



### **MEC-CBP (Springfield) sponsors 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Junior Achievement Entrepreneurship Summit**

Junior Achievement of Greater Washington and Community Business Partnership sponsored the first JA® Entrepreneurship Summit for rising 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade students, held on August 8 to 10. The summit provided an unforgettable experience by giving high school students access to mentors and the opportunity to work together and innovate.

Community Business Partnership sponsored the event and provided valuable staff resources to ensure the success of the summit. Debbie Dever, Business Incubation Center Director (MEC-Community Business Partnership) was an event organizer and team mentor. One of her team participants, Zorrie Jones was presented with the “JA Rising Star” award. Other CBP staff members were critical to the success of the event. Juli Monroe and Jessica Smith (CBP - Women’s Business Center) presented “5 Steps to Marketing”. Patti Senft (CBP-Veteran’s Business Outreach Center) facilitated the “Pitch Like A Pro” workshop and coached the teams in preparation for the final Shark Tank-style competition. Sheina Waddell (CBP-Training Coordinator) was a pitch facilitator.

Over the course of three days, students were introduced to the Design Thinking/Lean Start-Up model. Each team was challenged with identifying a specific problem within the food waste realm and creating an innovative solution that addressed that problem. With the guidance of team mentors, workshop facilitators and consultants, each team developed solutions that they ultimately pitched Shark Tank-style.

Throughout the summit, students participated in mini-workshops and challenges that developed both technical skills and soft skills. These skills are not only important to being a successful entrepreneur but also prepare students to meet the demands of a rapidly changing economy in a variety of professions and careers.

To see video highlights from the summit, go to: <https://vimeo.com/178516113>