

Jenna Sudds, JA Volunteer



Jenna graduated from Carleton University with a Masters of Arts (M.A.), Economics. As a Senior Economist with the Government of Canada, her career path was fairly traditional. That is, until she boldly realised a successful career

change. In July 2013, Jenna was named the **Kanata North Business Improvement Area's (KNBIA)** first-ever Executive Director.

As the dynamic leader of an organization that plays a critical part of Ottawa's economic development, we asked Jenna what motivated her to volunteer with JA. "The work the JA does is incredibly important. Ensuring that our future generation has the tools they need to be successful is very important, and any way that I can share my experiences and help - I'm happy to do."

Asked about something funny that a child said while volunteering, Jenna recalls a discussion from delivering *JA Economics for Success* to a classroom of grade 7 students at Stephen Leacock public school in Kanata. "We had a lovely discussion about how expensive it is to live on your own, buying furniture, paying rent, and buying groceries. The kids had some "interesting" ideas of how they could save money. Apparently only eating Kraft Dinner was considered a legitimate option!"

Jenna contributes to other causes that are important to her and that have impacted her life in some way. Jenna is currently the Vice-Chair of the Kanata Food Cupboard, a volunteer with Hospice Care Ottawa, and has also won *Kanata North's Citizen of the Year 2012-2013*.

Jenna leads by example in terms of paying it forward. “I think we are responsible to give back in some way to our communities. We all have different strengths and we can leverage these strengths to share our experiences and knowledge. The reality is that we get as much as we give when we volunteer.”

When asked what insights she has gained as a JA Volunteer, Jenna replied “That I can help empower the next generation of kids. I’ve also learned the importance of being honest and genuine with the kids. Even when it means being vulnerable.”

Jenna sees, first-hand, the difference she is making through her JA volunteering experience. “I had an especially interesting conversation with the kids last time about credit card use. They asked 17 questions! It was fantastic. It was obvious they wanted to learn more and needed to learn more about responsible credit card use. It was fascinating.”

As the title sponsor for the upcoming *JA Company Awards*, a year end event celebrating young entrepreneurs that have created student-run businesses, the **Kanata North BIA** is investing in local business education, helping develop young talent, and cultivating the next generation of entrepreneurs that will stimulate the local economy and help ensure our long-term prosperity.

<http://www.kanatanorthbia.ca/>

JA programs inspire youth to make better financial decisions, start up a business and create a career plan. For more information about volunteering with JA, please visit our website www.jaottawa.ca

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