

Sussex County Teen Represents Delaware during “One-Millionth JAG Student” Event in Washington, D.C.

Wilmington, DE – Formed in Delaware over three decades ago by Governor Pete du Pont, Jobs for America’s Graduates (JAG) celebrates an important milestone today, with the enrollment of the one-millionth student (full JAG release below). Governor Markell now chairs the organization.

Representing the First State at the celebration is Laurel Senior High School student Da’Shalyn Barnes. President of her local chapter of Jobs for Delaware’s Graduates (JDG), Da’Shalyn also serves as secretary for the Delaware State Career Association as well as The National Honor Society, and is a representative of the Student Government Association. Her full bio is attached. She and Markell will participate in today’s National Leadership Awards Luncheon in Washington, where 31 students (one from each state with a JAG program) will represent the “One-Millionth JAG Student.” They will join 250 leaders from business, government, education, and communities who support and invest their time and reputations in the work of Jobs for America’s Graduates.

Media interested in speaking with the Governor or others involved in today’s JAG celebration should contact Jonathon Dworkin at 302-233-6695 or jonathon.dworkin@delaware.gov.

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ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE “ONE-MILLIONTH JAG STUDENT”

Jobs for America’s Graduates, a national non-profit with 35 years of experience in helping some of the nation’s most at-

risk young people succeed in school and on the job, announces the enrollment of the *one-millionth student* since the inception of the organization under the leadership of Governor Pete du Pont in 1979.

Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) now operates in 1,000 classroom sites in 31 states. It provides intensive employability skills training, motivational student organization activities, remediation, academic support, and problem-solving for external issues that affect young men and women. JAG students receive a full 12 months of follow-up after graduation to ensure their successful transition into work, higher education, or both.

The results of JAG have been consistent for 34 years:

1. **Dramatically increasing graduation rates to 90% or above.**
2. ***Doubling*** the rates that poor, disadvantaged, and young people of color are able to secure jobs and ***tripling*** the rates that they secure full-time employment.
3. **Increasing the rates of both higher education enrollment and completion** for this same population – almost all first-generation college students.

Governor Jack Markell of Delaware serves as Chair of the Board of Jobs for America's Graduates and nine other Governors serve on the Board, along with "C-suite" executives of the Fortune 500, the U.S. President of the United Way Worldwide, and the Presidents of the Business Roundtable and the National Urban League.

Governor Markell highlighted the "One-Millionth JAG Student" milestone by stating that it is "*a special pleasure for all of us in Delaware who, for 35 years, have seen what an extraordinary value Jobs for America's Graduates brings to young people. It is a record of hope, opportunity, and delivery on the promise of jobs and higher education success*

for our young people.”

The “One-Millionth JAG Student” will be celebrated at the JAG *National Leadership Awards Luncheon* at noon on November 20 at the Marriott Marquis Hotel in Washington, DC. More than 600 young leaders from around the country will attend, including those 31 who have been selected (one from each JAG state) to represent the “One-Millionth JAG Student.” They will join 250 leaders from business, government, education, and communities who support and invest their time and reputations in the work of Jobs for America’s Graduates.

“[Before JAG] I had no direction in life and really felt that I would never do anything in my life. That is all in my past now. I know I belong in JAG. I know that I am loved and cared for. I know that I can achieve great things – things I never imagined at one point in my life. I have a plan for a wonderful future, for JAG has given me hope!” said Autumn Keith, Jobs for Georgia’s Graduates One-Millionth JAG Student representative.

In addition to Governor Jack Markell, it is anticipated that Governors Jay Nixon of Missouri, Phil Bryant of Mississippi, and John de Jongh, Jr. of the Virgin Islands (all JAG Board members) will attend. Senator Tom Carper of Delaware (Vice Chair of the Board during his years as Governor of Delaware) will also participate at the event.

Governor Phil Bryant will become the JAG Chairman on January 1, 2015. Regarding his attendance at this special event, the Governor stated that he is *“humbled to be the Chair-elect of this high impact, proven program. I look forward to continuing our efforts in Mississippi to grow Jobs for Mississippi Graduates from the current 50 to 100 programs, and as Chair I will work to increase the number of JAG programs across the country as we look ahead to serving the next one million JAG students.”*

The event will highlight the remarkably generous investment of USA Funds in the work of Jobs for America's Graduates and its new direction, to help ensure that JAG's students achieve a higher level of success in graduation, higher education, and employment. At the Luncheon, USA Funds will receive the **National Student Investor of the Year Award** for its investments in JAG and several other initiatives in various states to improve students' successful enrollment in and completion of higher education.

McKinsey & Company will be recognized for launching its "Generation" Initiative that, over the next four years, will engage 250,000 young men and women in the U.S. in a new form of engagement with employers to provide intensive training over 8-12 weeks, followed by two-month internships. McKinsey & Company will receive the **National Youth Employment Partnership Award** for its leadership in building new relationships and connections between prospective employers and young people as they graduate from high school.