

PNC Foundation Awards \$372,000 In Grants To YMCA of The North, Junior Achievement North

Funding will support early education, professional development and student entrepreneurship cohort programs in Black communities

MINNEAPOLIS, March 9, 2022 -- The PNC Foundation announced that it has awarded \$372,000 in grants over three years to YMCA of the North and Junior Achievement North to support early education programs, career pathways for early childhood educators, and an entrepreneurship student cohort in Black communities.



The grants will support organizational initiatives in Hennepin, Anoka, Carver, Ramsey, Dakota, Washington, and Chisago counties, where many residents are economically challenged, lack the support necessary to become financially independent and have inadequate access to educational resources.

“PNC is committed to driving real change in areas in which we can make the greatest impact,” said Kate Kelly, PNC regional president for Minnesota. “We are focused on advancing meaningful and sustainable opportunities in traditionally underserved populations and communities where we live and work, in keeping with our efforts to move all forward financially.”

The grant recipients will use the funding as follows:

— **YMCA of the North (\$100,000 grant)** – The PNC grant will support the YMCA Preschool at Maple Pond Homes Neighborhood Center. The project offers a two-pronged component, including a new kindergarten readiness program at Maple Pond Homes and an early childhood career pathway.

The preschool program will operate year-round, serving a maximum of 20 children per year. In addition, the YMCA will provide one community member a fully paid scholarship of \$2,000 to attain a Child Development Associate certificate (CDA), which will qualify him/her to be a licensed early education teacher in most states.

— **Junior Achievement North (\$272,000 grant)** – The PNC grant will support the expansion of JA LaunchU! to a Black Student Cohort. JA LaunchU! brings together a group of aspiring young entrepreneurs who are provided the resources and support to successfully launch their own business enterprises.

Under the mentorship of Entrepreneurs in Residence and a peer network, JA LaunchU! empowers high school students to fill a need or solve a problem in their community and teaches them practical skills required to conceptualize, capitalize, and manage their own business venture.

“The YMCA appreciates the opportunity to collaborate with PNC to make a real difference for preparing children for success in school and supporting childcare teacher’s careers,” said Glen Gunderson, president of the YMCA of the North. “The Y is committed to serving our community by providing educational and enrichment experiences that ensure every child has the opportunity to learn, grow and thrive.”

Sara Dziuk, president and CEO of Junior Achievement North shared, “We’re grateful to be collaborating with PNC to develop a JA LaunchU! Black Student Cohort. Their commitment to community and generosity is inspiring. Junior Achievement North is focused on equitably expanding programming so that students who have been systemically excluded can gain access to transformational learning opportunities. I can’t wait to see the creativity and passion of students as they launch their businesses and build foundational skills that will prepare them for bright futures.”

The three-year grants are part of PNC’s \$88 billion Community Benefits Plan, inclusive of a previously announced commitment of more than \$1.5 billion to challenge systemic racism and support the economic empowerment of Black American and low- and moderate-income (LMI) communities. The Community Benefits Plan will provide at least \$88 billion in loans, investments and other financial support to benefit LMI people and neighborhoods, as well as people and communities of color, over a four-year period.

About Junior Achievement North

Junior Achievement North has been serving students in Minnesota, North Dakota and western Wisconsin since 1949. We provide students in grades K-12 with financial literacy, college and career readiness and entrepreneurship education. Our programs are implemented by in-person or virtual volunteers, mostly business professionals, who share their skills and experience to motivate and inspire students to succeed. Learn more at www.janorth.org.

About YMCA of the North

The YMCA of the North is a leading nonprofit dedicated to strengthening communities through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. Established 165 years ago, the Ys provide life-strengthening services across the greater Twin Cities metro region, southeastern Minnesota and western Wisconsin communities. The 29 Y locations and program sites, eight overnight camps, 10 day camps, and more than 90 child care sites engage more than 370,000 men, women and children of all ages, incomes and backgrounds. To learn more about the Y’s mission and work, visit www.ymcanorth.org.

About PNC Foundation

The PNC Foundation, which receives its principal funding from The PNC Financial Services Group (www.pnc.com), actively supports organizations that provide services for the benefit of communities in which it has a significant presence. The foundation focuses its philanthropic mission on early childhood education and community and economic development, which includes the arts and culture. Through [Grow Up Great](#), its signature cause that began in 2004, PNC has created a bilingual \$500 million, multi-year initiative to help prepare children from birth to age 5 for success in school and life.

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