



JUNIOR LEAGUE OF  
CEDAR RAPIDS

# IMPACT 2019

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Ladies of League,

I am so excited to welcome all of you to the 2019/20 League year. This is a memorable year for us as we celebrate 85 years of women volunteers in the Cedar Rapids community. From bold beginnings in 1929 as a Junior Service League assisting with daycare and feeding the those in need in our community, we have grown so much and in many ways stayed the same.

We continue to focus on serving needs of the community, foster teens in particular, and developing the potential for women. This fall we plan to send eight women to six different training opportunities locally and nationally.

"We Rise By Lifting Each Other Up" is our theme for this year. Our current League exists because many women before us have dedicated their time, talent, and treasure to support our organization. Thank you! It's now our turn to raise up one another through mentorship, friendship, and encouragement. Let's build a League bigger and more connected than ever before.

We have a busy this year as we embrace a new fundraiser - Join Leaders Change Results-, continue to grow our housing and scholarship programs and implement a new League structure. Change is exciting and a little scary all at once but I am certain that if we stay focused on building one another and our organization we will see amazing results.

Most sincerely,

Cara Joens  
President 2019/20



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JUNIOR LEAGUE RELEVANT  
ILLUMINATED PROACTIVE  
ENLIGHTENED HIGH-IMPACT  
INTELLIGENCE  
PUTTING INTUITION AND EXPERIENCE TO WORK  
NETWORKED MEMBERSHIP  
**LEADERSHIP**  
REIMAGINED

## DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

In Iowa there is a group of women moving the needle on the topic of Diversity and Inclusion. It's year three for the Diversity and Inclusion Task Force in JLCR and we have exciting things planned. We started with our mission in mind -creating trained volunteers- this task force has encouraged members to challenge their own biases and learn more about the importance of a diverse group of women serving the Cedar Rapids community.

This task force has provided training with outside facilitators on topics including cultural competencies, mini trainings during GMMs, recommended readings and Lunch with League; a program where members connect over lunch to get to know someone they might not otherwise have the chance to. This year the task force plans to stay up to date on research and ways to incorporate D&I initiatives into our strategic plan. If you have an idea to share with this committee please email Cara Joens at [cavanaugh.cara@gmail.com](mailto:cavanaugh.cara@gmail.com).

**THE JUNIOR LEAGUE WELCOMES ALL WOMEN WHO VALUE OUR MISSION. WE ARE COMMITTED TO INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENTS OF DIVERSE INDIVIDUALS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND COMMUNITIES.**



## JLCR HOUSING PROJECT- BUILDING STABILITY

Young adults who have aged out of the Iowa foster care system and who are actively working with a Foundation 2 Advocate are eligible for the Junior League of Cedar Rapids Housing Program. The program offers one year of financial housing support. Participants in JLCR's Housing Program are provided assistance with rent, but also so much more. For the first six months, JLCR pays for 100% of the rent for its participants, then gradually decreases the percentage throughout the remainder of the year. This transition is critical, as it allows the participants time to build savings, and then slowly get accustomed to paying their own rent, setting them up for success after the year in the program, when JLCR steps away to help someone else.

All of us can likely appreciate the benefit of having someone step in and cover rent costs, but the JLCR Housing Program goes well beyond the obvious, and works towards long term impact. Participants are provided assistance with rent. In addition to assistance with rent Foundation 2 Advocates work with the participants on budgeting, a savings plan, as well as providing them with resources to learn how to be a good tenant. A goal of the program is to help participants move beyond a survival or crisis mode, and to instead start to move them into a financial space that allows them to further their education and/or career, providing a long-term, life-changing opportunity. Foundation 2 and the participants' advocates are an important part of this program, their involvement is vital to its success, and the partnership makes the program that much stronger.

We continue to connect and educate our members and the young people we work with on cycles of poverty and the challenging statistics youth aging out of the foster-care system must overcome. Recently, Senator Liz Mathis and Chief Program Officer, Kelli Malone of Four Oaks (pictured on the bottom right) spoke with our league about anticipated child-welfare changes and what league members can do to continue to advocate for youth.



## FOSTERING STRENGTH- OUR BEST YEAR YET!

Fostering Strength took place on April 30 with a record breaking 350 attendees and \$58,438 raised. Steve Pemberton shared about the different sources of support he encountered throughout his years in the foster care system and how they changed his life. Steve was a phenomenal speaker and connected so well with our audience and young people in attendance. The proceeds from the Fostering Strength luncheon help change the lives of foster care youth in our community.

Donations provide a cushion when a foster youth moves into their own apartment for a first time and can't make rent. Donations also provide young adults with several basic needs for their first apartment. We're already planning how to make our 2020 event even better. Save the date May 8, 2020!



## MENTORING

The JLCR Mentorship program connects pairs of powerful women in a formal mentorship program. Groups are able to customize their development and League experience. Whether these two talk about their next career move, or a new place in town they are excited to volunteer, these women share their connections and empower each other! The JLCR year of 2019-2020 has 17 pairings.

Participants are already raving about the benefits of having a mentor through Junior League. One participant said, "In the first month we were matched I had an expert in my field give me critical feedback about how to work with a challenging employee." Another participant stated, "I'm gaining just as much being a mentor!" Check back in the spring to hear all about their experiences!



# CELEBRATING 85 YEARS OF EMPOWERMENT

We held a celebratory get together honoring our 85th year on September 23! Past President, Samantha McGrane and Sustainer, Cindie Birchansky put together a beautiful evening. All guests were able to vote on their favorite project over the years. The top two vote recipients were Old MacDonalds Farm and Waypoint. Each of these organizations were given a donation on behalf of JLCR! Thank you to everyone who celebrated with us!



# JUNIOR LEAGUE OF CEDAR RAPIDS EVENTS



We're back! The first GMM kicked off in August. We also launched our first Join Leaders Change Results Campaign, led by our cheerleader Amber Blomme. The first campaign raised over \$300 exceeding their goal! Stay tuned about how YOU can get involved in our next campaign!

Below: Check deliveries to Old MacDonalds Farm (left) and Waypoint (right).

