



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

7/10/26

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PRESIDENT OF JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT OF GREATER CLEVELAND NAMED FINALIST FOR PRESTIGIOUS KARL FLEMKE PIONEER ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

[Cleveland, OH] — Albert DiFranco, president of Junior Achievement of Greater Cleveland, has been named a finalist for the prestigious Karl Flemke Pioneer Achievement Award for 2026. This distinguished national honor recognizes first-time Junior Achievement presidents who demonstrate outstanding leadership, innovation, and impact within their local organizations and the broader JA network.

The award will be presented at the Junior Achievement USA® NEXT National Leadership Conference, taking place July 20–23, 2026, in Salt Lake City, Utah. DiFranco joins four exceptional JA leaders from across the country as finalists for this highly competitive recognition.

Under DiFranco's leadership, Junior Achievement of Greater Cleveland has reached unprecedented levels of impact, serving nearly 18,000 students annually, securing record revenue, and spearheading the opening of Northeast Ohio's first JA Experiential Learning Center. By championing forward-thinking strategies and fostering strong community relationships, DiFranco has strengthened the organization's ability to drive economic mobility for students, allowing them to improve their quality of life by preparing them for a rapidly changing world.

"I am honored to be named a finalist for the Karl Flemke Pioneer Achievement Award alongside a group of stellar JA leaders throughout the country! It is great to be recognized for the vision and hard work that led to our new Experiential Learning Center opening in March 2026," said Albert DiFranco, "We are building something special in Greater Cleveland and I am grateful to my colleagues in the Junior Achievement family for helping us on our journey!"

Tim Greinert, President of Junior Achievement USA, added, "We are thrilled to recognize Al as a finalist for this well-deserved honor. His leadership and achievements exemplify the very best of Junior Achievement. Through

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our mission to drive economic mobility for students, leaders like Al play a critical role in driving meaningful impact and helping students achieve academically today and economically tomorrow.”

The Karl Flemke Pioneer Achievement Award honors the legacy of the late Karl Flemke, who served as president of Junior Achievement Inc. from 1982 until 1994. His visionary leadership helped shape the organization’s growth and long-term impact, and this award continues to celebrate emerging leaders who carry forward his commitment to excellence and innovation.

About Junior Achievement USA®

Junior Achievement is education for *what’s next*. As a strategic partner working in collaboration with educators, employers, investors, leaders, and the communities they serve, we are dedicated to helping students achieve academically today and economically tomorrow. As a leader in experiential learning operating on a national scale with over a century of experience, we are driving toward lasting change. This means ensuring a generation of students has the transferable skills and competencies needed to navigate a rapidly changing world. By delivering career-connected learning, we are invested in accelerating economic mobility through education. By helping students become confident, capable, and connected today, we can ensure they have access to opportunity-filled futures tomorrow. Junior Achievement reaches more than 4.6 million students annually across nearly 100 U.S. markets, and is part of JA Worldwide, which serves over 19.9 million students in more than 100 countries. Learn more at www.ja.org.