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National Fuel Named Presenting Sponsor of Junior Achievement's 41st Annual Bowl-a-Thon
Longtime JA partner steps into lead role after years of employee participation and fundraising support



Buffalo, N.Y. – Junior Achievement of Western New York (JA) today announced that National Fuel has been named Presenting Sponsor of its 41st Annual Bowl-a-Thon, the organization's signature fundraising event. The sponsorship marks a new chapter for the longtime JA supporter, whose employees have consistently ranked among the event's most active participants and fundraisers. In 2026, JA's Bowl-a-Thon raised a record-breaking \$213,496 to support financial literacy, work readiness, and entrepreneurship programs for local students.

National Fuel assumes the Presenting Sponsor role following four decades of support from the previous presenting sponsor, making this the first change in the event's top sponsorship position in the Bowl-a-Thon's history.

"National Fuel has demonstrated an extraordinary commitment to Junior Achievement and the students we serve," said JA President John Crawford. "Their employees have helped make the Bowl-a-Thon one of Western New York's most successful community fundraising events, and we are thrilled to welcome them as Presenting Sponsor."

National Fuel employees have been among the Bowl-a-Thon's most dedicated supporters, with approximately 130 to 190 employees participating annually. The company has also raised more than \$20,000 for the event each year over the past three years, helping to expand JA programming for thousands of local students.

“Supporting the Junior Achievement Bowl-a-Thon has been a National Fuel tradition for many years, with employees stepping up annually to participate, fundraise and champion JA’s mission,” said Karen Merkel, Managing Director of Corporate Communications. “As we prepare to celebrate our 125th anniversary in 2027, we are proud to build on that legacy by increasing our support as Presenting Sponsor. This expanded commitment is a natural next step in our partnership with JA and reflects our continued investment in its mission and those it serves.”

The 41st Annual JA Bowl-a-Thon will take place March 6, March 13, and May 12, 2027, at Transit Lanes. For more information, visit <https://westernnewyork.ja.org/events/ja-bowl-a-thon-wny>.

Junior Achievement’s learning experiences promote the transferable skills and competencies students need to take advantage of economic opportunity and achieve economic mobility. We believe each person’s future should be determined by choices, not chance. At Junior Achievement, we are committed to giving students opportunity-filled futures by helping them become confident, capable, competent, and connected to what the world has to offer.

About Junior Achievement of Western New York

Junior Achievement is the world’s largest organization dedicated to educating students in kindergarten through 12th grade about financial literacy, entrepreneurship, and career & work readiness through experiential, hands-on programs. In the 2025-2026 school year, Junior Achievement of WNY enriched the lives of 8,486 students in 65 schools and community organizations throughout the eight counties of Western New York. For more information about Junior Achievement of Western New York and how you can make a difference in a child’s life, visit our website at www.jawny.org, follow us on LinkedIn at <https://www.linkedin.com/company/junior-achievement-of-wny> or like us on Facebook and Instagram: @JAofWNY.

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