



ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

2023 GRANTEE

## PROJECT

# Junior Achievement BizTown



## GRANTEE

Junior Achievement of Central Indiana



## INVESTMENT

\$3,000

## PROJECT OVERVIEW:

Junior Achievement of Central Indiana (JA) is a leading non-profit organization, impacting more than 50,000 students during the 2022-2023 school year alone. JA's hands-on, experiential learning programs educate and inspire young people in the areas of work and career readiness, employability/life skills, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy, building the skill sets and mindsets needed to pursue and achieve their dreams. During the 2023-2024 school year, more than 11,000 fifth grade students from schools around central Indiana had the opportunity to experience JA BizTown, JA's signature elementary capstone program, which allows students to see, touch, and live the experience of personal finance in a real-life setting of stores, shops, and financial institutions, by becoming "an adult for the day." Students travel with their class to the JA BizTown facility, where they put into practice what they have learned about in JA coursework prior to the simulation. The Metropolitan School District of Lawrence Township sent 1,100 students through this program during the 2023-2024 school year. This district has been actively involved in JA in-school programs for many years. However, participation in JA BizTown has previously been difficult due to the financial barriers. With 70% of their student population identified as low-income by the Indiana Department of Education, and with strains on school funding state-wide, school funding is simply not available to allocate towards JA BizTown. Participation in JA BizTown has an associated cost for curriculum, facility upkeep, on-site materials, technology and personnel. Due to funding structures that vary across school districts, and the fact that many central Indiana school districts have a significant percentage of students benefiting from federal free and reduced lunch programs, JA relies on commitment from community partners to fund the experience for students. The support from the MIBOR ECDC allowed over 100 Lawrence Township students to participate in this impactful experience, ensuring more fifth grade students in these schools have equal access to this program.

## IMPACT METRICS:

- Improves Quality of Life
- Increases Talent Attraction Efforts
- Engages Businesses to Positively Impact Communities
- Connects Talent
- Encourages Entrepreneurship and Innovation
- Supports Discovering Career Pathways for Students
- Provides Workforce Development Education

