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**The Idea Village and Brees Dream Foundation Partner with Junior Achievement of Greater New Orleans, Inc.**

*The Trust Your Crazy Ideas Challenge will grow student participation in local entrepreneurial movement*

**New Orleans, LA (September 29, 2014)** – Today, The Idea Village and the Brees Dream Foundation announce that Junior Achievement of Greater New Orleans (JAGNO) will be taking on the *Trust Your Crazy Ideas Challenge*. Founded in 2009 by Brittany and Drew Brees of the Brees Dream Foundation in partnership with The Idea Village, the *Trust Your Crazy Ideas Challenge* is an annual entrepreneurship program and competition for local high school students.

“The Idea Village is dedicated to building a vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem in New Orleans,” said Tim Williamson, Co-founder and CEO of The Idea Village. “The strategic decision to transition the operations of the *Trust your Crazy Ideas Challenge* over to Junior Achievement ensures long-term sustainability of the program and increased engagement of New Orleans’ next generation of leaders in the entrepreneurial movement.”

Last year, Junior Achievement saw great success with the introduction of their JA Be Entrepreneurial curriculum, reaching 1,400 local students from 19 different schools and culminating in the inaugural The Junior Idea Challenge during Youth Entrepreneurship Day at New Orleans Entrepreneur Week. The 4<sup>th</sup> annual *Trust your Crazy Ideas Challenge* engaged 48 students from eight schools and also culminated during Youth Entrepreneurship Day.

Building on this momentum, the Brees Dream Foundation and JAGNO are joining forces to grow the reach and impact of the *Trust Your Crazy Ideas Challenge*, now a combination of both programs, to engage over 2,500 students. It will culminate in Youth Entrepreneurship Day on Saturday, March 21, 2014, during the 7<sup>th</sup> annual New Orleans Entrepreneur Week, where the winner will walk away with a \$10,000 continuing education fund and \$5,000 for their school, courtesy of The Brees Dream Foundation. The pitch event will just be one component of Youth Entrepreneurship Day, an open celebration of high school students doing great things in New Orleans that will be produced by JAGNO and The Idea Village.

“The City of New Orleans is known for its creative talent and its position as a hub for startups,” said Jack Brancewicz, JAGNO President. “To sustain this, we need to continue to build our bench strength by educating and inspiring the youth of New Orleans to embrace their entrepreneurial spirit through programs like the *Trust Your Crazy Ideas Challenge*.”

“Every kid has a dream, they just need someone to believe in them,” said Drew Brees, Quarterback of the New Orleans Saints and Co-Founder of The Brees Dream Foundation. “That’s what the *Trust Your Crazy Ideas Challenge* is all about; surrounding students with people, opportunities, and resources that can help make their dream a reality.”

“We hope that the lessons learned during this program will become lifelong skills, benefitting the students into their careers and beyond,” said Brittany Brees, co-founder of the Brees Dream Foundation.

In order to be eligible to participate in the 2014-2015 *Trust Your Crazy Ideas Challenge*, students will have to complete Junior Achievement’s JA Be Entrepreneurial curriculum, a hands-on, experiential learning program taught by business volunteers and teachers, resulting in a completed and practical business plan. Registration is now open. Visit [trustyourcrazyideaschallenge.org](http://trustyourcrazyideaschallenge.org) to learn more and apply.

Over the last two years, The Idea Village has delegated other critical initiatives to strategic partners in an effort to scale the impact of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in New Orleans. Most recently, the organization announced the transfer of an innovation center in the Upper Ninth Ward to Urban League of Greater New Orleans and the selection of Propeller: A Force for Social Innovation, to grow the nationally acclaimed Water Challenge. In 2012, The Idea Village transitioned the Education Entrepreneur Challenge to 4.0 Schools.

***About The Idea Village***

In 2000, The Idea Village was formed by a group of New Orleans citizens who believed entrepreneurship is a catalyst for positive change. The Idea Village formalized in 2002 as an independent 501c3 non-profit organization with a mission to identify, support, and retain entrepreneurial talent in New Orleans by providing direct service to high impact entrepreneurs, educating the broader community, and supporting initiatives that strengthen our entrepreneurial infrastructure. From 2009-2014, The Idea Village has provided direct support to over 3,411 New Orleans entrepreneurs by engaging over 2,600 professionals to allocate 68,543 consulting hours and \$2.5 million in seed capital. In addition, The Idea Village hosts New Orleans Entrepreneur Week, a business festival that has become the platform for the New Orleans entrepreneurial ecosystem. [www.ideavillage.org](http://www.ideavillage.org)

***About Junior Achievement***

Junior Achievement of Greater New Orleans (JAGNO) delivers a variety of educational programs in finance and economics presented to children in Kindergarten through twelfth grade. In the 2013-2014 school year, JAGNO with its many volunteers, touched the lives of more than 28,000 Southeast Louisiana students. For more information on JAGNO, visit [www.jagno.org](http://www.jagno.org), call (504) 569-8650 or connect with JAGNO on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) (@JANewOrleans).

***About The Brees Dream Foundation***

The Brees Dream Foundation was founded in 2003 with a mission to advance research in the fight against cancer to provide care, education, and opportunities for children and families in need. Brittany and Drew Brees and The Brees Dream Foundation have collectively contributed more than \$20,000,000 to charitable causes and academic institutions globally. [www.drewbrees.com](http://www.drewbrees.com)

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