



JOBS FOR AMERICA'S GRADUATES: Dropout Prevention, Postsecondary Education, Careers and Leadership Development for At-Risk Youth **PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

PROGRAM SUMMARY

Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) is a 35-year-old non-profit and employment program dedicated to helping at-risk young people to graduate from high school and make successful transitions to postsecondary education and meaningful employment. JAG is a voluntary in-school program that counts as a high school elective. It focuses on a set of core competencies that prepare students to succeed in the workforce. Using this approach, JAG has consistently achieved graduation rates of 90+ percent for this group of students, which typically has a 50 percent graduation rate. JAG currently serves nearly 50,000 students in 1,000 communities in 31 states, including Missouri. In the fall of 2014, JAG celebrated the one millionth student to enroll in the program since its inception. *(A summary of JAG's success may be found on page 2 of this summary.)*

JOBS FOR AMERICA'S GRADUATES—MISSOURI

JAG—Missouri is offered in cooperation with the Missouri Community College Association. Missouri is the only one of the 31 JAG states to be organized with a community college association. All involved believe this to be a natural partnership with multiple points of intersection to benefit students, employers, and the school systems of Missouri. A statewide advisory board is being developed to guide, advise and advocate for JAG—Missouri.

FUNDING INCENTIVE

Thanks to a combination of Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) through the State of Missouri and a private matching contribution from USA Funds, JAG—Missouri is able to provide incentive funding to new JAG schools for at least the first year of implementation. The incentive funding covers approximately half of the cost to deliver the program for a full calendar year, with the schools/school districts covering the other half. Participating schools and school districts sign a formal Memorandum of Understanding that also triggers the incentive payment.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information about JAG—Missouri and becoming a participating school/district, please contact:

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Jobs for America's Graduates—Missouri
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Kincaid can provide additional information and is available to meet with school officials, superintendent and principal groups, workforce development groups, and potential business partners.

JAG RESULTS AND STUDENT SUCCESS – CLASS OF 2013

- **91% Graduation Rate** - completion of a high school diploma or GED.
- **Positive Outcome Rate of nearly 80%**- after graduation, students are employed, in the military, in postsecondary training, or some combination thereof.
- **Job Placement Rate of 59%** - **Double** the employment rate for the at-risk population and **triple** the rate of full time employment
- **A 71% Full Time Jobs Rate** – **Three times** the national average.
- **43% Higher Education Rate** – Students graduate from high school and successfully transition into post-secondary education.

KEY IMPACTS

- **Employment Impact:** A recent report conducted by Dr. Andy Sum, Director of the Center for Labor Market Studies at Northeastern University. Dr. Sum's report cites JAG as a program that **doubles** the rate that disadvantaged youth get jobs, and **triples** the rate they get full time jobs as compared to their peers who are not in JAG. Given the dire youth unemployment situation we currently face, we are very proud of these findings.
- **Employer Satisfaction:** A random sample survey of employers of JAG graduates were asked by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce to rate their perceptions of JAG workers and the JAG program:
 - To quote the Chamber: *"The results portray a highly successful program that enjoys considerable success and one that is valued among JAG employers. Both the JAG program and the worker consistently received high rankings throughout the survey."*
 - An overwhelming majority of supervisors (98%) are "Very Likely" or "Somewhat Likely" to employ other JAG Graduates.
 - Only 3% of the JAG workers did not meet supervisors' expectations

THE JAG MODEL: COMPREHENSIVE, PRACTICAL, PROVEN, ACCOUNTABLE, COST EFFECTIVE

- **Classroom Instruction.** A trained "**Career Specialist**" provides individual and group instruction to **35-45 students** in a class delivered for credit during the school day.
- **Employability Skills.** The JAG NATIONAL CURRICULUM equips participants with a minimum of 37 employability competencies and intensive career exploration and training opportunities.
- **Adult Mentoring.** Specialists (JAG teachers) provide 180 contact hours and the individual attention at risk students need to overcome barriers that stand in the way of personal and academic success.
- **Advice and Support.** Specialists provide guidance as students make significant career and life decisions and connect participants to other social and education services in the community.
- **Summer Employment Training.** Job placement is provided and partnerships are developed with summer youth employment programs to maximize year-long learning.
- **Student-Led Leadership Development.** Participants join a highly motivating student-led organization to develop, practice and refine their leadership and teaming skills and serve their communities.
- **Job and Postsecondary Education Placement Services.** Employer marketing and assistance with postsecondary education opportunities is provided by the Specialist to support their students' postsecondary goals and successful transition to those opportunities following graduation.
- **12-Month Follow-up Services.** JAG provides no less than twelve months of follow-up services and support to participants after graduation or completion of a GED.
- **Accountability System.** A comprehensive, internet-based tracking and reporting system that includes information on the participants served, services delivered and performance outcomes.
- **Cost Effective Approach.** The average cost per participant is \$1,600. Considerably less than other programs with the same goals.