



The Achiever



News of the 33rd National Junior Achievers Conference

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Validations use Achiever input

For the first time in Conference history, the initial screening of Conference officer candidates is being done entirely by their fellow Achievers. Sixty second-year NAJAC delegates have been selected for the interviewing task.

"We want to involve Achievers in every aspect of the validation and election process," explained David Jesberg, election liaison. "Past surveys have shown that the Achievers have a good idea of the type of leaders they want."

The sixty interviewers were selected from a field of 130 members of the Achiever Election Committee. These Achievers were themselves screened by members of the Elections Committee staff.

"We were basically looking for persons with leadership qualities, independent ideas, and good thought processes," continued Tom Loberg, staff manager of the committee. The selectees were then placed in panels of three for judging.

The selectees are given a one-hour training session and are supplied printed instructions with judging criteria and possible interview questions. Achievers are free to deviate from the prepared questions, however.

Candidates are asked questions about Junior Achievement, general business, and current events. The Achiever interviewers also judge a two-minute impromptu speech. Each interviewer scores each candidate individually. The scores combine into a particular formula, encompassing the general exam, parliamentary procedure exam, the interview, and a "letter exam" where the candidate writes two responses to letters provided him.

Scores are entered into a computer. "We have a computer program that statistically compares the scoring of different interview panels," explained Jesberg. "The scores of those panels that grade consistently high are balanced by those of panels that grade low."

Approximately 12 to 15 persons are selected as first cut survivors, depending on where a natural break occurs in the scoring.

Achievers are not eliminated from the validation process at this stage, however. Final interview rounds are conducted by panels consisting of two Achievers and one staff member.

The Achiever interviewers chosen for this group are themselves chosen by stringent criteria. During the first round of interviews Achievers evaluate their fellow interviewers. Those Achievers who emerge at the

top of the scale are asked to do the final validation rounds.

"We take great precautions to make sure that no one interviews a person from his own delegation," assured Jesberg.

And how did this whole system come about?

"We've been mulling over the idea for three years," said Loberg. "Last year the Achievers did all the interviewing for the National Achievers Association (NAA) officer elections. The response from Achievers and staff was great."

"I think it's a good way to run elections," concluded Jesberg. "Many candidates themselves have said they prefer Achiever interviewers."



Donna Shalala, winner of the 1976 Distinguished Graduate Achiever Award, shares a light moment with two present-day Achievers from Cleveland, her former home town. From left are Achievers Bill Dory and Brenda Hnanicek, and Dr. Shalala.

Award winner tells delegates

'Hard work the key'

Donna Shalala left the 1957 National Junior Achievers Conference proudly swinging her new "Sweeny beanie." Monday evening she left her second Conference with not only a 19-year-old Sweeny beanie, but also the award as Distinguished Graduate

Achiever of 1976.

A member of JA in the Cleveland area for 2½ years, Dr. Shalala held the offices of treasurer and president in her miniature business companies. Currently, she is treasurer of the Municipal Assistance Corporation for the city of New York ("Big Mac")

and can reflect on the day last summer when she signed a check for one billion dollars to save the city from bankruptcy. "To you, signing a billion-dollar check must seem millions of years away from your small JA companies," she told the delegates, "but it is not. I've done both and I came tonight to tell you I was less nervous signing a billion-dollar check than I was handling the books for my first JA company!"

Dr. Shalala feels that being a woman has never held her back from positions of responsibility, either in her JA business beginnings or in her current career. In her experience with company elections, ability took precedence over any consideration of sex, religion, or race. Finding herself the only female board member of Big Mac, she commented that "in the middle of the crisis it didn't make any difference . . . crises are wonderful levelers."

In her acceptance speech, Dr. Shalala named a few of the keys ingredients in her proven recipe for success. She begins with hard work, success. She began with hard work, to which she added a measure of risk, a willingness "to risk security for opportunity." The third component necessary to success is a sense of humor, and the fourth a balancing sense of humility.

Dr. Shalala emphasized as the final item in her list the fact that "you've got to love your work." She

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Product Fair

Finding a product which is both easy to produce and readily marketable is a problem which plagues many JA companies. The NAJAC Product Fair offers a solution to this problem by giving delegates a chance to examine and ask questions about some of the best JA products in the country.

The Product Fair will be held tomorrow afternoon from 4 to 6 p.m. in the McNutt Flame Room. A representative from each company will be present to talk about his product.

"The value of the fair is that the product is on display along with the Achiever," stated Tony Vendely, display coordinator. "This way you can ask questions and get answers about materials and difficulties with the product."

The Commercial Develop-

ment Association is sponsoring the Product Fair, and is providing trophies, plaques and cash prizes for the top products. Awards will be given for first, second and third places, and "Most Original" product.

In addition, the 50 top products will be named "semi-finalists" and will be photographed to appear in the National Product Idea Book, according to Vendely.

The contest will be judged by representatives from the Commercial Development Association. The judges will be guided by the requirements for a successful product listed in the JA Company Manual.

In order to qualify for the Product Fair a product must have produced \$600 in sales and must not be a kit or commercial product.

One, Two, Three, Yea . . .

Cincy Trade Fair super

There has to be a reason why the Cincinnati Trade Fair is one of the largest and most successful in the country. It could be that it is almost entirely organized by Achievers.

Over 75,000 people accepted invitations in television commercials by the Cincinnati Zoo's noted "Eddie the Chimp" and crowded into the Cincinnati Convention Center to be entertained, talk to local celebrities, and buy JA products from the 150 booths at the "world's largest trade fair."

The fair climaxes each JA year for the 120 Cincinnati JA companies and guest companies which come from five states to set up booths. Not only is it a major source of income for many companies (the average sales figure for a company at the two-day fair was over \$400.00), but the extraordinary amount of planning, work, and ticket sales which precede the event present a challenge for any Achiever willing to do the work.

Achievers do the greater part of planning, organizing, and running the Cincinnati Trade Fair. Early in January a series of chairpersons are

appointed. These Achievers, and the committees which they organize, will spend the next four months plastering the greater Cincinnati area with signs and handbills, gathering door prizes from local merchants, and selling Trade Fair tickets.

"It's like having a full-time job," reflected Jamie Decker, a senior Achiever who served as general co-chairperson of the 1976 Fair. "You have to motivate the Achievers to sell tickets and put up signs. There's a lot of organization before, during and after the fair."

Don DiGiovanele, a junior who served as the other general co-chairperson, agrees. "I had something to do every night starting the middle of January," he stated.

Jamie, Don, and the other top Achievers who chair the door prize, publicity, backstage, door, and information committees are introduced to Cincinnati Achievers at the annual Trade Fair rally. The 1976 rally, which was attended by over 1,000 enthusiastic Achievers, was held at Convention Center on a Sunday afternoon in mid-January.

Following a huge pep rally, the Achievers were fed all the chili dogs they could eat and treated to a dance.

The main purpose of this rally is to create enthusiasm for the sale of trade fair tickets. The day following the rally the first batch of tickets are issued and for the next 11 weeks Achievers nightly await the announcement of which of the four JA centers is leading in sales money collected. One of the top priorities at company meetings becomes the collection of "ticket money."

Each ticket sells for \$1.00 and is divided into three sections. The first entitles one adult to admission to the trade fair and to the rock concert which annually features four local bands on the night before the fair.

The middle section is redeemable for one free Big Mac at any McDonald's in the Cincinnati area.

The remainder of the ticket serves as a raffle ticket stub which is removed at the time of purchase and turned in by the Achiever. Ticket purchasers are eligible for awards of a Hawaiian vacation and over 250 other door prizes whether or not they

attend the fair.

Sales incentives for the Achievers are high. For selling between 25 and 360 tickets an Achiever can win an all-expense paid trip to an area amusement park, a Reds ballgame, a four-day vacation in Gatlinberg, Tennessee or a week-long vacation in Daytona Beach, Florida.

More than ticket sales are needed to put together the trade fair, however. Committees of Achievers deluge greater Cincinnati with thousands of signs, which appear in store windows, vacant buildings, and are even taped on downtown trash cans. Handbills are passed out in shopping centers and downtown. Restaurants are provided with paper placemats advertising the fair. Achievers are chosen to appear on six radio and six television specials. Commercials featuring Achievers, Ronald McDonald, Eddie the Chimp and Lou Grohen, the President of Cincinnati McDonald's appear on prime time television.

All the publicity appears to pay off. This year, on opening day the Convention Center was packed wall-to-wall with people enjoying the carnival atmosphere, despite a beautiful spring day outside. Meanwhile, the shows were running on time. Uncle Al, a local kid show host was doing his act on stage; trained zoo animals, a high school band and a karate demonstration would follow. The kiddie rides were whirling and spinning, balloons bobbed through the air, and everywhere, Achievers were selling their company products.

Despite all the hours of work, and all the worry and hassle of putting on the fair, Jamie and Don both think the personal rewards they gained far outweighed the trouble caused by the fair.

"I improved my sales ability and really learned to work with other people," said Don.

"There's a lot of competition, and you learn how to keep pace among Achievers," Jamie agreed.

When asked if they would do it all over again, both co-chairpersons responded with an unequivocal "yes."

"I would consider it a great honor to be chosen again next year," Don asserted.

Jeff Kreidenweis, co-program director of the Cincinnati program, was chairperson of the 1973 trade fair. He reflected that watching the Olympics on television several weeks ago made him consider the future of Cincinnati's fair.

"I was watching the games," he explained, "and one of the commentators mentioned the fact that every four years more and more records get broken and he wondered where it was going to end. When I ran the fair three years ago I remember thinking that it couldn't get any bigger, and it's tripled in size since then. The record just keeps getting broken and I just don't know where it's going to end."

Food: tons of it

NAJAC food. Some delegates praise it as absolutely terrific, while others maintain that what the cafeterias serve is not food at all, but rather some kind of synthetic substitute. Regardless of which view one holds, however, it must be

admitted that there is a lot of it being served.

Take breakfast, for instance. At McNutt dining room alone, in one morning 90 dozen (1,080) eggs will be prepared, along with 1,150 sweet rolls. And these figures are only for

the slightly more than 40% of conference delegates that eat at McNutt.

Mrs. Marguerite Puckett, food manager for McNutt, has the job of planning all the meals we will be eating during the week. She explained that for just one of the upcoming lunches it was necessary to order 198 lbs. of bacon, 100 lbs. of tomatoes, and 600 lbs. of watermelon. Her full-time staff of 90 will also be baking 2,400 chocolate chip cookies.

"Everything is made right here," Mrs. Puckett continued. "Everything is done on a schedule. We strive to prepare all the meals as close to serving time as possible."

Mrs. Puckett also commented that desserts are a favorite part of NAJAC meals.

"Ice cream is very popular," she added. "And the roast beef sandwiches we had on Monday went over better than hamburgers and cheeseburgers."

One new innovation at NAJAC mealtime this year has been the addition of the salad bars at each of the three dorm cafeterias.

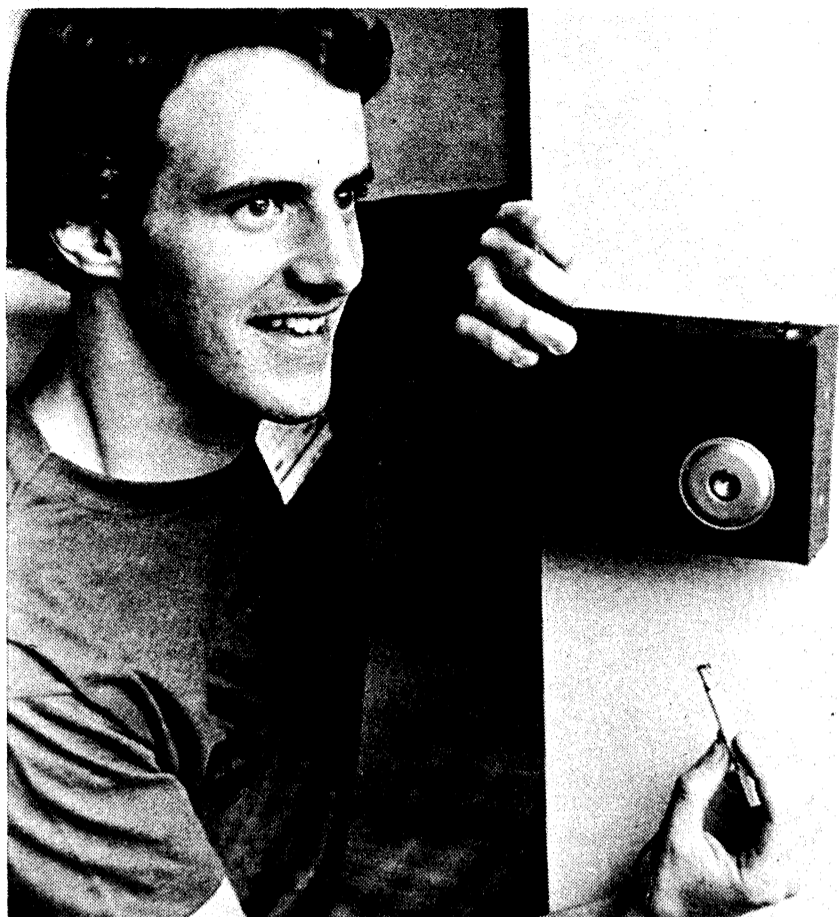
"We've gotten a lot of favorable comments about the salad bar," Mrs. Puckett stated. "They're so popular in restaurants we thought we'd try them here. It makes it seem more like eating out."

Complaints about cafeteria food are likely to continue indefinitely, rather like death and taxes. There is always the person who finds a brighter side to matters, however. One staff member was heard to comment this week that NAJAC food was a real break from his regular diet — TV dinners prepared in a microwave oven.



It's the thought . . .

Enthusiasm is the key to everything that goes on at NAJAC — even the long trek to the auditorium. These Achievers had the right idea, but the camera saw things in a different way than they.



Buffalo Achiever and inventor Jim Wilber demonstrates the smoke detector he designed.

Coin business booms in N.Y.

A nickel is always worth five cents, right?

Not to a person who has been collecting coins since the age of five, and certainly not when at the age of eighteen that same person forms his own business dedicated to the collection and sale of coins, medals, and currency.

Common Cents Coins, Inc., one of the newest businesses in Buffalo, N.Y., is owned and operated by David Gianturco, 1976 president of PROMETHEAN ENTERPRISES, a Junior Achievement Company sponsored by the Zonta Club of Buffalo. Together with his partner, an area accountant, Dave incorporated in January. Since then the business has reached a \$20,000 sales volume, and Dave has bought out his partner.

What makes a high school senior

decide to take the risks of the business world? JA had a lot to do with Dave's decision. "I never thought of myself as a businessperson until I hit JA," he says. "I always thought I'd go into social work or teaching. Then I discovered how challenging the business world can be."

Dave had been working in the coin department of a local retail store for several years. With his experience, he was beginning to feel overqualified for the job and decided to learn the business of coin appraisal. That led him to the formation of his own business. Being president of his JA company for three years gave him the confidence necessary to try it on his own. "I learned a lot in the incorporation process," he relates, "and I've discovered that running a real business is just like running a JA company, only with ten times the paper work."

The incorporation process in New York State requires a \$60.00 fee for the incorporation itself and \$500.00 for lawyer's fees. The reason Dave decided on a corporation rather than a partnership is right out of the JA manual — the limited liability of a corporation as opposed to a partnership.

Dave likens Common Cents Coins to a JA service company because of the many services he provides to his clients. He appraises coins, fills bulk and individual orders which involve buying and selling, and gives advice to people interested in coins for investment purposes.

Dave's parents have been behind him all the way in his experiment, but they did worry in the beginning. Coin dealers often run the risk of being robbed.

Dave overcame their fears by taking his personal coin collection from home and putting it in a bank safety deposit box. All of his business coins are kept in a vault at a location in downtown Buffalo where he maintains an office. His own advice to anyone with a valuable coin collection is: "Keep it in the bank. Under no circumstances should valuable coins be kept at home."

How does Dave keep up a schedule which sometimes requires up to 50 hours a week with the business, a full load at school, Junior Achievement, a Coin and Stamp Club, and various other activities? "I believe that a person can make time," he states confidently. "Everyone is given the same number of hours in the day, but the way they are used determines success or failure."

Dave's business abilities and organizational skills paid an additional dividend this year when he was named a national finalist in the Best Salesperson Contest in St. Louis.

David Gianturco hasn't decided if Common Cents Coins will be his life's work, but he is making definite strides toward placing his mark on the business world.

Buffalo Achievers design, market smoke detector

Any above-average JA company with dreams of success realizes the importance of good product research and development. It is the rare company, however, which is lucky enough to have a member with either the skill or ambition of Jim Wilber of Buffalo, N.Y.

Jim estimates that he spent over 700 hours designing and perfecting the complicated electronic circuitry which went into his company's rather unique product — a smoke detector system.

A smoke detector is a small box which emits loud beeping noises when an unusual amount of smoke is in the area. The original detector which Jim designed for his JA company, Promethean Enterprises, used a heat sensor to initiate the warning beeps. Although the company members were very interested in the idea of a fire prevention device, they were hesitant to produce it when they found out that it is generally not the heat of a fire which kills people, but rather the smoke.

Jim then went to work on developing a device which works on an "electric eye" principal, similar to the ones used to keep automatic elevator doors open.

The device is contained in a box which must be completely opaque, so light does not interfere with the light beam in the electric eye, and yet must permit air to enter freely. When the air becomes cloudy with smoke, it breaks the beam of light and sets off an 80-decibel horn.

The completed detector is less than four inches high. It runs on the power of 4 D cell batteries, which will last for a year. When the power in the batteries gets low, the detector begins emitting beeps around 20 seconds

apart to indicate that new ones are needed.

Jim, a 17-year-old senior this fall, has had no electronics training. He explained that his knowledge stems from "a lot of reading" which he has been doing for the last eight years.

One of the drawbacks of the detector was that the amount of time taken to perfect the unit took its toll on sales time.

We wanted to make a quality device," Jim commented. "After all, we knew that people would be staking their lives on it.

"At first we didn't know if the idea was feasible," he continued. "But when I had developed the first model at the end of December the company went into production of the metal enclosures. The final, improved model wasn't finished until March."

The materials for the detector cost about \$9.00, and the unit sold for \$15.00. The average cost of a similar, commercially available unit is \$39.00, according to Jim.

"Although our detector is not UL approved, it does meet UL specifications," Jim explained. "To get it approved would have taken about five months and \$5,000, neither of which we had."

Promethian Enterprises sold 12 of the units at \$15.00 each. This income, combined with sales money from the company's other seven products added up to \$805 in company sales.

Jim maintains that all the hours he spent working on the unit were "unquestionably worthwhile."

"One of the best ways to learn is to get involved in a problem," Jim explained. "You run into bugs so you hit the books and learn from them."

His research also led to a part-time job with CR Research, a Buffalo company specializing in electronics.

This summer Jim has worked on perfecting a warning system for helicopters.

"The job has worked out really well," Jim commented. "I know that working in electronics is what I really want to do."

Now that the device is perfected, Jim figures he has several choices.

"I could either set up my own company, go for UL approval, and start making them," Jim said, "or I could sell the rights to the circuit.

"It's not a product that every JA company could make," he continued. "But I'd like to be president of my company next year, and it's possible that we'll make them again."

Dr. Shalala speaks

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has repeated her recipe many times over, giving rise to a lengthy list of professional achievements. In addition to her responsibilities on the Big Mac board, she also serves as an associate professor on the staff of Columbia University. A book she is authoring about New York city finances is due to be released this fall.

Her appearance at NAJAC also gives Dr. Shalala the opportunity for reunion with several old friends. Jack Spisak, last year's Distinguished Graduate Achiever, participated with her through the Junior Achievement program in Cleveland, Ohio. Henry Heffner, presently a JA regional vice president, was also part of the old team as the executive director of Cleveland JA.

Hats top it all off



New look in training

One of the most vital aspects of Junior Achievement may be taking on a new look in the next few years. The National Research and Development Department is now experimenting with ways to improve the local areas' officer training programs.

The traditional approach to training JA company officers has been a one-day seminar which begins with a motivational speaker — one whose job is to build enthusiasm among the prospective officers — and concludes with each officer group being briefed on their responsibilities by resource personnel.

An alternative to this approach is now being tested in Toledo, Ohio. It incorporates a little more of the "learn by doing" concept into the training. During the first session the officers are shown how to keep their records by a resource person, who demonstrates with a replica of the actual records and fictional figures. After a lunch break, the entire group reconvenes, this time with each company's officers intact as a team.

Using the closing figures for a typical November, the officers are

given a case study which requires them to enter December's figures on their own. They are also expected to prepare their reports for the January meeting of the board of directors. This method gives the officers practical experience at their record-keeping duties and stresses the need for cooperation among the officers in preparing for their monthly board meeting.

In addition, to simulate the decision-making responsibility of an officer, they are asked to make a marketing decision. With the cost figures they have already calculated they are asked to determine whether it is more profitable to sell their product in large quantities at a wholesale price or singly at a retail price.

Another approach to officer training makes more of a change in the basic approach. It is founded on a complete "management by objective" strategy. The officers meet with their advisers at the advisers' plant or office, and plan the goals and objectives for the company's entire year. Cost, pricing, and profit decisions are discussed, phases of the production process are evaluated,

and methods of sales training are proposed.

The uniqueness of this process is that it may be repeated at anytime during the year. When a company is having difficulties, this meeting may be held to re-evaluate its goals and

objectives. Problems may be discussed and solutions suggested.

Both of these methods are still experimental, but if they are successful it is hoped they will help JA company officers learn their jobs.

'76 delegates rock to 'Wolfman' and 'Records'

For years one of the most popular pastimes of NAJAC delegates has been dancing to the live bands that have rocked the Conference with music. One request often heard from delegates about the music was simple:

"More, More, More . . ."

This year the requests have been answered with the establishment of the first NAJAC disco in the Flame Room of McNutt.

Hosting the event for three nights this week from 10 p.m. to 11:15 p.m. have been Rob "Records" Ray and Big Al "Wolfman" Vacanti, who came prepared with "stacks of wax," and requested everyone at the

Conference to "come on out and grab a piece of the floor." "Wolfman" and "Records" are sharing their record supply with the participants in their pink fink-judged dance contest. Two skillful winning couples will each receive two albums for their ability to brilliantly boogie across the Flame Room floor.

All in all, it's the best disco jock and comedy patter team to hit the NAJAC stage ever. (It's also the first disco jock and comedy patter team, etc. . . .) They've promised to do their utmost to assure that as Achievers leave the Flame Room Tuesday, they'll be saying:

"Oh, What a Night . . ."