



# Jobs for America's Graduates

A Report to the CSA and the Board of Directors

June/July 2016

## Preparations for the September 22 JAG *National Thought Leader* Event

The JAG *National Thought Leader* Event is our most important policy and fund-raising event of the year. This year's event will be held at the Gallup headquarters in Washington, with our Chair, Governor Phil Bryant, leading the event. We are delighted to report that one of our newest Board members, Governor John Bel Edwards of Louisiana, will join us as well. We also anticipate the participation of Chris Masingill (Federal Co-Chair of the Delta Regional Authority), Pat Skorkowsky (Superintendent of the Clark County School District), Congressman Don Beyer of Virginia, and other public and private sector experts.

While our focus will remain on finding *solutions* to youth unemployment, we have changed the structure of the event. We will seek to apply the Recommendations from the past nine *Thought Leader* Events and the expertise of this year's participants to two of the nation's most challenging youth employment environments: The Mississippi-Louisiana Delta region and North Las Vegas, Nevada (the city hardest hit by

the recession).

We will be joined by our Co-Hosts from the past several years: The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM); the National Urban League; the Asian & Pacific Islander American Scholarship Fund (APIASF); and the Hispanic Heritage Foundation.

The event will be intensive and highly interactive as we develop specific youth employment strategies for these two locations that can also be applied in other rural and urban locations. It will be an exciting day, and we encourage all of our Board members to join us.

We hope that this new approach will result in real solutions to youth unemployment on a sustainable and affordable basis.

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**Jobs for America's Graduates  
National Training Seminar**

**July 11-15, 2016**

# 2016 National Training Seminar: Attendance of 400+

Our annual National Training Seminar, held in Orlando this year, was a great success. We were pleased with the turnout for the event, as many states have restrictions on funding for travel to conferences, and certain states are banning any form of out-of-state travel.

Our National Training Seminars always receive positive feedback, and this year was no exception. Post-NTS evaluations indicated that those who attended found the workshops, speakers, and opportunities for interaction with their colleagues extremely valuable, and considered this year's NTS to be one of the best ever.

## LEADERS

We were delighted to have a number of key leaders join us to focus on the theme of the conference: *Delivering on the Promise*.

**Carolyn Warner** brought outstanding closing remarks on behalf of the Board of Directors and received a standing ovation.

**Joe Leonard**, Assistant USDA Secretary for Civil Rights, also gave a very moving and engaging address about the value the people at the front lines bring to the lives of young people. Joe and his team became so excited about what they saw in JAG that they are now actively working with us to create a number of career fairs and presentations about job opportunities with the USDA across the country for JAG students, since the USDA is

one of the few federal agencies where there are jobs in almost every state.

**Commissioner Mark Butler** of the JAG Board offered a unique perspective to all our team as someone who oversees a broad range of employment and training programs in Georgia, and has seen the success of Jobs for Georgia Graduates first-hand. Mark offered a compelling case for the value of the program and the important role the frontline team of JAG plays in boosting academic and economic success for our most at-risk and disadvantaged young people.

**Ted Dintersmith**, whom the JAG Board met at the April 1 meeting, gave a compelling talk about opportunities to change the way education engages, motivates, and supports high-risk youth in employment.

We were very pleased to have **Larry Caruso** with us for all five days in his role as JAG Board member and as Executive Director of Jobs for Kentucky Graduates.

**Myrna Bell**, US Human Resources Field Business Lead at McDonald's, also joined us and participated in the Board's presentations.

## WORKSHOPS

In addition to a number of corporate workshops, NTS offered several "best practice" sessions led by our local staff around the country.

Much of the focus of this year's NTS was on JAG's new Project-Based Learning modules. Project-based learning is a proven method of improving skill mastery and engaging young people in learning. A great deal of work has gone into converting several modules of the JAG National Employability Skills Curriculum into new Project-Based Learning modules. We offered training sessions during Pre-NTS and NTS to help those present learn how to use the new modules.

The State Affiliate leaders met early each morning at NTS to review plans and deal with various challenges and opportunities as a national organization, including focusing on JAG's Out-of-School program and its potential to become one of our

Those who attended...considered this year's NTS to be one of the best ever.

biggest sources of growth as an organization.

Our appreciation to all who joined us at the National Training Seminar.



# Out-of-School Youth Program Growing

Because of the success of the JAG Out-of-School program over the past 2½ decades and the shift of federal and foundation funding to serving out-of-school youth, we are bringing the results of the JAG program to the attention of key decision makers in federally financed state and local workforce systems.

At the July National Training Seminar, we provided special training on implementing the Out-of-School Model Application. At least a dozen Affiliates indicated their readiness to work with the national staff to design and establish the Out-of-School program in their states for the first time, or to build on their existing Out-of-School programs.

We are developing new brochures highlighting the success of the program and describing how it operates, and promoting

the Out-of-School program on the JAG website, Facebook, and other social media.

We are arranging to make presentations to national, state, and local workforce leaders who control the funding for out-of-school youth, to increase their awareness, interest, and appreciation of the Out-of-School program.

We anticipate that by mid-fall we will have at least 53 Out-of-School programs in place – up from 36 in December 2015. The Annie E. Casey Foundation's receipt of a major federal grant to implement improved education and employment training to existing out-of-school youth programs has allowed us to add seven sites this year alone. In Georgia, we are implementing four new Out-of-School program sites. The

Workforce Board Director in the Savannah area, who was formerly with Jobs for Michigan Graduates, saw the value in Michigan and is determined to bring the program to Georgia.

Because Out-of-School programs can be implemented at any time, we will continue to increase outreach, engagement, and pursuit of funding for such programs, since a substantial amount of money remains uncommitted at the state and local levels, with few quality programs for serving out-of-school youth available to many Workforce Boards.

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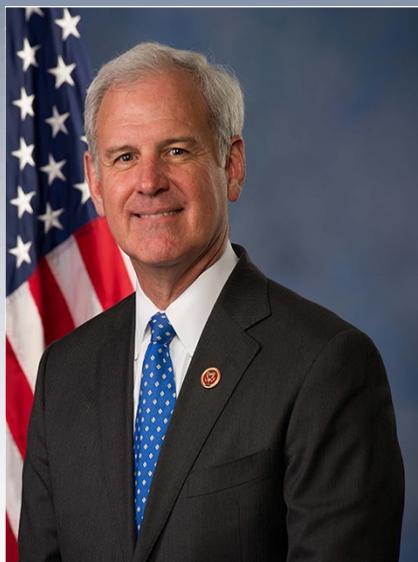
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# Congressman Bradley Byrne Elected to Board of Directors

Republican Congressman Bradley Byrne from Mobile, Alabama has been elected to the Board of Jobs for America's Graduates. The Congressman has decades of experience in working with career & technical education systems and the community college system in Alabama, and has been a strong advocate for education and job training for at-risk and disadvantaged youth.

Congressman Byrne is also a member of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce, which makes most of the recommendations to the House of Representatives on key education and job training



Congressman Bradley Byrne

legislation. Congressman Byrne joins Congressman Don Beyer on our Board, as we continue our tradition of bipartisan representation and commitment to the work of Jobs for America's Graduates.

Congressman Byrne is seeking ways to bring Jobs for Alabama Graduates to the attention of the school districts in his District. Along with Congressman Beyer, he is working to arrange a presentation to members and staff of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce about the value and success of the JAG program.

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## News from around the Network

**Liz DuPont-Diehl** has left her leadership role at Jobs for Connecticut Graduates for another position. We are grateful for Liz's leadership during some very challenging times, when she got the program up and running, and in overcoming regular budget challenges. **Billie Scrusse** has been hired as Interim Director of the program in Connecticut while the search continues for Liz's successor.

We are delighted to announce that **Janelle Duray** has been promoted to

the position of Senior Vice President of Jobs for America's Graduates, effective August 1.

Janelle has done an outstanding job of assuming several senior leadership assignments, working with our State Affiliates regarding public and private sector funding, and overseeing our national fund-raising efforts. She also manages the grants from the public and private sectors to incent schools and jurisdictions to establish JAG programs, over-



JAG Senior Vice President, Janelle Duray

sees the AT&T mentoring program, and administers the Annie E. Casey Foundation's "LEAP" grant. **Congratulations, Janelle!**

# National Fund-Raising Update

As we enter into the last half of the year, JAG's national resource development campaign is meeting many of its targets, but the overall goal has been affected by reductions anticipated in funding from Western Union (\$25,000, down from \$75,000) and Shell, which is concluding funding after 20 years of support (\$50,000 annual donation to support the National Training Seminar and other events). Western Union might still be able to do a bit more by the end of the year, but we must operate on the assumption that we will be down \$100,000 from our projections.

As good news, we have just received a renewal of **\$250,000** support from ADM – a **truly extraordinary commitment as the company faces major economic challenges**. They have also provided an additional \$25,000, which is being divided among three of our Affiliates, and leaders from ADM continue to serve on the non-profit boards of our State Affiliates. ADM has also committed to a guaranteed job interview to JAG applicants. We are grateful for this commitment, given the great challenges our young people faced as they search for jobs.

Funding for our *National Thought Leader Event*. Also looking ahead, funding for our

*National Thought Leader Event* on September 22 will be less than for last year's event, as a result of the loss of funding from Shell and Western Union. However, pledges should still exceed \$200,000. So,

**We have just received a renewal of \$250,000 support from Archer Daniels Midland!**

too, with the *National Leadership Awards Luncheon* on November 10. We are in discussions with several other organizations to further diversify and increase support from the private sector.

## **NEW NATIONAL AT&T GRANT REQUEST**

We have submitted a proposal to the AT&T Foundation for 2017-18, seeking to expand our successful four-year partnership in using resources from the AT&T Foundation to incent new schools and jurisdictions to implement the JAG program for the first time and/or grow existing programs.

Entergy. We are delighted with the new support from Entergy,

resulting from the personal engagement of CEO Leo Denault, now serving on our Board of Directors. Entergy has provided \$75,000 of support each to JAG in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi, and \$25,000 core support to Jobs for America's Graduates. The funds are being used to incent new schools to implement the program and provide support for student leadership and engagement activities in each of the states.

The Resource Development Committee will meet in September to discuss providing additional assistance in identifying and pursuing potential new sources of support for the work of the national organization.

## **REQUESTED HELP FROM ALL BOARD MEMBERS**

Governor Bryant and Mike D'Ambrose (Chair of the Resource Development Committee) once again urge each Board member to suggest at least one new company, foundation, or individual who shares our mission, whom we can approach to brief them about the success of Jobs for America's Graduates.

