



The Faces of Jackson County

Partnership with a Business Project

Jefferson High School
Jefferson, Georgia
Chapter #4256

2018-2019



TABLE OF CONTENTS



Section	Page Number
Purpose.....	3-4
Partnership Goals	4-7
Chapter Involvement	7-8
Planning, Implementation, and Executions.....	8-9
Publicity Received	9-10
Benefits and Concepts Learned	11
Impact on Business and Chapter.....	12
Evaluation	13-14



Purpose

The Abernathy Cochran Group is a real estate group located in Hall County, Georgia, that is dedicated to assisting people with buying and selling their homes. Due to the multitude of real estate agents available in this area of Georgia, competition is immense. To meet this challenge, The Abernathy Cochran Group (ACG) came up with an idea that made their company unique and encouraged buyers and sellers to hire them. Thus, “The Faces of Hall



County” was developed into a website and social media platforms. This project spotlights a variety of people around the community, including, but not limited to entrepreneurs, doctors, teachers, restaurant owners, students, and veterans. This project has proven to be very successful, and it has received a lot of positive attention in the community.

However, ACG wanted to continue to promote their business through expanding the project to other nearby areas where they are providing real estate services, such as Jackson County. Mr. Brad



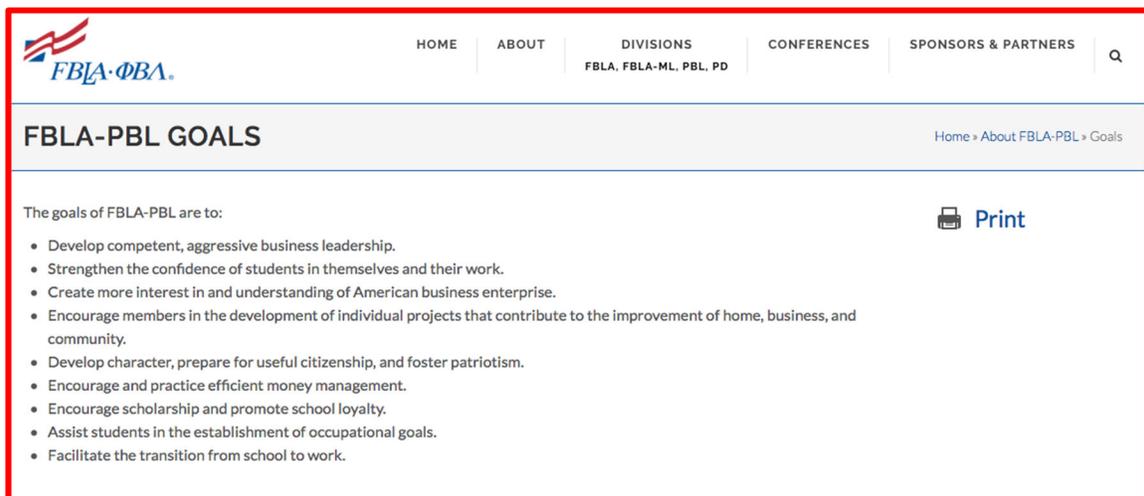
Abernathy, real estate agent and face behind this enterprise, then reached out to Jefferson High School and its’ CTAE department to seek help in interviewing candidates for The Faces of Jackson County. The Jefferson High School FBLA chapter eagerly stepped up to



the challenge of completing these interviews. The goals of ACG aligned perfectly with standards of two business classes offered at Jefferson High School (JHS): Business Communications and Entrepreneurship. It was a perfect partnership; ACG received help in conducting their interviews, and JHS students, along with FBLA members, were able to use their knowledge and gain real life experience.

Partnership Goals

The Future Business Leaders of America has a set of goals that it strives to assist its members with accomplishing. As you will see below, this Partnership with a Business Project aligns with seven of these nine goals.



The screenshot shows the FBLA-PBL Goals page. At the top left is the FBLA-Phi Kappa Phi logo. The navigation menu includes HOME, ABOUT, DIVISIONS (with a sub-menu for FBLA, FBLA-ML, PBL, PD), CONFERENCES, and SPONSORS & PARTNERS. The page title is "FBLA-PBL GOALS" and the breadcrumb trail is "Home » About FBLA-PBL » Goals". A "Print" button is visible on the right. The main content lists the goals of FBLA-PBL:

- Develop competent, aggressive business leadership.
- Strengthen the confidence of students in themselves and their work.
- Create more interest in and understanding of American business enterprise.
- Encourage members in the development of individual projects that contribute to the improvement of home, business, and community.
- Develop character, prepare for useful citizenship, and foster patriotism.
- Encourage and practice efficient money management.
- Encourage scholarship and promote school loyalty.
- Assist students in the establishment of occupational goals.
- Facilitate the transition from school to work.

Goal 1: Develop Business Leadership

With Abernathy Cochran Group, chapter members have developed and will continue to develop business leadership skills. This is accomplished through members of the JHS FBLA chapter, Business and Computer Science students, and local residents work with each other to conduct interviews to provide content. These interviews are then posted to The Faces of Jackson County website and social media. While conducting interviews,



members built bridges with local business owners and learned business skills from these entrepreneurs. When chapter members conducted these interviews, they used their leadership skills and applied themselves, and this enhanced the apparent confidence in what they were doing.

Goal 2: Strengthen the Confidence of Students

Through the process of conducting interviews with local businesses, chapter members gained confidence in speaking with experienced and interesting persons in the community. Students and chapter members were responsible for reaching out to the interviewees to schedule a time, communicating the requirements for the interview, and finally completing the interview. This process allowed members to develop needed communication skills and improve their confidence. This also allowed members to practice confidence-building skills in a business situation, as well as other scenarios.

Goal 4: Encourage Development in Projects that Improve Homes, Businesses and Communities

While working with the Abernathy Cochran Group, chapter members worked together to develop The Faces of Jackson County webpage. This project helps promote local businesses, entrepreneurs, and community members. When interviews are posted on The



Faces of Jackson County website, the interviewee eagerly shares the article to their website or social media pages. Once the article is shared, it reaches other potential clients and customers. The simple sharing of the article will increase business profits. Since the creation of “The Faces of Project,” over 350 total interviews have been completed. Fifty of these were conducted for “The Faces of Jackson County.” Students and FBLA members at JHS are continuing to conduct interviews, so this number will continue to increase.

Goal 5: Develop Character

Character by definition is the mental and moral qualities distinctive to an individual. Chapter members, along with JHS students, built character through interacting with others around the community during the interview process. These interviews consisted of meaningful conversations, which had a purpose. The interviews were not conducted just to say they were, but rather it was to further develop relationships with those around the community. Through the time spent with many members of the community, along with the resulting experiences, a lot of worthwhile information was learned. Time and experiences build character, and that is exactly what this partnership brought about. However, this project was a large task to take on, through perseverance and determination, the goals were and continue to be achieved. The mentality of never giving up builds character alone. JHS students and FBLA chapter members’ personal qualities have grown in a positive, beneficial way throughout the countless hours spent on the project. These strong qualities will, without a doubt, assist students in the future. This is not just a project, but it is so much more than that. It is a learning experience that builds character and impacts many for the better.



Goal 7: Encourage Scholarship and Promote School Loyalty

Many of the interviewees for The Faces of Jackson County have been local school employees. The employees of the Jefferson City Schools are prominent faces in town and receive positive feedback from being a part of this project. When members and students were able to interview these important individuals, they experienced just how impactful their school is and how crucial the members of the faculty and staff are to the community.

Goal 8: Assist in the Establishment of Occupational Goals

Another benefit observed from this project was that students and members were able to interview people who were in the same line of work as what they wanted to pursue. For example, one member who aspires to become a teacher, was able to interview her 3rd grade teacher for this honor. This student noted that learning more about her role model's background and person life was very encouraging to her and her aspirations to become a teacher.

Goal 9: Facilitate the Transition from School to Work

Through the necessary steps of the partnership with a business project, the transition from school to work was key. As mentioned in the above section, members were able to interview individuals in their desired career field. This allowed them to network and make connections with individuals which will assist them in making a solid connection in transitioning from school to the working world.

Chapter Involvement

Throughout the process of the project, the JHS FBLA chapter has been involved almost every step of the way. Starting at the beginning of the project, chapter members started by



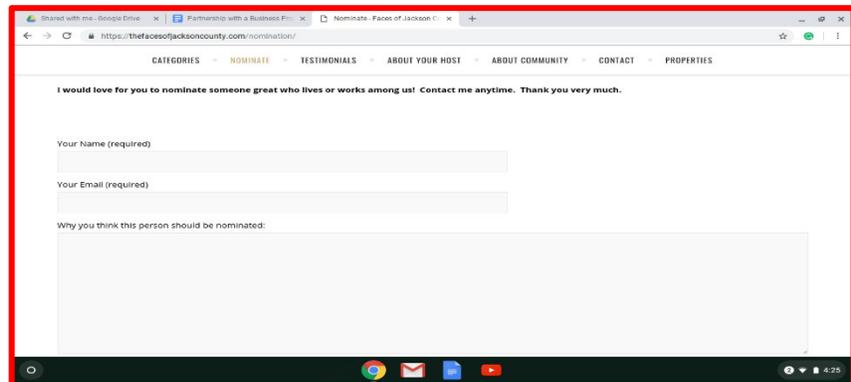
coming up with ideas of people to interview throughout the community. The people and students nominated were then approved by the JHS chapter adviser and ACG.

After approval, nominees were interviewed by selected chapter members with their list of questions. Once the interviews were conducted, chapter members were required to type a transcript of the voice recordings and or videoed interviews. Students then sent them to the

Faces of Jackson

County to complete the interviewing process.

Chapter members also participated in making graphics to put on the



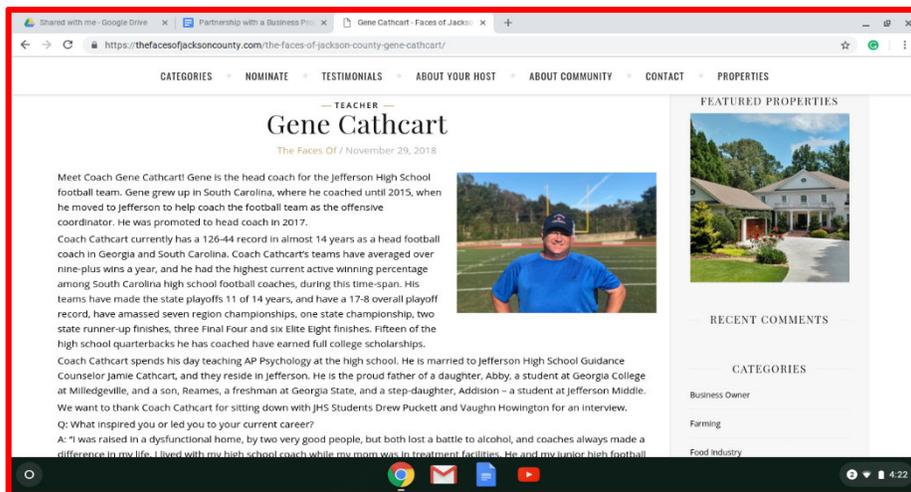
back sides of coupons. Once the coupons were made, ACG sends them to clients. This helps local businesses receive more attention and increase clientele. All of the Jefferson High School FBLA chapter members participated in this project, and the partnership would not have been possible without all of their help.

Planning, Implementation, and Execution

The idea behind “The Faces of...” began when The Abernathy Cochran Group wanted to increase the traffic on their website. For months the ACG team brainstormed ways to increase their numbers, shortly after The Faces of Hall County was created. After the success of The Faces of Hall County, ACG wanted to expand their project to other areas that they were selling or buying real estate in. The Abernathy Cochran Group contacted Jefferson High School looking for students who would be willing to conduct interviews and help start up The Faces of Jackson County. Mr. Abernathy and his marketing director,



Ashley Bates, came to JHS to speak to the students and members. They shared the history of their project and their vision for expanding to Jackson County. The speakers also shared statistics and life lessons from years of marketing and real estate experience. The members and students thoroughly enjoyed hearing from these industry professionals. JHS FBLA members eagerly stepped up to the task and immediately started contacting local businesses and influential individuals in the community. To ensure that all interviews were professional and all interviewees were a good example of the local community, students and members had to follow certain steps: Nominate an interviewee, receive approval to interview that person, set a time to interview them, have them sign the release form, and then conduct the interview. Once members had conducted the interview, they captured a



smiling picture of the interviewee to post along with the interview. After the interview, students typed a

transcript and a short summary of the interview. The last step of producing an interview was to have the JHS chapter advisor and ACG approve the final product and post it on The Faces of Jackson County website. During 2018-19 school year, Jefferson students and FBLA members developed the first interviews for The Faces of Jackson County website. Mr. Abernathy and Ms. Bates returned for a second time to speak to newly interested students and get updates on how they could assist with the project and make it more



beneficial to everyone involved. We hope to continue with this partnership, as well as contacting interviewees and preparing for more interviews.

Publicity Received

Over the course of partnering with Abernathy Cochran Group, The Faces of Jackson County has received a lot of publicity. Several newspapers, local businesses, and people from around the community are talking about The Faces of Jackson County.

In addition, Jefferson High School students and teachers have been talking about how The Faces of Jackson County is helping the community in more than one way. An example of this is by giving free advertising to local businesses. This gains publicity, and it creates lots of talk about the project. With the creation of this project ACG has received a lot of attention from people in the community that



have started following the project. The ACG Faces of Jackson County Facebook went from zero followers to two hundred ninety-two and the Instagram from zero to one hundred sixty-six. Another way The Faces of Jackson of County has helped the community is by generating publicity for itself and through using the easy to navigate website, which displays all of the people interviewed. The website generates publicity by giving the people in the community a place to see local business owners and community leaders and also hear about their stories. This, in turn, shows the community that local business owners are not just business people, but they are real people as well. The publicity of The Faces of Jackson County has not only benefited the community, but it has began to generate even more publicity for The Abernathy Cochran Group and its real estate team.



Benefits and Concepts Learned

The benefits and concepts learned through the process of The Faces of Jackson County project have been extensive in that through the process, the Jefferson FBLA chapter has benefited from the concepts and skills that the project has to offer. One of the main concepts were: It's always worth it to reach out into the community, and make a difference. Another key benefit learned through The Faces of Jackson County project is that: The people in a local business community want you and others to succeed in all of your goals. The business people involved in this project thus far have been thrilled to support the project and excited to see local high school students involved and benefiting from such a unique idea. These two benefits and concepts, which were learned throughout the project, made a tremendous impact in the members of the Jefferson FBLA Chapter and Business Computer Science classes. The skills they learned such as communication, confidence, and networking prove they benefited greatly from playing a major role in the making of The Faces of Jackson County.



Impact on Business and Chapter

The impact on businesses and the chapter was tremendous, and it is continuing to increase as the project continues. One of the main impacts on the Jefferson FBLA chapter was that it brought the entire chapter together and improved our teamwork skills. This is more than anyone could have ever asked for or expected from this project. Real estate sales for ACG have increased to 9.8 million in volume and \$175,897 in commissions income. Since creation of “The Faces of” project ACG has increased their



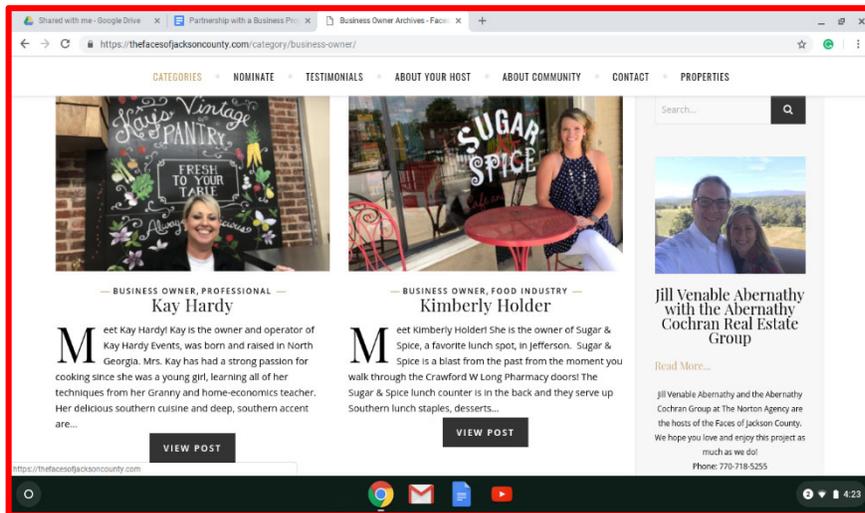
website traffic to 5.725 visits per month. As for the impact on the businesses, that was also amazing. The Abernathy Cochran group was highly grateful for the chapter helping them expand their business by doing what members saw as a simple interview. They were very impressed by how the community received and acknowledged the interviews as an amazing source to find and support local businesses. In turn, this sent many new customers to local businesses. This impacted the business not only financially, but physically. Businesses in the community were greatly appreciative and decided to send great feedback to us about The Faces of Jackson County.



Evaluation

Steps

To start the project, the chapter was approached by Brad Abernathy searching for help with a new project called The Faces of Jackson County. He expressed that he had gone to several other neighboring communities and launched similar projects and had great success. The Jefferson FBLA chapter decided to take on the project. The chapter first



began by starting a planning phase that involved developing a process to have chapter members conduct interviews. Next, chapter members conducted the interviews with

community members as well with local business owners that were put through a process to be approved with the Jefferson FBLA chapter advisor and Brad Abernathy. This ensures The Faces of Jackson County name is held securely with the people interviewed. After the community members were interviewed, the interview had to be typed and put into transcript form. Then the interviews were then sent to Brad Abernathy for review and to be posted.

Ideas for Improvement

During the course of making the Partnership with a Business Project there have been a few changes that should be made to make the process easier. One of the main changes that

should be made to better The Faces of Jackson County is making the process more efficient in the approval of candidates for interviewing. Another key change that needs to be made is interviewing a greater variety of people not just local business owners but local officials and people that are making a difference.

Conclusion

The Faces of Jackson County and partnership with The Abernathy Cochran Group has been and will continue to be successful over the time period that it was brought to the Jefferson FBLA chapter. This project has directly led to 5,300 visits per month to the Abernathy Cochran Group website over the past three years and has increased ACG's real estate sales over 60% since its creation. However, the project is still ongoing with the Jefferson FBLA chapter. There is a bright and successful future for the partnership with The Abernathy Cochran group and The Jefferson FBLA chapter with more plans to grow in the future.

