

We are pleased to offer our support to Junior Achievement of Mahoning Valley and their proposal for funding. As educational leaders, we think it is vitally important to the future of our students that they have a strong foundation in the understanding of economics, business, personal finance and entrepreneurship. Additionally, having adults from the business and faith-base community to come to our schools and teach the JA curriculum provides our students the opportunity to interact with role models. This unique interaction allows students to connect the relevance of their academic lives to their future. The rigor and relevance provided by JA programs meets the needs of the community to educate our future workforce to be contributing leaders. We strongly recommend your consideration for Junior Achievement of Mahoning Valley's Community Connectors funding request. Support for Junior Achievement and its programs will ensure that the futures of our student's are a bright one!

Dr. William Nye

Superintendent of Grand Valley Local Schools (2007-present)

Qualifications:

Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership-Youngstown State University
Governing Member of NEOMIN-Northeast Ohio Management Information Network (2013-present)

ACSOG, Vice President-Ashtabula County School Council of Governments (2013-present)

Grand Valley School Board Member (2002-2005)

Administrator-Jefferson Area Local Schools (2001-2007)

Prior Relevant Experience:

Administrator-Jefferson Area Local Schools (2001-2007)

Vocational Agriculture Instructor-Jefferson Area Local Schools (1990-1995)

Northeast District Athletic Board Vice President-Ohio High School Athletic Assoc. (2012-present)

Mrs. Mary Zappitelli

Superintendent of Geneva Area City Schools (2008-present)

Qualifications:

Master of Education-Edinboro University of Pennsylvania

Prior Relevant Experience:

Conneaut Area City Schools- Superintendent (2006-2008)

Conneaut Area City Schools- Assistant Superintendent (2002-2005)

Rowe Middle School-Principal (1198-2002)

Rowe Middle School-Assistant Principal (1995-1998)

Conneaut High School-Assistant Principal (1991-1995)

Conneaut Public Library Board of Trustees (1983-2006)

Rotary Club of Conneaut (2005-2008)

ACCESS Board Member (2008)

LEADERship Ashtabula County Class of 2003

Mr. Michael Notar

Superintendent of Conneaut Area City Schools (August 2014-present)

Qualifications:

Superintendent's License-Youngstown State University

Master of Educational Administration-University of Dayton

Prior Relevant Experience:

Warren City School District-Superintendent (2012-2014)
Director of Business Operation-Warren City Schools (2010-2012)
Niles City School District-Principal of High School (2007-2010)
Brookfield Local School District-Superintendent (2005-2007)

Mr. Michael Candela

Superintendent of Pymatuning Valley Local Schools (2012-present)

Qualifications:

Masters of Education in Educational Leadership/Administration – Youngstown State University
Association for Career and Technical Education-21st Century Leadership Institute
Ohio Association of Career-Technical Superintendents-Aspiring Superintendents Academy

Prior Relevant Experience:

District Level Administrator-Ashtabula County Technical and Career Center (2007-2011)
Building Level Administrator-Ashtabula Area City Schools (2005-2007)
Adjunct College Instructor-Kent State University, Ashtabula Campus (1989-2004)

Dr. Thomas P. Diringer

Superintendent, Buckeye Local Schools

Prior Relevant Experience:

1975 – 1985 Ten years, teacher, four districts
1985 – 2002 Seventeen years, principal, three districts
2002 – 2003 One year, Director of Curriculum and Instruction
2003 – 2012, 2014 – 2015 Ten years, Superintendent

Dr. Jerome Brockway

Superintendent of Ashtabula County Technical and Career Campus (1989-present)

Qualifications:

Superintendent of Ashtabula County Technical and Career Center
The Ohio State University-Ph.D.
Chief Executive Officer-Ashtabula County Technical and Career Center (1989-present)

Prior Relevant Experience:

Chief Executive Officer-Ashtabula County Board of Education (1986-2002)
Ohio State Board of Career Colleges and Schools-Governor Appointment (2009-present)
Ohio Board of Regents State Wide Apprenticeship Partner Panel-Member
Ohio Vocational Association-Life Member
Ashtabula County 503/504 Corporation-President (1992-present)
Civic Development Corporation-Trustee
Ashtabula Foundation-President (2005-present)

John C. Montanaro

Superintendent Jefferson Area Local Schools

Qualifications:

Masters in Educational Administration-Youngstown State University
Certification in Elementary Education-Cleveland State University

Bachelor of Science (Accounting)-Robert Morris University

Prior Relevant Experience:

Principal-Jefferson Area Jr. /Sr. High School

Assistant Principal-Ashtabula Area City Schools

Title I Teacher / Coordinator

Summer School Teacher-Ashtabula

Severe Behavioral Handicap Teacher-Chardon

Title I Math Tutor / Team Room Leader – Thurgood Marshall Elementary

Child Care Worker – Geauga County Juvenile Court

Community Connectors Grant
Leadership Team Partner Bio
ACCESS Ashtabula County

Paula Ghiz, ACCESS Executive Director

- Currently in 0th year working for ACCESS, 3rd as Director, previously as Program Director and Middle School Advisor.
- Previously employed as middle school teacher and high/middle school athletic coach. Bachelor degree in elementary education, concentration in coaching.
- Personal community involvement includes church activities (teach junior church, participate in bell choir) and local youth sports organization (coach and chief umpire).
- Professional community involvement includes collaborating with Zonta and local university for programming, working with business community to provide services to students in Ashtabula City Schools.

Statement of Interest

I always new that working to help students would be something I would pursue. In my early teaching days I was always drawn to the students who needed just a little more help and support. I knew that I could not only help these students learn, but also be a positive influence and role model in their lives. As my career direction changed and I started to work for ACCESS, I was able see things from a different perspective and imagine a whole new way that I could positively impact the lives of children.

Through my work and personal experiences I have become more aware of the challenges that students face and I feel strongly that I am in a position to help students learn how to overcome some of the barriers they encounter. The role of ACCESS is to help students plan and prepare for their future and it has never been clearer that there is a dire need to help students make a connection between their academics and future career possibilities.

Ashtabula County students that ACCESS serves report parents' education levels to us and nearly 50% of students every year are considered first-generation college students. Therefore, the need for support and guidance continues to be needed on a very large scale. Nobody can do it all on their own, so the more connections that students can make, the better. This grant is the perfect opportunity to build those much-needed relationships with local community and business partners.

ACCESS Director's responsibilities will include the following:

- Participate in the planning and preparation of logistics for implementing services.
- Provide two ACCESS Advisors to implement services in the schools.
- Train, manage and maintain communication with the ACCESS Advisors who will implement the Community Connectors grant services in the schools.
- Develop the programming, lessons and materials that will be used in the schools for this grant.
- Participate in the evaluation of the services, collect data to measure progress and success, and complete reports as required for grant guidelines.

Biography

As a Divisional Vice President with AXA Equitable and an active member of the Northeast Ohio community, Chad is dedicated to helping individuals, businesses, and organizations build strong financial futures.

Starting with AXA in 2006, Chad quickly built a large cliental by endeavoring to develop strong relationships with his clients; taking the time and attention necessary to understand their goals and concerns, and further their financial intelligence. That same year, Chad earned the designation of Retirement Benefits Specialist, Tax Sheltered Plans. In 2007 he was recognized in the Cleveland Branch as the top Advisor in establishing new client relationships. In 2008 Chad was nationally recognized for his outstanding production, as a recipient of the prestigious Centurion Award. His years of training and experience in financial services have equipped him to design investment and protection strategies tailored to each individual client.

Chad began mentoring new advisors in 2010 and in January of 2011 he was promoted to the position of Divisional Vice President, where his role includes hiring, training and developing successful advisors, while still servicing and building his personal cliental.

As an Investment Advisor Representative with AXA Advisors, LLC, and an agent of AXA Network, LLC and its subsidiaries, Chad and his team work with dozens of providers to offer a variety of financial products and services; including, Retirement Planning, Education Planning, Business Planning, Mutual Funds, Brokerage Accounts, Life Insurance, Disability Income Insurance, Annuities, and Employer-Sponsored Retirement Plans such as 401(k), 403(b)/TSA and 457(b)/EDC. Chad holds Series 7, Series 6, and Series 24 registrations with FINRA, as well as, his Ohio Life and Health Insurance License.

Chad is a graduate of The Ohio State University where he earned a Bachelors degree in Business Communication. He lives in Roaming Shores with his wife, Lisa, and children Naomi, Julia, and Parker. He has served on Village Council in Roaming Shores, and been actively involved in teaching and youth ministry in his local church. Chad is an avid fan of high school wrestling and MMA, and enjoys wake surfing and relaxing with friends and family on the pontoon boat during summer months.



AXA ADVISORS

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Chad C. Vavpetic

Retirement Benefits Specialist Tax Sheltered Plans
Vice President

March 5, 2015

Dr. Richard Ross, Superintendent
Ohio Department of Education
25 S. Front Street
Columbus, OH 43215

Dr. Ross,

I am writing in support of the Community Connectors Grant Application submitted by Junior Achievement to bring programming to the schools of Ashtabula County.

Here at AXA, we have partnered with JA for a number of years to bring their world-class curriculum to students through the state. Some of my favorite days are spent in the classroom teaching JA.

My support of this grant goes beyond my belief in Junior Achievement, however. I am also a resident of Ashtabula County and a parent of two school-age daughters (Julia, 7th and Naomi 10th) who attend Jefferson Area Local Schools. I see the economic need throughout our county daily, a need that can only be met by educating and empowering individuals who then decide to do something different than what has been done before them. Our biggest opportunity for change lies with our students, and the most effective educational tool I've ever seen in the schools is Junior Achievement.

As a business owner, a resident, and a parent, I would be delighted to have the opportunity for my organization to partner with JA in our local schools!

Sincerely,

Securities and investment advisory services offered through AXA Advisors, LLC (NY, NY 212-314-4600), member FINRA, SIPC. Annuity and insurance products offered through AXA Network, LLC and its subsidiaries.

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www.chadvavpetic.com

Lynn M. Zalewski

4200 Park Avenue-3rd Floor, Ashtabula, OH 44041•440-992-2121•lynnz@doyccac.org

Experience

August 1996 - Current Catholic Charities of Ashtabula County Ashtabula, OH

Executive Director – January 1, 2008 - current

- Responsible to the Board of Directors for the financial, professional and administrative aspects of the Agency
- Provide the necessary leadership to ensure the mission of the Agency is developed and fulfilled by all who are apart of the Agency Services
- Represent the Agency to the community and ensure that the Agency's purpose and programs are clearly articulated and promoted
- Hire, dismiss, utilize and develop staff, delegating tasks and responsibilities as necessary
- Analyze, interpret and monitor data and oversee the preparation of official reports and record of the organization
- Plan for and oversee program areas, development, fund-raising, public relations and other activities.

Assistant Director – 2006-2007

- Day-to-day office management and oversight of administrative functions
- Assist in the development and implementation of Agency budget
- Responsible for preparation and timely submission of new contracts and renewal contracts
- Responsible for research, preparation and submission of grants
- Serve as the Agency's Client Rights Officer
- Almost solely responsible for the preparation and submission of the Agency's self-study in preparation for accreditation renewal in 2006
- Develop and distribute Agency policies and procedures
- Design Agency newsletters, brochures and flyers
- Represent the Agency on many community councils, associations and coalitions
- Directly supervise Fiscal Coordinator
- New hire orientation

Program Manager – 1996-2006

- Direct supervision of two program coordinators and up to seven program service providers
- Assist in the development and implementation of five different program budgets
- Develop, distribute and ensure implementation of all program policies and procedures
- Interview, hire and train new employees
- Plan and manage distribution of cash assistance to clients
- Analyze and report demographics and program statistics for each program
- Report grant outcomes to grantors
- Ensure compliance of grants and regulatory bodies
- Manage three client data bases
- Provide community outreach via presentations and workshops
- Provide financial literacy education to junior high and high school students

April 1993 – May 1996 Carlisle Retailers, Inc. Ashtabula, OH
June 1979 - August 1989

Buyer

- Develop and implement departmental budgets, which included the planning of sales, receipts, markdowns and gross profit – responsible for a \$4 million budget
- Coordinate and write advertising copy for company-wide and departmental events
- Communicate and educate sales staff in the various store locations regarding new items, trends and merchandising of key items

Education

1976-1979 Kent State University	Bachelor of Business Administration	Degree in Marketing
2008-2011 Regis University	Master of Science	Degree in Nonprofit Management

Other

- Ashtabula County United Way Account Executive
- LEADERship Ashtabula County graduate
- Executive Team, Region 5 Homeless Planning Team
- Chair, Public Information Committee, Family & Children First Council
- Catholic Charities USA Leadership Institute graduate



Michele Merkel

Michele is the president of Junior Achievement of Mahoning Valley, serving Mahoning, Trumbull, Ashtabula and Columbiana counties. Prior to her presidency Michele served ten years as Senior Program Manager. During Michele's seventeen years with Junior Achievement of Mahoning Valley, JA has expanded its program offerings from one after-school company program to 23 in- school and after- school programs. During the 2013-2014 school year Junior Achievement partnered with 466 educators in 75 schools educating and inspiring over 10,000 young people in the Mahoning Valley to succeed in a global economy. Under her leadership as president, the organization has received the highest national recognition for the past six years by Junior Achievement USA for financial solvency, program impact, program quality and overall managerial effectiveness.

Michele has maintained active roles on many boards and committees in our community. She has served as President of the Youngstown Kiwanis Club, Treasurer for the Junior League of Youngstown and is currently serving on the boards of Youngstown State University Non Profit Leadership Council and the Mahoning County Financial Stability Partnership.

November of 2006 Michele was honored at the "40 under 40" as one of the top five young professionals of the Mahoning Valley and a 2007 Athena Nominee.

Michele resides in Warren, Ohio with her husband Chief Eric Merkel, Warren City Police Department and her two children Erica, age 13 and Ian, age 10.

MICHELE L. MERKEL

3947 Greenmont Drive ♦ Warren, Ohio ♦ (330) 716-1031

PROFILE

President of Junior Achievement of Mahoning Valley, Inc.

Eighteen year nonprofit background experience with emphasis on program development, fundraising, community relations, event planning and strategic planning. Demonstrated achievement in:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ♦ Board Development | ♦ Fund Raising |
| ♦ Recruitment and Training | ♦ Administrative Operations |
| ♦ Customer Relationship Management | ♦ Marketing and Media |
| ♦ Grant/Proposal Writing | ♦ Special Events |

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Junior Achievement of Mahoning Valley, Inc., Girard, Ohio 2007-Current

President

- Directs a four county area and its four member staff as chief staff officer. Responsible for all planning, finance, fund raising, program, public relations and administrative operations.
- Develops and implements effective fund raising campaigns to reach established fund raising goals.
- Gathers, analyzes, interprets and uses financial data in developing a budget to support the accomplishment of organizational goals at realistic costs.
- Works with the Board of Directors to develop policy and assure proper governance of the organization.
- Develops and maintains constructive relationships with diverse groups including staff, Board members, business supporters, donors, volunteers, educators, students and suppliers.
- Effectively manages staff with varying racial, ethnic, cultural and economic backgrounds.
- Acts as representative of the Area before governmental, political, community, civic or industry groups. Acts and conducts oneself in ways that enhance the Area's image with all community groups.
- Demonstrates and encourages a commitment to quality performance. Works in ways that reflect a sense of urgency and commitment to productivity.
- Solves problems and makes difficult decisions. Oversees human resources, informational, financial and office support functions.
- Assures implementation of all programs to meet growth goals. Ensures that the current commitment from business leaders, schools, teachers and volunteers are being renewed.

Junior Achievement of Mahoning Valley, Inc., Girard, Ohio

1999-2006

Senior Program Manager

- Implemented and managed daily operations of all programs, including management of support staff.
- Assured that all administrative procedures were implemented and that teachers, volunteers and class fees secured.
- Increased public awareness of programs through presentations, press releases and electronic media.
- Secured funding for programs through contacting businesses involved and those currently not involved.
- Develop and implemented all volunteer orientation programs. Secured location of training, developed orientation materials, scheduled volunteers/teachers, ordered program materials, distributed registration and evaluation forms.
- Assisted all program related Board Committees in carrying out their specific functions so the goals of the Board can be achieved. Prepared materials for Board and Committee meetings.
- Maintained database information on all programs and participants. Submitted class registration forms and required reports to National Headquarters on a timely basis.

Junior Achievement of Mahoning Valley, Inc., Girard, Ohio

1997-1999

Program Manager

- Implemented and managed daily operations of Junior Achievement elementary, middle and high school programs including administrative procedures.
- Secured volunteers and planned volunteer recognition event.
- Secured schools and classroom teachers. Assured program quality, expansion and good school relations.
- Increased public awareness for all programs.

Youngstown Community Action Council, Youngstown, Ohio

1993-1997

Head Start Teacher

- Taught educational and recreational activities for 20 children, ages 3-5, in a pre-school setting.
- Planned and executed age-appropriate activities to promote social, cognitive, and physical skills.
- Developed daily lesson plans.
- Observed and assessed each child's development. Conducted parent/teacher orientations and meetings.

EDUCATION

Youngstown State University, Youngstown, Ohio-1993

Major: Early Childhood

COMPUTER SKILLS

Word ♦ Excel ♦ Raiser's Edge Database ♦ Web Design ♦ Microsoft Outlook
♦ QuickBooks ♦ Publisher

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Member Junior League of Youngstown
Member of MVP 20/30
Named Top 40 Young Professional in 2006
Athena Nominee 2007
Past President, Kiwanis Club of Youngstown
Youngstown State University Non-Profit Leadership Council
Financial Stability Leadership Council
Ohio Business Week Advisory Council
Youngstown City Schools Community Partner
40 Under 40 Planning Committee
Youngstown/Warren Regional Chamber
Ashtabula Chamber of Commerce
Salem Chamber of Commerce
Mahoning/Shenango Planned Giving Council