



Hints of Hope

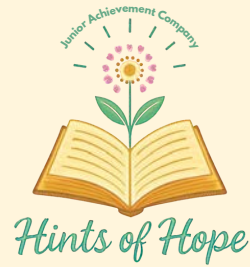
ANNUAL REPORT 2026

Hints Today, Hope Tomorrow

Sales:
227 units

Profit Margin:
56%

Sales Revenue:
\$4676.10



Executive Summary

Junior Achievement Company 2026

Company Overview

Hints of Hope was created to combat the negativity and hopelessness in today's world. Our journal guides users through simple tasks that encourage spreading real acts of kindness. It's more than just a journal, it's a movement built on the belief that small acts of kindness can make a big impact. Our mission is, to help make the world a better place, one page at a time.

Our Product

The Hints of Hope Kindness Journal is an interactive guide that helps individuals, especially students, make a meaningful impact in their communities. With over 90 different acts of kindness, each page includes a task, an explanation of why it matters, reflection prompts, and a hope tracker (small suns that can be filled in to track your hope for that task), with space to document service hours at the back of the journal. It also features resources and inspiring stories to encourage continued acts of kindness, allowing users to spread hope while growing personally.



Executive Summary

Do you ever turn on the news or scroll through social media and feel overwhelmed by the constant stream of negativity? It can sometimes seem like discouraging stories dominate our feeds and headlines. We noticed that too, and that's exactly where Hints of Hope steps in. Hints of Hope was created to combat that negativity within our own community and replace it with something stronger: hope, kindness, and action. The real issue isn't that people don't care, it's that many simply don't know where to begin or feel they lack the motivation to take that first step. The idea of "making a difference" can feel overwhelming. We've all heard that you don't have to travel to the ends of the earth to create change. Sometimes, the most meaningful impact comes from the smallest gestures: a kind note, a helping hand, a moment of encouragement. That's what Hints of Hope is here to do: provide simple, achievable ways for anyone to start spreading positivity right where they are.

-Henry Kocher CEO



Hints of Hope

Meet Our Team



Henry Kocher -CEO



Jolene Wakeley -VP



Lily Sims- Sales



Jake Foy- Marketing



Leila Gardener-Young -
Public Relations



Shonney Murphy-
Production



Andrew Galvin -
Finance



Hinty the Hopeful
Bear

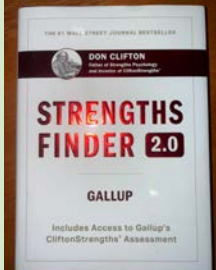


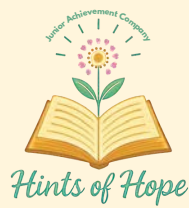
Teachers- Michael Nieporte & James Halmasy
 Volunteer- Emily Clark
 School- GlenOak High School
 Junior Achievement of North Central Ohio



Building a Team

- First 3 months: workshops, activities, and challenges preparing us to run a business.
- Completed personality tests (driver, analytical, amiable, expressive) to identify strengths and assign roles.
- Participated in leadership challenges and group activities.
- Formal interview process: management team (CEO & VP) and students interviewed each other.
- Management reviewed resumés and recommended roles.
- Teachers finalized teams based on personality fit and skills.





Leadership & Organization

Company Culture

We celebrate milestones like reaching sales targets, and team accomplishments such as success at local competitions with cookie cake, always recognizing everyone's hard work. We stayed connected through a group chat and did a lot of team bonding while completing tasks and after selling events, including trips to the zoo, fun business events, coffee outings, and more.



Cookie Cake celebrations



Team bonding at the Zoo



Chamber of Commerce

Organization & Structure

This year, we embraced democratic, servant-oriented, and transformational leadership, creating a team where every voice mattered and decisions were made collectively. Growth, learning, and doing our best were prioritized over perfection. Every member is passionate about our mission, and we foster collaboration so everyone can contribute meaningfully. While each person has specific roles, it's the combined effort, creativity, and dedication of the team that brings our product to life. We are more than coworkers, we are a community connected by friendship, shared values, and the goal of making the world a little brighter.



Team bonding at the Zoo



Stark Tank Support



JumpStart Presentations Visit

Maximizing Business Performance

Throughout the year, we identified that our team needed better organization and accountability to improve efficiency. After receiving feedback from our teachers, we implemented a structured task-tracking spreadsheet to clearly assign responsibilities and deadlines. This system improved communication, increased accountability, and strengthened our overall business performance.



Hints of Hope

— Innovation Process Discovery —

The Problem

With so much negativity in the news and on social media, we realized we were waiting for change instead of creating it. We knew students needed an easier way to complete service hours for graduation, but didn't know where to start. That's why we created a product that makes volunteering fun, simple, and impactful.

64% of Americans say social media negatively affects the country according to pewresearchcenter.org

but only 28% of people aged 16+ volunteer according to census.gov

Product Design & Testing

To launch Hints of Hope, we set out with one clear goal: spread hope in meaningful, accessible ways. We knew making a difference didn't require grand gestures, it could start right in our own community. Our original concept was a card-based game featuring categories like Free, Pay It Forward, and Faith-Based.

Rather than abandoning the vision, we refined it. We transitioned to a 90+ day interactive kindness journal that not only guides participants through intentional acts of kindness but also provides space for personal reflection. This shift strengthened our mission: we're not just encouraging people to perform kind acts, we're building a movement rooted in reflection, impact, and lasting change. However, this model also came with its struggles. We hand-designed every page of our journal on Canva. While this was time-consuming, it allowed us to prioritize the quality of our product.

First Prototype



Final Product





Hints of Hope Innovation Process Market Analysis

Competitor

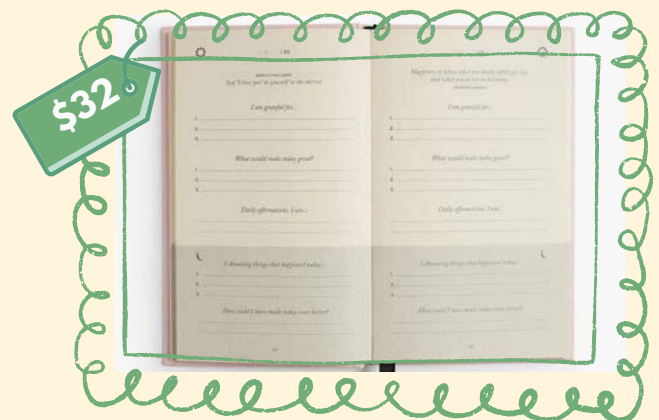
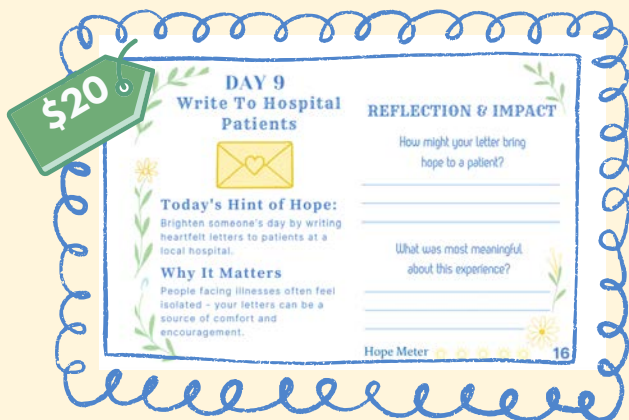
Our main competitor is The Five Minute Journal, sold on Amazon for about \$32. It promotes positivity through daily gratitude writing and inspirational quotes. Unlike The Five Minute Journal, Hints of Hope goes further by offering guided activities, curated quotes, moral check-ins, and structured reflections, creating a more engaging and action-oriented personal growth experience.



Our Competitive Advantages

- Over 90 interactive kindness challenges designed to inspire real change
- Weekly reflection pages to encourage personal growth
- Tear-out task pages for activities like leaving uplifting notes for others
- A community service hour tracker for logging acts of kindness
- Stories of strength and inspiration to motivate and uplift
- Additional support resources for organizations
- Personal notes from our team
- Sponsor highlights and certification of completion

| Feature / Resource | Hints of Hope Kindness | The Five Minute Journal |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Action-based kindness activities | ✓ | ✗ |
| 90+ interactive challenges | ✓ | ✗ |
| Guided reflection pages | ✓ | ✓ |
| Curated quotes | ✓ | ✓ |
| Moral check-ins | ✓ | ✗ |





Hints of Hope

Innovation Process Product overview

Inside the Journal

Our interactive kindness journal includes over 90 guided acts and reflections to inspire positive growth and real community impact.

At Home, real life actions

Why it matters

Reflections for each week

Date + task done

Day 62
Paint Small Rocks

REFLECTION & IMPACT
What message did you add to your rock?

Where did you place it, and why?

Today's Hint of Hope:
Spread joy in unexpected places. Paint rocks with kind messages and place them along trails, at parks, etc.

Why It Matters
Kindness rocks are a fun, artistic way to bring an instant burst of happiness to those who find them.

Hope Meter 81

WEEKLY REFLECTION & STORY OF HOPE
A week of small acts can bloom into lasting change.

What moment from this week made you feel most hopeful?

Was there someone whose kindness, actions, or words encouraged you?

What did you learn about spreading hope this week?

Story of Hope
The Little Free Library Movement
In 2010, Michael Lomonaco, a former school teacher, noticed that the little free libraries were a great way to spread kindness and literacy in their own neighborhoods, and started a small business that would fund the creation of these libraries across the country.
Today, there are over 1,400+ Little Free Libraries across the country.

Quote of the Week
"We can't help everyone, but everyone can help someone." — Ronald Reagan

14

COMMUNITY SERVICE HOURS TRACKER

| DATE | WHAT I DID | HOURS | SIGNATURES |
|------|------------|-------|------------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

150

Reflection

Hope meter

Real life stories

Quotes

Hours + Signatures

Outside the Journal

Hints of Hope features a hopeful and uplifting cover design, along with sponsor recognition and mission overview on the back.

Outside The Journal



Spiral binding for easy use

Hopeful, inspiring logo

Soft floral design matches the journals theme

Mission statement

Sponsor logos highlighted at the bottom

Inside The Journal

90+ Guided Reflections

Acts of kindness with thoughtful reflection prompts

Weekly Prompts

Questions to encourage personal growth

Service Tracker

Log service hours and acts of kindness

Stories of Strength

Inspirational real-life stories to encourage and uplift

Resource Pages

Helpful hotlines and resources, plus final reflection + certificate

Hope Meter

5 Star scale to help track personal well-being

Rip-out pages

Pages to rip out that relate to the task presented

Motivation pages

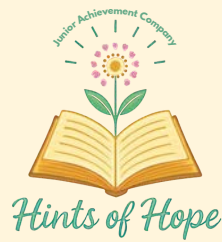
Pages throughout the journal that motivate you to keep going

Letters from the team

A page from each team member that includes advice

Sponsors Page

Informational page to contact our generous sponsors



Customer Elements

Target Market

Primary Target Customers:

- High school students in need of community service hours
- Families looking for meaningful activities to do together
- Churches & youth groups seeking structured service opportunities
- Gift buyers looking for intentional, purpose-driven gifts

Users:

Students, families, youth groups, and individuals who want to serve their community in a simple, guided way.

Path to Customers

- School & community selling events
- Partnerships with churches, youth groups & organizations
- Social media marketing (Insta, QR codes, word of mouth)
- Sponsor and community referrals



Customer Service & Sales Efforts

We focus on relationship-based selling by engaging customers face-to-face, explaining our mission, and sharing the impact of our journal. We prioritize responsiveness, thoughtful follow-ups, and community feedback to strengthen customer trust and satisfaction.

Customer Interactions

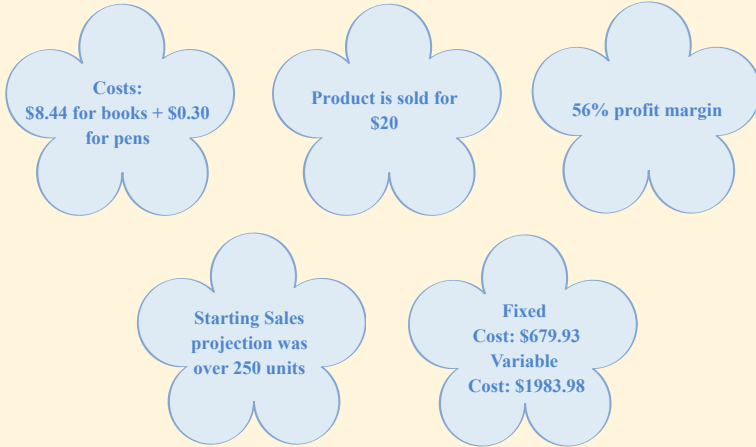
In the month of February, we hosted a Valentine's Day raffle featuring chocolates, lottery tickets, coupons from local businesses, and past JA products, with entry included in each journal purchase. As a team, we also handed out flowers and silly bands to customers at selling events, and many took photos with our mascot, Hinty the Hopeful Bear.





Hints of Hope

Business Performance



Cost Structure

- The team decided to create a journal as the product.
- A printing press was used because producing the journals ourselves would have taken too long.
- After speaking with several printing companies, the team chose Pinnacle Press.
- The entire team helped design each page of the journal.

Revenue Streams

We have sold our product at a variety of events, including the Hartville Marketplace and the Akron Home and Garden Show. We have also sold at school-related events such as performances, sports games, and speech and debate tournaments. Additionally, we leveraged our “low-hanging fruit” by selling to friends, family, and close acquaintances who were likely to support our company. We also reached youth groups and high school students, which align closely with our target B2C market. A large portion of our early revenue also came from sponsorships. We were lucky enough to have started our company with 600 dollars worth of capital and to have received a 600 dollar loan from Junior achievement. However, in order to begin producing our journals we acquired 15 sponsors who believed in our cause. Our team went door to door to local businesses asking them to support our mission of spreading kindness. We also earned 3rd place in Stark Tank, receiving \$1,000 to further support our business growth.





Finance Performance

Total Net Profit:
6373.65

Return on investment:
262%

Break-even:
56 units

Total units sold:
227 units

Sponsorship revenue:
\$1,750

Sales revenue:
\$4,676.10

Hints of Hope

Income Statement

Mar 25, 2026

Revenue

| | |
|-----------------------|------------|
| Sales | \$4,676.10 |
| Donations | \$183.13 |
| Sponsors | \$1,750 |
| Stark Tank | \$1,000 |
| Capital | \$600 |
| Neo High School Grant | \$500 |

Total Revenue \$8,709.23

Expenses

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| Cost of Goods Sold | \$1,852.88 |
| Advertising/Website Expense | \$49.93 |
| Sales Tax Payable | \$284.40 |
| Trade Show Booth Expense | \$190 |

Total Expenses \$2,377.21

Total Net Profit \$6,373.65

Profit Per Unit \$11.26

Break Even Analysis

The break-even analysis shows how many units we had to sell to cover our initial costs. Each journal & pen costs \$8.74 to produce and sells for \$20, giving a profit of \$11.26 per unit (56% profit margin). Our fixed costs total \$914.28. Dividing \$914.28 by the profit per unit of \$11.26 shows we had to sell about 56 units to break even. We accomplished this goal in the first week!

Hints of Hope

Balance Sheet

Mar 25, 2026

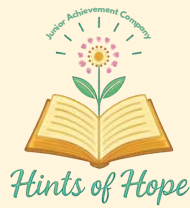
Assets

| | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| Cash (on hand) | \$306 |
| Checking Account | \$2,580.34 |
| Supplies | \$624.41 |
| Finished Goods | \$2,595.78 |
| Total Assets | \$6,106.53 |

Liabilities

| | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Accounts payable | \$630 |
| Sales Tax Payable | \$284.28 |
| Total Liabilities | \$914.28 |

Total Owners Equity \$5,192.25



— Learning Experiences & Future —

Successes

One of our biggest successes has been the positive impact our journal has had on the community. Through the Hints of Hope Kindness Journal, we encourage others to complete acts of kindness while also completing many of the tasks ourselves. This has allowed us to spread positivity and see how small actions can make people feel supported. We have also been able to reach even more people by sharing our mission through local news coverage.



Challenges

One challenge our team has faced is increasing social media engagement. While many people enjoy the journal, it has been difficult to encourage customers to consistently post using our hashtag. This has pushed us to think more creatively about how we promote our brand and motivate people to share their kindness experiences online.



Future Plans

Looking ahead, we plan to keep completing the Hints of Hope Kindness Journal tasks to continue spreading kindness and making a positive impact, not just for school, but because we believe in our mission.

Learning & Shaping

Throughout running our business, we learned many valuable lessons. One key area was inventory control, bringing the right amount of products to selling events. We also spent time learning what booth setup and displays attracted customers the most. Additionally, we worked on dividing responsibilities evenly so each team member contributes and the team stays organized.





One More Thing

Global Possibilities

The message behind the Hints of Hope Kindness Journal is universal. Acts of kindness matter in every community, so our product has the potential to reach people beyond our local area and inspire positivity in other regions and cultures. As we grow, we plan to expand our product line by creating different versions of the journal, including editions for each season, versions centered around various holidays, and translations in Spanish and other languages. We also aim to design journals that reflect different cultures as we expand into new countries. To reach these broader audiences, we will utilize social media and other digital platforms to share our message and connect with people around the world.

Connecting to New Markets

While our journal helps students earn community service hours, it can also appeal to families, teachers, youth groups, and community organizations looking for meaningful ways to give back.

Innovating

We can continue innovating by adding new tasks, creating updated editions of the journal, or developing a digital version that allows users to track their progress and share their kindness experiences.



Our Giveback

Our giveback comes from completing the kindness tasks in our journal to spread positivity in the community. From writing cards to hospital patients to giving flowers to teachers, we actively practice the message of our product. To us, this isn't just a product, it's an opportunity to help make the future brighter.



Hints of Hope

Thank You

Our participation in JA has been an incredible experience for our team. We have learned how to manage our time, market our product, and sell our pitch. We never dreamed our product could have success like this. We want to thank Junior Achievement for allowing us to participate in all the unique opportunities, our teachers for supporting us, and our volunteers for putting in the time to make us the best we can be. Thank you, Junior Achievement. We know that the experiences we have had together in the past year will stay with us throughout our professional careers.

-Hints of Hope Team



JA Company of the Year Competition