.

When will the 2021-2022 JA Company Program Occur?

JA Company Program will start the week of November 1st, meeting weekly through March. On Monday, November 1st at 6pm we will have a virtual Kickoff Event for all students and their

parents/guardians in the program, and their host site will have their first meeting on their meeting day of that week. The program will run through Mid-March

What is the Time Commitment for JA Company Program?

Prior to the program, there will be pre-work for students to complete on their own in order to immediately jump into the program.

Meetings will take place from 5pm-7pm on either Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday evenings, based on the student's choice. The program is scheduled to kickoff the week of November 1st and run through Mid-March March.

As this year's JA Company Program is virtual, there is no commitment to attend any in- person meetings or events. However, attendance of all virtual meetings is expected.

To accomplish student company and personal goals and tasks, students will have to complete assignments on their own outside of meetings, as well as possibly having small team video meetings on their own during the week.

How will I communicate with fellow company members and mentors?

All meetings and communication, including file sharing, video/audio chat, and text chat, will be done through the Microsoft Teams platform. Microsoft Teams has apps for PC, Mac, iOS, and Android, as well as a web- based interface.

Participants will be expected to be professional and respectful in their communications at all times. Communications that are offensive, derogatory, inappropriate, bullying, discriminatory, disrespectful, etc. will not be tolerated and are grounds for dismissal from the JA Company Program. (These are examples only and are not intended to be a comprehensive list)

Should a student feel uncomfortable with any communications received from another student or volunteer mentor, they should immediately contact their mentors or JA Staff Member Stuart Younger.

What are the technology requirements?

Students are responsible for providing their own technology. Students are required to have:
1) An internet connected device that can access Microsoft Teams. Microsoft Teams has apps for PC/Mac/iOS/Android, or you can access Microsoft Teams via a web browser. This device must also have video chat capability including a webcam and microphone, and students will need to use this device for all company meetings/video chats. Students should expect have their cameras on for all JA Company Program meetings unless told otherwise.
2) Access to internet capable of video conferencing
3) An email address that can send and receive emails from external domains. JA prefers non-school emails. This email address will be used by JA to send information about JA Company Program and to enroll the student in Microsoft Teams. (Students can create an email address for free with Gmail, Yahoo, etc.)

While JA understands that technology and internet does occasionally break, students will be unable to participate if they cannot meet the above technology requirements. At this time, JA is unable to provide any accommodations for students who are unable to meet the technology requirements.

Is attendance required?

In short, <u>yes</u>! While we understand that emergencies, internet outages, and unexpected conflicts do occur, students will need to rely on each other to accomplish their company goals and objectives. Furthermore, it is expected that the virtual nature of this year's JA Company Program should allow for more flexibility for students to participate in meetings from any internet connected location.

Volunteer mentors will be donating their time and energy to mentor students and students will need to rely upon one another to achieve company goals. If a student cannot commit to participating in <u>all</u> of JA Company Program, JA does not recommend the JA Company Program for them.

Is there a dress code?

In order to promote a business-like atmosphere, students will be expected to dress in <u>Business Casual</u> attire for any company meetings/video chats. Examples of appropriate Business Casual attire include collared shirts that cover one's shoulders such as polo shirts, button downs, and blouses. Inappropriate attire includes t-shirts, especially with inappropriate language/imagery, tank tops, or gym/workout attire.

How will the virtual implementation of JA Company Program be different than JA of Southeastern PA's typical Afterschool implementation of JA Company Program?

This year's JA Company Program will be pretty much the same JA Company Program experience you have come to expect, except the virtual only implementation will lead to different circumstances and challenges for students to overcome through the entrepreneurial process.

Who will the mentors be for JA Company Program?

Mentors will be volunteers who are adult professionals from local businesses. These volunteer mentors will have clearances in accordance with local school district, JA, and PA Department of Human Services policies. The volunteer mentors will be following JA's Volunteer Conduct Standards and Digital Media Policy and abide by JA guidelines for working virtually with youth.

How many students will be assigned to each JA Company Program Host Site?

We anticipate having a cohort of 15-20 students in each of our host sites this school year. As of August 2020, we are still finalizing the number of host sites. We anticipate having about six host sites.

Who is eligible to participate in JA Company Program?

Any student who will be in grades 9-12 who lives in Philadelphia, Berks, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Lehigh, Montgomery, or Northampton counties in Pennsylvania in Fall 2021 is eligible to participate in JA Company Program. Students must also commit to attending programs meetings, completing all forms, and meeting the technology requirements as detailed above.

How can I sign up for JA Company Program?

Fill out this application here! The application is due October 18, 2021. As a part of the application, students will complete a one-page personal inventory. Due to the increased popularity of JA Company Program and the reduced number of available spots in virtual implementation, JA anticipates receiving more applications than we have available spots. Therefore, it is highly likely we will not be able to place all applicants in JA Company Program this year.

What will increase my chances of being accepted to JA Company Program?

There are two ways students can improve their chances of being accepting into JA Company Program.
1) Students should submit their application as early as possible.
2) The students' personal inventories will be reviewed prior to making application decisions. As such, students who put in more time and care and have insightful inventories will be more likely to be accepted into JA Company Program.

How will I choose what host site I prefer to attend?

Students will indicate which evenings, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and/or Thursdays, they are available. If they are accepted, the student will be assigned to host site/cohort that meets on a night the student is available. When available, returning students will have the opportunity to indicate a preference to work with their volunteer mentors from last year.

In the past, as students were responsible for their own transportation to travel to host sites, we had students indicate what specific host site they could most easily attend. As this year's JA Company Program is an entirely virtual experience with no required in-person commitments, this is not necessary for this year.

How will I know if I have been accepted to JA Company Program?

After the application closes on October 18, 2021, JA will process applications and make application decisions and placements. You will hear soon after that.

I have more questions about JA Company Program. Who do I contact?

If you have any questions, please contact Stuart Younger!

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