



JUNIOR LEAGUE OF CEDAR RAPIDS

Report to the Community 2016-2017

President's Letter

What a year! It has been an honor and a pleasure serving as your Junior League Board President for 2016-2017. This is my 13th active year in League and I have spent some time recently reflecting on how far we have come.

What sticks out the most is our relationships with the kids who participate in AMP. When we began attending AMP, I remember going to the Four Oaks kitchen at the Bridge on 1st Avenue and we would just cook. The kids would curiously pass us by on the way to the rec room and our interaction was minimal. Now, fast forward 7 years or so and we know them and they know us. While few of us are at every AMP meeting, those kids decided that we would always be there and seem to have accepted us as a group. Whenever I go to the AMP meetings now, I am humbled by the comraderies between the kids and our members.

As an offshoot of our project, we diversified our funding income to include more grants. This year, our community project was 100% funded by grants by September and next year, our community support budget will double due to our enhanced resources. In addition, we ensure our fundraisers are accessible to the children we serve. Each year, children in foster care can attend Butterfly Kisses and Fostering Strength due to local company support and our generous members.

Correspondingly, we have matched our commitment to community impact and focused on our member impact we well. In 2016-2017, we doubled our training budget, allowing us to send more members to AJLI and locally sponsored trainings than we have since I transferred into this League 10 years ago. Our members return from these trainings inspired and with a host of new ideas to enhance our work.

We have all come a long way and I hope that each of our members feel like their experiences embody our mission to “promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women, and improving communities through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers.” As we look back at our accomplishments this year and look forward to future impact, I think what is most special is our collective impact on our community and each other. Personally, I want to thank all of you for your hard work, enthusiasm, and friendship. It has been a blessing and I cannot wait to see what we can accomplish next year.





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Bridging the G.A.P.

Guide. Advocate. Provide.

Project Guide

Achieving Maximum Potential (AMP) meetings were started as a partnership between JLCR and Foundation 2 to connect JLCR members with the Partnership of Iowa Foster Care Youth Council's Achieving Maximum Potential (AMP) local group. As a result, JLCR members and AMP participants interact on a twice-monthly basis, developing bonds between adults and the teens. AMP continues to grow, thus a move to a much larger space was in order.

AMP meetings will now be held at First Church of the Open Bible on E Ave NW. JLCR ladies still have a great space to cook and prep a delicious meal for the AMP kids. This impacted when AMP was held as well. It is now be the second and fourth Thursdays of the month instead of the first and third. The first meeting at this new location was in early 2017.

We are also looking into starting a junior chef program. An AMP kid would sign up to co-head chef with a JLCR lady. Many of the AMP kids have shared their desire to learn how to cook and we feel this would be a great way to teach them an invaluable life skill.

Over the summer of 2016, we discussed that our biggest goal for the League year is to enhance the relationship between JLCR ladies and the AMP kids. We have been encouraging the JLCR ladies to eat and interact with the AMP kids during the meeting. The creation of a junior chef program will drive this effort forward.

Thank you to the members of Project: Guide. You have been rock stars at getting ladies to sign up for head chef and making sure that things are running smoothly!



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Project Advocate

Day on the Hill

JLCR members LaShonda Kennedy, Angel Burns and Christy Logan traveled to the Iowa State Capitol to advocate with other Junior League women from Des Moines and the Quad Cities for Junior League Day on the Hill.



Little Black Bag Challenge

“Wait, are you actually carrying trash in that thing?”

This was just one of the countless questions my fellow Junior League of Cedar Rapids women answered during our Little Black Bag Challenge. For one week, we transferred all the contents out of our purses and into black trash bags.

Very often, as foster youth age out of the system or move homes, they are handed a black trash bag, asked to gather their belongings and leave. The Little Black Bag Challenge was intended to advocate for foster youth in a unique way. Carrying around a trash bag instead of a purse draws attention. Once we garnered that attention, we took the opportunity to chat about the work JLCR does and how it impacts foster youth.

Taking place April 17 –23, the challenge was the perfect way to build momentum for Fostering Strength. We engaged with each other throughout the week on social media with #LittleBlackChallengeJLCR.

Advocacy work can be hard to pin down and doesn't always have a tangible elements. The Little Black Bag was the perfect way to involve a broad group from the membership into our advocacy efforts. Look for this challenge again next year, this time bigger and better!



Fundraising

Fostering Strength: By the Numbers

What advice would you give your 21 year old self? Keynote speaker Gigi Edwards Byrant walked us through the advice that she would have given her 21 year old self at Fostering Strength on Thursday, May 11, 2017.

Her story is inspiring.



At 21, Gigi was a former foster youth and a single mom working on making ends meet. In past, she looked back at countless foster home placements, many involving abuse. Her future? Unclear. While her grandmother was in her life and provided emotional support, Gigi had no other family to provide financial, emotional, or spiritual support.

The ideals and lessons she learned are what allowed her to finish her bachelor's degree over the course of a decade and continue to grow in a career, which eventually lead to her

becoming chairwoman of the Texas Department of Family Protective Services Advisory Council. At this point, she was finally was able to help change the system and be an advocate for foster youth across her home state. Fostering Strength attendees were moved by her story of empowerment and bravery.

Again this year, de Novo Alternative Marketing create three beautiful videos that encompassed out Bridging the G.A.P. Project.




JUNIOR LEAGUE OF
CEDAR RAPIDS

Fostering Strength

PLATED LUNCHEON FEATURING A CASH & CARRY MARKET

Gigi Edwards Bryant, MBA

Wife, mother, elected official, keynote speaker,
business owner, and community volunteer!

THURSDAY, MAY 11, 2017 | 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM

www.juniorleaguecr.org



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Butterfly Kisses

On January 29, 2016 the Junior League of Cedar Rapids hosted our 15th Annual Butterfly Kisses, a father-daughter dance, at the Cedar Rapids Marriot. This year was all about Ariel with a theme of Under the Sea! The dance went from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. in the afternoon.

Before entering the ballroom, the daddy/daughter groups could have a professional photo taken and the girls could have their face painted. The silent auction opened at this time and bidding stayed competitive throughout the dance.

Ariel made a special appearance and sang her signature song "Part of That World," along with the uber popular "Let It Go" from Frozen. The ballroom was filled with song and laughter as all the little girls sang along!



Community Impact

Done in a Day

Done in a Day projects allow JLCR to support area non-profits by offering short-term volunteer services. As the name implies, the projects are done in one day, with the goal of making an impact on several parts of the community.

Summer 2016

Lunch & Literacy - Summer is a time for family vacations, lazy days by the pool and ice cream trucks, but Junior League members also know that kids need to spend time continuing to enrich their minds during the summer. Five Junior League members took time out of the summer, to read to kids at the Hoover and Olivet Boys & Girls Club sites.

Catherine McAuley Landscaping - Landscaping is never an easy task but for a non-profit like The Catherine McAuley Center that provides life changing services to the community, it's even harder to find the time. Six Junior League members were able to help landscape the main Center and one of the transitional homes provided by the Catherine McAuley Center.



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Fall 2016

Habitat for Humanity - Seven members spent their beautiful fall day painting a home in Wellington Heights in partnership with Habitat for Humanity. Habitat for Humanity works with low-income families that need exterior home improvements. A current foster parent was even kind enough to bring over hot chocolate and snacks to help support our efforts.

Harvest Fest with the Old MacDonald Farm - September 24 marked the last free event for the year at the Old MacDonald Farm in Cedar Rapids. Junior League members had the opportunity to help out with t-shirt sales, the apple bobbing station, etc. Members were invited and encouraged to bring their families out to volunteer and enjoy the event along side them.

Families Helping Families Clothing Closets - Members had the chance on October 2 and October 16 to staff the Families Helping Families Clothing Closet. The Clothing Closet is a free store for foster families. They're able to find clothing, shoes and supplies for infants, children and teens placed in foster care. Junior League of Cedar Rapids values their recurring partnership with Families Helping Families.

Winter 2017

Families Helping Families Closet Restock - This DIAD was offered twice a month for two hours on every other Sunday from October to December. The duties included sorting through donations of clothing and then hanging/displaying those items for foster families to choose from. Also, general tidying of the clothing closet. If a family came in to shop then we would make sure they filled out the paper work and easily found what they were looking for. If someone was donating then we would help them unload and make sure they filled out donation paper work. There is always a board member there to help with the duties and for general guidance.

PATHS Program Clothing Drive - During the November GMM, members brought in work attire to donate to Jane Boyd's PATHS Program. This program provides career development skills training, coaching, internship placement, and job search support for its participants. The clothing drive was an incredible success, with over 40 members donating multiple articles of clothing to the program. Upon completion of the program, participants were able to "shop" the donations to wear for interviews and jobs.

Families Helping Families Clothing Closet - Twice a month from October through December JLCR members volunteered at the Families Helping Families Clothing Closet. The Clothing Closet is a free store for foster families to find clothing and other necessities for their foster kids. JLCR members regularly get to interact with foster kids through our Bridging the G.A.P program, however, this gave us the opportunity to also interact with the families providing a temporary or permanent home for these kids. Those who were able to participate got to feel and see the service these families provide and the continual support they need from our community.



Membership

Membership Retention - Holiday Party

JLCR members gathered on Saturday, January 14 at the Early Bird in downtown Cedar Rapids to celebrate the holiday season. With the theme of Winter Wonderland, members mingled while enjoying beer, wine and appetizers from the local downtown business.



JLCR Sustainers - Holiday Party

JLCR sustainers gathered on December 10 for the 2016 Holiday Party. This year's event was graciously hosted by Danielle Rings and Nina Brundell at MODE in Cedar Rapids. Drinks and hors d'oeuvres were served and the ladies enjoyed a great evening of fun shopping and conversation. The group included a wide variety of attendees including current board members, recent sustainers and even lifetime members. Board members enjoyed the opportunity to discuss our current fundraisers and Bridging the G.A.P. project.

Thank you to all who attended this year's Holiday Party and a huge thanks to MODE and to Danielle and Nina for hosting.

Provisional Members

After a successful summer of filled with socials to meet potential new members, Membership Recruitment was excited to kick off the new member year in late September. The new member class will refocus their efforts this year to spend more time getting to learn the Junior League organization and the Bridging the G.A.P project.

New members will also focus learning more about each of the aspect with JLCR's project and will attend Achieving Maximum Potential meetings, Board Meetings, General Membership Meetings and committee meetings.

The reformatting of the new member class will hopefully allow new members to get their feet wet with Junior League between September and January and prepare them to join various committees beginning in January for the remaining of the year.

Provisional Members—cont.

Each year, the new member committee works together on a project and this year’s class organized a Stuff the Truck event with Stuff Etc. The event was meant to gather goods for Stuff Etc. to sell, with JLCR to receive 50% of the final price on items donated in the name of JLCR.

Welcome to all Junior League of Cedar Rapids new members!

Cassi Forbes, Destini Hoth, Kristie Hunter (Kemp), Jessica Kaspari, Monique Kuhns, Amanda Lyons, Anne Morman (Schmalenberger), Karelyn Pohl, Brandy Pregon, Becky Robinson, Kristen Svalstad, Kate Walters (Wiebke), Anna Weddle and Kristiana Wright



Annual Meeting

Thank you to all that attended our Annual Meeting on Tuesday, May 16 at the Coe College Clark Alumni House! It was a night to celebrating the many accomplishments of the year and toasting to next year’s leaders. Here’s the awards from the night:

Leadership Award

Caitlin Mattes

Wheels in Motion Award

Adriane Moline

Rising Star Award

Anne Morman

Unsung Hero Award

Stacey Przyslecki

Spirit Award

Amber Blomme

Sustainer of the Year Award

Danielle Rings

You Name It Awards

Stickin’ To It: Jenn Draper

Mama Bear: Brie Steffens

Inner Beauty: Michelle Foley

Robert O. Daniel Community Service Award

Kitt’d

Leadership Development

A Weekend in Raleigh

by Ellen Bardsley

I was so thrilled when I heard that I had been chosen to represent JLCR at the Junior League Organizational Development Institute in Raleigh, North Carolina in October. I joined JLCR with the desire to better myself and meet like-minded women and I looked forward taking a deeper dive into Junior League. Some fellow JLCR members told me to get ready to “drink the Junior League juice” and boy, were they right!



Every part of the conference was inspiring; from networking with women from Leagues of all sizes, the insight shared by the leader of my chosen track for the weekend, Membership and hearing from the Junior League legend, Vicki Clark. The memory from the weekend that sticks with me the most was hearing from a former President of the Junior League of Raleigh, Virginia Parker.

Her family had a long history with League; her grandmother and mother were both in League and instilled the drive to better herself and her community. She faced tremendous loss in her personal life, with the death of her mother in her teen years. When it came time for her to join League, she rose through the ranks and quickly found herself elected President.

Virginia detailed the time she put into her preparation for the first General Membership Meeting she would lead. The morning of the first GMM had blue skies and sunshine, Virginia was ready. Just a couple hours later, her entire League year would shift, as this bright and sunny day was September 11, 2001. Virginia and the entire Charleston League’s mentality for the year became “How can we help?” It was a time of uncertainty and a time to put country before self.

Junior League women are a powerful force, ready to help at a moment’s notice. If we see a need to fill in a community and we fill it. Virginia's words of inspiration lit a spark in myself and my fellow JLCR members at ODI. We brainstormed and strategized each night during the conference and met after returning to ensure all of the knowledge we absorbed at ODI would make a difference in the Junior League of Cedar Rapids.





Statement of Financial Position

ASSETS

Cash	166,887
Endowment	198,564
Accounts Receivable	9,294
Certificate of Deposit	27,269
Fixed Assets	15,841
Other Assets	75
TOTAL ASSETS	415,933

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Liabilities

Accounts Payable	4,538
Deferred Revenue-Dues	27,703
TOTAL LIABILITIES	32,369

Net Assets

Unrestricted	415,933
TOTAL NET ASSETS	415,933
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	448,302

Special Thanks

Junior League of Cedar Rapids 2016–2017 Sponsors

Union Pacific Railroads	The Gazette Company
Transamerica Foundation	de Novo
Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation	Pierson's
Diamond V	Hy-Vee
Lil' Drugstore Products	Ryan Companies
University of Iowa Community Credit Union	Four Oaks
United Fire Insurance	Skywalk Group
Transamerica	Bohr, Dahm, Greif & Associates
CliftonLarsonAllen	United Way of East Central Iowa
Skogman Realty	MODE



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Junior League of Cedar Rapids (JLCR) is an organization of women committed to promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of woman and improving communities through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. Its purpose is exclusively educational and charitable. JLCR reaches out to women of all races, religions and national origins who demonstrate an interest in and a commitment to voluntarism.

Leadership

President: Abbie Covenah
President-Elect/Vice President of Planning: Nicole Ridge
Vice President of Operations: Samantha McGrane
Vice President of Fund Development: Amber Blomme
Vice President of Membership: Mandy Ferrante
Vice President of Community: Jennifer Ziegler
Vice President of Communications: Christine Young
At-Large: Caitlin Ward

Our JLCR Board of Directors are chosen each year through an application and interview process. Their charge is to govern JLCR in the way that they best see fit, keeping in mind the organization's mission, by-laws, history, and future.

Members of the JLCR Board of Directors are to uphold three responsibilities: Duty of Care, which requires attentive, informed, diligent participation and stewardship, including fiduciary duty; Duty of Loyalty, which requires each Board member to act in good faith, in the best interests of the organization, heed confidentiality, and excuse herself from a situation in which she has a conflict of interest; and Duty of Obedience, which requires each Board member to act in accordance with JLCR's mission and bylaws, as well as all laws that govern its location.