

Junior Achievement and HP Launch Latin American Initiative to Encourage Social and Environmental Responsibility in Business

JA of Costa Rica receives US\$5,000 implementation grant to empower innovative and socially conscious young entrepreneurs.

San José, Costa Rica – Junior Achievement of Costa Rica is providing local high school students with the opportunity to pursue entrepreneurial excellence by engaging in responsible business practices, thanks to a US\$5,000 grant from HP (Hewlett-Packard). Eight Latin American countries will participate in the expanded Responsible Business Initiative that culminates in the new Americas Region JA Company of the Year Competition and the accompanying HP Responsible Business Award on December 10-13, 2009, in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

HP created the HP Responsible Business Award to inspire future business leaders to be socially and environmentally conscious. The pilot for this Signature Award debuted in Europe at the 2006 JA-YE Company of the Year Competition. This year, the initiative expanded to North America and now to the Latin American countries of Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, Colombia, Chile, Mexico, Peru and Venezuela.

To be eligible to compete for the HP Responsible Business Award, a student company must be a finalist in the JA Company of the Year Competition, and company members must have completed a case-study module that promotes responsible business ideas and practices. The educational unit includes in-class exploration of case studies with HP volunteers and an online HP Responsible Business Ideas Contest. In addition, each company member must possess a Responsible Business Certificate, earned online at the Responsible Business Competition website (www.responsible-business.org) prior to the event. The winning student company will receive an HP product for each member (five maximum).

“Nowadays, a successful company is measured by more than its quarterly earnings report. It’s important to balance all aspects of running a business,” said Mrs. Sylvia Homberger, Executive Director of Junior Achievement of Cost Rica. “In the same way, this competition and the HP Responsible Business Award are designed to spotlight student companies that excel in their business plans and operations and demonstrate strong financial performance, social and environmental responsibility to all stakeholders, and innovative strategies and solutions.”

“Junior Achievement is grateful to HP for its support of this initiative,” added Mrs. Homberger. “HP is a solid partner in educating young people about entrepreneurship, good business practices, and global citizenship.”

"Innovation in education is essential for developing the next generation of high-tech entrepreneurs," said Yvonne Hunt, executive director of the HP Company Foundation and leader of the Global Social Investment team at HP. "Junior Achievement and HP's Responsible Business Competition are vehicles in which we can pair HP volunteers with students who will become tomorrow's leaders and the custodians of our socio-economic future."