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Junior Achievement visits Braden Middle School for JA in a Day

by General

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ASHTABULA TOWNSHIP – It was an informative day for students at Braden Middle School as volunteers from Junior Achievement came out to the middle school on Wednesday, Feb. 26.

Junior Achievement middle-school programs are developed with a primary emphasis on entrepreneurship, financial literacy and work readiness while also providing a strong secondary focus on math, reading and writing. According to District Manager Patty Stone with Junior Achievement for Ashtabula County, all 7th- and 8th-grade classes in the Ashtabula County district are visited.

"This is a great opportunity for the kids to explore their interests and learn about career maps," Stone said. "This is the beginning of them entering the work world – learning soft skills, interviews, applying for work permits."



Stone shared that the Junior Achievement program returned to Ashtabula County after a 20 year absence in 2014, and also said that many volunteers from the 1990's were happy to come back.

There were multiple volunteers from various organizations speaking with students throughout the day.

Some organizations and people on site were Anthony Pascarella with Ohio Hometown Insurance; Todd Bendis with Lake City Plating; Kathy Safranek with Huntington Bank; Laura E. Jones with LEADERship Ashtabula County; and County Commissioner J.P. Ducro IV.

"For the 8th graders, they get more into economics, like how to handle money, manage finances, pay themselves, budget and know the difference between credit and debit," Stone explained.

Pascarella, owner of Ohio Hometown Insurance located in the Ashtabula Towne Square complex, was in Ms. Rebecca Deak's 7th-grade classroom sharing tips with students.

During his presentation, Pascarella talked about certain careers that are either have a positive outlook moving into the future, or are on the decline. "Go with your passion, that's the important thing," Pascarella said.

Students came up with their own ideas as to why they thought a job may or may not be on the decline, with many coming to an overall agreement that technology is the future and those who don't adapt will be left behind.

Stone also shared that of the nearly 300 students gathering valuable information, each gets a certificate of achievement.

In addition, she also praised the amount of volunteerism and the willingness of so many to do so in Ashtabula County to make the event possible for the students.

"This is such a great community for volunteers," Stone said. "The community has always been so giving."

To find out more about Junior Achievement, be sure to check out their website at www.ashtabula.ja.org/.

Submitted Photo

(Back row) Chad Vavpetic, Mark Winchell, Anthony Pascarella, Kathy Safranek, Laura E. Jones, Bob Lebzelter, and (front row) Todd Bendis, Bonnie Cannon, and J.P. Ducro IV were volunteers for the day, providing Braden students with guidance and experience for successful lives beyond school.

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