

## *JA Titan*<sup>®</sup> Blended Model Finalist Paper

Economics, business operations, and data analysis often prove to be challenging topics for students and educators alike. To help students engage with these topics in a meaningful and engrossing learning experience, Junior Achievement USA created *JA Titan* Blended Model. Designed for students aged 14-18, the learning experience pairs scaffolded, blended, modular lessons with engaging gameplay to cultivate experiential learning that brings business economics to life.

*JA Titan* Blended Model facilitators can select from 11 blended, modular lessons, and they can choose to facilitate the lessons in three formats: direct instruction, remote instruction, or student self-guided. The lessons vary in complexity to allow facilitators to customize program delivery so that both beginning students and more advanced learners can synthesize the complex topics discussed. For example, the lesson, *Tutorial: Getting Ready for Business* guides learners through the program and simulation objectives and tools in a highly structured and scaffolded format. Alternately, if a facilitator is presenting *JA Titan* Blended Model to a more advanced group of learners, they may choose to utilize the lesson, *Competition Prep: Freestyle Exploration* which empowers students to make connections and orient themselves to the simulation and learning objectives through a loosely structured exploratory activity.

During each lesson, students bolster their understanding by participating in a simulated business economy as CEOs of cell phone companies. They must make business decisions in four departments, review their financial data and quarterly outcomes, and analyze data pertaining to their competitors' operations. The simulation fosters a fun, immersive, and competitive environment that aids in student comprehension. During class, facilitators can operate multi-player games allowing students to play against each other, creating a dynamic micro-economy. Students can also play the game in single-player mode to practice and experiment with different business strategies.

*JA Titan* Blended Model also incorporates a facilitator dashboard that allows educators to manage and customize games, to view leaderboard data during games, and to export a detailed game report as a .csv file that outlines every decision made by all players in a game. This data is a teaching tool that can be used for deep analysis that also allows for extensive customization when opened and modified in a spreadsheet format.

The impact of this learning experience is amplified by its deliberately inclusive design. A diverse, international advisory group provided feedback throughout the development process, impacting the design of advisor avatars for example. Spanish-language editions of the curriculum and the game interface are included for bilingual students, and a unique screen reader is included to enable sight-impaired students to play.

*JA Titan* Blended Model was released in August 2021. In the first 6 months, 35 of 103 JA Areas in the United States adopted the program, along with multiple JA Member Nations. Students and facilitators alike have reported increased engagement from students and a deeper understanding of business economics.