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**KERI GARNETT NAMED AS NEW PRESIDENT OF
JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT OF SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA**

ROANOKE, VA – Junior Achievement of Southwest Virginia announced today that Keri Garnett, former Financial Empowerment Center Manager at Freedom First Enterprises, has been named president. As president of the Junior Achievement, Garnett will manage the organization’s work readiness, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy programs that currently reach over 5,000 K-12 students annually in the area.

“We are delighted to introduce Keri as our next President here in Junior Achievement,” stated Sam Oakey, Co-Chair of the Junior Achievement of Southwest Virginia Board of Directors. “Keri’s leadership capabilities and strong work ethic are quickly apparent and are evidenced by her extensive record of success in a variety of challenging endeavors,” said Oakey.

Garnett’s career has been dedicated to financial empowerment and equity within the Southwest Virginia communities. Most recently Garnett served as Manager for the Roanoke Financial Empowerment Center through Freedom First Enterprises where she supported all aspects of the organization. Garnett has been focused on building an extensive network in the community and was recently chosen as a Roanoker Magazine’s “40 Under 40” citizen who is a making a difference in the community, being described as a “purpose-driven, influential and compassionate part of Roanoke.”

Garnett received a Master of Education and a Bachelor of Science in Human Services from Northeastern University, Boston.

“After a national search and the review of many applications, the search committee was fortunate to identify Keri as a leading candidate,” said Craig Parrent, Chair of the search committee. “Keri’s experience in the not-for-profit world and her local involvement in that space will be a real asset in her new role as the President of JA Southwest Virginia.”

“I am proud and honored to join a prominent organization like JA with such an important mission,” commented Garnett. “JA educates and inspires young people to value free enterprise, business, and economics to improve the quality of their lives. I will work hard to ensure students experience JA’s high-quality programs so they can gain the skills relevant to success in their future careers and in their lives.”

Following twenty-four years leading Junior Achievement of Southwest Virginia, the current President, Katherin Elam, will retired on November 15, 2022.

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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 provide 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 more than 3 million students per year in 104 markets across the United States, with an additional 5.2 million students served by operations in 100 other countries worldwide. Junior Achievement USA is a member of JA Worldwide. Visit ja.org for more information.

