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Hampton Roads Students Succeed in Virtual Economy

NORFOLK, Va., Jan. 21, 2014-- Last fall, in classrooms across the Hampton Roads region, students piloted [Junior Achievement \(JA\)'s](#) financial decision-making curriculum known as JA [Finance Park Virtual](#). Today, JA of Greater Hampton Roads announces it is launching the curriculum during the 2013-2014 school year, to more than 2,000 students from Suffolk and Norfolk Public High Schools with financial support from consumer debt-buyer Portfolio Recovery Associates (Nasdaq:PRAA).

This unique program begins with four weeks of teacher-led workbook lessons in addition to special topics taught by select Junior Achievement (JA) community volunteers. Upon completion of the classroom series, students are immersed into the process of making real life financial decisions. At the click of a mouse, Finance Park Virtual comes alive and students create an avatar, and adopt a fictitious life which includes a job, income, and families, all while managing charitable giving, utilities, clothing, housing and transportation expenses. Students quickly learn how to sustain a quality of life while living within their means.

Additionally, this program meets nearly 60% of the competencies that educators need to teach for the newly mandated [Economics and Personal Finance](#) credit. This credit became a graduation requirement during the 2011-2012 school year for the Commonwealth of Virginia.

"The experiential financial education provided through JA Finance Park helps students to understand the short and long-term impact of educational, financial and life-style decisions," said Kevin Will, president of Junior Achievement of Greater Hampton Roads. "It also prepares students to succeed as adults by teaching them basic, practical money-management skills which they will need to help them prosper in life."

"We support this program with the hopes of engaging and teaching young people about money management so they will avoid economic challenges in the future," said Tara Privette, senior vice president of operations, PRA. "We each get a single opportunity to build our credit and this program can encourage students to grow into financially responsible adults."

Junior Achievement is still seeking additional sponsors for the Finance Park program. The program will expand into more schools as funding becomes available.

To see an online demo of the program visit: [JA Hampton Roads](#).

About Junior Achievement USA™ (JA)

Junior Achievement is the world's largest organization dedicated to giving young people the knowledge and skills they need to own their economic success, plan for their future, and make smart academic and economic choices. JA programs are delivered by corporate and community volunteers, and provides relevant, hands-on experiences that give students from kindergarten through high school knowledge and skills in financial literacy, work readiness and entrepreneurship. Today, JA reaches four million students per year in more than 120 markets across the United States, with an additional six million students served by operations in 119 other countries worldwide. Visit www.ja.org for more information.

About Junior Achievement of Greater Hampton Roads

Junior Achievement of Greater Hampton Roads, Inc. has been providing workforce readiness, financial literacy and free enterprise education to the young people of Hampton Roads for over 40 years. Founded in 1966 by local Hampton Roads community leaders, JA began by teaching 251 high school students how business works. Community leaders continue to come together to shape the vision of JA as board members, classroom volunteers and donors. Today, an excess of 300 community members bring their experience to over 10,000 kindergarten through twelfth grade students annually. Visit www.jahamptonroads.com for more information.

About Portfolio Recovery Associates

Portfolio Recovery Associates, Inc. (Nasdaq:PRAA) is a financial and business services company operating in the U.S. and the U.K. As a leader in the U.S. debt buying industry, PRA returns capital to banks and other creditors that helps expand financial services for consumers. PRA collaborates with its customers to create affordable, realistic debt repayment plans. The company also provides a broad range of fee-based services to local governments and law enforcement, U.S. businesses, institutional investors, global hedge funds, and U.K. banks and creditors.

PRA was recognized as one of *Fortune's* 100 Fastest-Growing Companies in 2013 and 2012. The company also has been named to the Top 25 of *Forbes'* Best Small Companies in America for the past two years and has been annually ranked on *Forbes'* list since 2007. For more information, please visit www.PortfolioRecovery.com.

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