

VISIONS

A photograph of four children on a stage, seen from behind. They are all reaching their right arms up towards the top of the frame. The child on the far left is a girl with pigtails wearing a patterned sweater. The child next to her is a boy in a red and black plaid shirt. The child next is another boy wearing a plaid shirt and a fedora hat. The child on the far right is a girl in a red dress with a floral headpiece. The stage is dark with some red and blue lighting effects.

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contents & FEATURES // Summer 2018



VISIONS

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Letter from THE PRESIDENT

"How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world."

- Anne Frank

As the Junior League of Greenville's 2017-2018 year comes to a close, we are glad you are reading this issue of VISIONS! In this issue, we are excited to highlight the JLG's almost 90-year history and involvement in Greenville's arts community, including the Peace Center, the Children's Museum of the Upstate, the Upcountry History Museum - Furman University and the South Carolina Children's Theatre. We will also be sharing more about our ongoing work with the South Carolina Children's Theatre—including our recent gift to help finance its new home in the West End—and profiling several Members who are making a difference, both locally and around the world. Finally, we are excited to share more about our work and the \$40,000-plus in grants we awarded over the past year.

This year's theme for the League has been "Celebrating our Legacy - Embracing our Future." As we celebrated our history and legacy, we also began important conversations about the changing nature of our community and of our membership. This has involved thoughtful conversation about the current needs of the community and how we, as an organization of women committed to service and voluntarism, can make the greatest impact with our resources. These conversations have resulted in some exciting plans and visions for a more happy and healthy community and we look forward to sharing more about these plans in the near future.

As I look back over the past year, I am awed by the countless hours of service given by our members and the incredible passion with which our members serve our community. I am confident that the 20 young women who founded the JLG in 1929 would be proud of what our organization has become—and awed by our plans for the future. On a personal note, I am incredibly grateful and humbled to have had the opportunity to serve the JLG this past year alongside such dedicated and remarkable women. I am so proud of our history, and I am just as excited to see where we'll go in the future. Thank you for all of your support of our work and efforts.

Courtney Atkinson

Courtney Atkinson

President, 2017 - 2018

Junior League of Greenville, Inc.



Courtney Atkinson



Courtney Atkinson is a graduate of Leadership Greenville – Class 35 and was named by Greenville Magazine as one of Greenville's "Best and Brightest under 35" in 2006. She is currently serving as Chair of the City's Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee as well as on the Board of Directors for the South Carolina Children's Theatre and as Chair of the Greenville County Bar Association's Memorial Service Committee. A graduate of the University of Georgia, Courtney received her law degree from Washington & Lee University School of Law. She is an attorney at Metcalfe & Atkinson, LLC.

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OF GREENVILLE

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Letter from

THE SUSTAINER REPRESENTATIVE

I remember the year I was eligible to become a Sustainer in the Junior League of Greenville. It was accompanied by a huge sigh of relief that I no longer had “requirements” or “obligations” as an Active Member. All I was required to do was pay my dues. I was going to have all of this free time. It was going to be like a taste of retirement. Woo-hoo!

After a couple of years of being a Sustainer, I began to wonder why I was still a member of the Junior League. Sure, it's important to sustain the League with my dues. What organization doesn't need money to sustain its programs? But, did my dues really make a difference? What was in it for me?

As I pondered my future with the Junior League of Greenville, I realized that being a Sustainer was not at all like being set free and that my membership did much more than just sustain the League. I believed in our programs. I knew the value that Active membership brought to me. I believed in the future of our organization. Maybe, just maybe, there was something else for me as a Sustainer.

I began to pay attention to the articles and announcements in The Update. I read VISIONS. I began to attend Sustainer events. I offered to be a Sustaining Advisor. Guess what I found out? Just like Active membership, the more I gave of myself to the Junior League, the more I was given in return. And I've just wrapped up another wonderful year serving as Sustaining Advisor for the Board.

It is an exciting time to be a member of the Junior League of Greenville. I invite each and every one of you—current or former Sustainers—to come back and make a difference in Greenville with our Actives and Provisionals. It takes some initiative on your part, but if you come and volunteer with us again, I guarantee you will receive more than you can possibly give.

Won't you join me in being an active Sustainer of the Junior League of Greenville?

Caroline Stewart

Caroline Stewart

Sustainer Representative, 2017 - 2018

Junior League of Greenville, Inc.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Junior League of Greenville, Inc. is an organization of women committed to promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women and improving the community through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. Its purpose is exclusively educational and charitable.

The Junior League of Greenville initiates and participates in programs and partnerships that enhance the physical, emotional and educational well-being of children and families. We are committed to building a safe, healthy, nurturing community.

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Please recycle after you have enjoyed this publication.

We would love to hear from you! Email Hannah Barfield Spellmeyer with your thoughts about the magazine or to learn how to become more involved at Information@JLGreenville.org

For more information about the Junior League of Greenville or becoming a member, visit us online at JLGreenville.org.



Caroline Stewart joined the Junior League of Greenville in 1984. She is a graduate of Auburn University and is married to Dick Stewart. They have three children: Elliot, David and Adele. In her spare time, Caroline enjoys gardening, sewing and volunteering with the Junior League.



Letter from THE EDITOR

Like most things in life, the only thing constant about the Junior League of Greenville is change. Since our inception in 1929, we've transformed as an organization in both our membership and our outreach.

If you've ever had a moment to chat with a Junior League Member from decades past, they may tell you that service in the League required volunteering up to three hours a day during the week and that the membership rarely, if ever, worked full-time jobs. Fast forward to the present and many of our members have ambitious careers alongside family responsibilities and civic duties. The Junior League also offers a wealth of in-league and community placements so that all our members, from full-time moms to retirees, can stay involved.

Our membership is, without a doubt, what makes the Junior League of Greenville so special. We continue to work diligently to evaluate the diversity within our membership and identify ways we can do a better job of mirroring our community. Later in the magazine, you'll learn about some of those initiatives.

I hope our readers have enjoyed the opportunity to learn more about the Junior League's early campaigns and initiatives in this and the previous issue of VISIONS. From the Diet Kitchen providing baby formula to poverty-stricken mothers to our investments in the arts around Greenville, we have been and will always be committed to the changing needs around us. Traditions may come and go, but the Junior League of Greenville is timeless.

It has been a pleasure serving as the Editor of the Junior League of Greenville's VISIONS magazine. Thank you to my wonderful committee and all those that help make this publication possible!

Hannah Barfield Spellmeyer

Hannah Barfield Spellmeyer

Editor, 2017 - 2018

Junior League of Greenville, Inc.

Hannah is an Executive Recruiter at Stott and May Professional Search. She serves on the Board of Directors for the Family Effect, the Upcountry History Museum, and the Leadership Greenville Advisory Council. Hannah and her husband Colin Spellmeyer enjoy spending time downtown and exploring new restaurants in the area. She is a graduate of the University of Georgia and received her master's degree from Clemson University.



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JLG Through The Decades

A LOOK BACK OVER LIFETIMES OF INSPIRATIONAL
JUNIOR LEAGUE OF GREENVILLE MEMORIES





GREENVILLE JUNIOR LEAGUE PUBLICATIONS



THE FUTURE OF THE JUNIOR LEAGUE OF GREENVILLE

An Interview with Katy Sides, Community VP

// By **Hannah Barfield Spellmeyer**

Almost 90 years ago, 20 women from the Greenville community came together to form the Junior Charities, an organization dedicated to service. Since then, much has changed. Fundraising projects like bridge tournaments and rummage sales have given way to The Nearly New Shop and our most recent Little Black Dress and *Shop for Greenville* campaigns. Community outreach programs like the Diet Kitchen, which provided baby formula to poverty-stricken mothers, also grew and multiplied many times over, resulting in initiatives like Kids in the Kitchen and Home Run for Healthy Kids®.

This evolution is not random nor unwelcome. One deliberate way the Junior League of Greenville assesses future initiatives is through a Strategic Plan. According to Katy Sides, Junior League Board Member and Community Vice President, the Strategic Plan guides the League in terms of partnerships and activities as well as internal goals for the League, such as membership and committee objectives. It is updated every three years.

The Strategic Plan is essential to our progress, but it is still only one piece of the League's planning picture. As Sides describes it, an enormous amount of energy and effort is devoted to making sure the Junior League of Greenville is effectively serving the needs of our community. For example, in 2016, the League established the developmental grant process to allow for formalized review of capital campaign grant requests. Additionally, the Community Project Research and Development (CPR&D) committee is responsible for evaluating grant requests for both financial resources and volunteers each year.

Because outreach is at the core of the Junior League, leadership is constantly evaluating ways to better serve the community. This year, an ad hoc task force has been created to "...look at the League's current community impact and focus, take a fresh look at the current problems in Greenville and recommend a community focus for the future," explained Sides. This task force hopes to identify some of the most challenging issues facing Greenville and recommend the best way for the League to make an impact in those areas.

The task force, CPR&D committee and the League as a whole would be futile if it weren't for the amazing women who make up the organization. Sides shared that the Junior League of Greenville is enthusiastically supporting an Association of Junior Leagues International (AJLI) campaign to make diversity and inclusion a top priority. As a first step, the League is participating in a detailed



diversity and inclusion assessment to evaluate our diversity-related efforts and to have a thoughtful conversation about where we stand – and where we need to improve. According to Sides, this will serve as the springboard for future opportunities and programs to support diversity within the League and its initiatives.

When asked where she thought the Junior League of Greenville might see itself in 10 years, Sides wisely commented that there's no way to predict an exact trajectory: "Our community and country consistently change, and new challenges present themselves continuously... [We hope] to be a community that is inclusive of women who want to make a difference—no matter how we look, what we do or where we come from."

The only way to stay relevant in any area of life is to thoughtfully change and evolve. While it may be hard to pinpoint exactly what the Junior League of Greenville will look like in 10 years, it's a safe bet that the organization's core values will remain the same: promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women and improving the community around us.

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A PROFILE IN LEADERSHIP: *Elizabeth Dubose*

// By *Hope Collins*

If you had told Elizabeth Dubose during her provisional year that she would lead Home Run for Healthy Kids® as the Chair of the 10th annual event, she probably would never have believed you.

Like many members, Dubose followed in her mother's footsteps by joining the League, and she hoped she would meet young women with similar goals and values during her tenure. But after several years as an Active Member serving in community placements, she found herself feeling as if something was missing from her Junior League experience.

About this time, she received a call asking her to become the Logistics Coordinator for Home Run for Healthy Kids®, a three-day event that teaches fourth graders about living a healthy lifestyle. This new leadership role proved to be the challenge she needed to get reenergized within the League.

Dubose went on to serve as the Logistics Coordinator, and then the event's Vice Chair in 2016. This past year, she served as the event Chair. By day, Dubose leads a team of 80 as the manager of therapies for the Roger C. Peace Rehabilitation Hospital with Greenville Health System. She also has past experience planning fundraisers and events, but nothing on the scale of Home Run for Healthy Kids®. Last year, Home Run for Healthy Kids® served 2,700 children from 26 Greenville County schools.

An event this size takes manpower, including 150 volunteers and a 22-person planning committee made up of three subcommittees. Recruiting vendors, securing schools and confirming logistics all make up integral parts of the event-planning process.



Dubose shared that taking on the task to oversee a completely volunteer-led event with such complexity was at times daunting, but also incredibly rewarding.

During the past four years, Dubose has learned much, and she said she truly believes her time in the League has made her a better leader in her corporate role. Her League service has helped her improve in many areas, such as strategic planning, budgeting and public speaking.

"The Junior League of Greenville is one of the most well-run nonprofits I have been involved with," Dubose said. "This group of women knows how to get a job done, and every single committee member, board member and volunteer were committed to the event's success."

While she says it's bittersweet to say goodbye to the Home Run for Healthy Kids® committee, Dubose said she is looking forward to a new role in the League, serving on the Community Project Research and Development Committee. She regularly encourages all members to envision kind of League legacy they want to leave. She said she always asks members to reflect on what they want out of their experience.

"You are what you put into the League," Dubose said, and in fact, she is a living example of this. When she felt stagnant in her community placement, she felt empowered to step into a role that taught her new skills and built lasting relationships. As a leadership organization, that's what the Junior League of Greenville is all about: empowering members to fulfill passions and achieve goals.





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A NEW PLACE TO CALL HOME

Helping the South Carolina Children's Theatre continue to inspire the young people in the Upstate

// By **Kate Hudson**

The South Carolina Children's Theatre began in 1987 as a small organization for individuals in the Upstate who enjoyed theater.

With no paid employees or physical location to call home, the organization hosted productions in donated spaces, completely dependent on the time and resources of volunteers.

Thirty years later, the South Carolina's Children Theatre has grown remarkably since its humble start in the old Belk building of downtown Greenville. The nonprofit now serves more than 43,000 individuals on a yearly basis and provides multiple educational outreach resources to the community.

Despite the organization's tremendous growth, the South Carolina Children's Theatre has still not had a physical location to call its own – until now.

With the joint support and resources of the community, the South Carolina Children's Theatre has reached its \$10 million fundraising goal to build its own theater. The Junior League of Greenville has committed to providing a developmental grant for \$100,000 to the South Carolina Children's Theatre as part of the nonprofit's capital campaign.

The South Carolina Children's Theatre's mission is to educate and stimulate the minds and imaginations of young people and their families through participation in high-quality theatre, year-round education and accessible outreach – a mission that aligns well with the League's community impact areas of Education and Family & Children.

With 34,000 square feet of new space, the Children's Theatre will be located in the West End of downtown Greenville. The new location will include a 300-seat main theatre, a second stage and several classrooms, along with a public area modeled after the Peace Center plaza. Groundbreaking is planned for summer 2018.

In addition to putting on a handful of productions each year, the South Carolina Children's Theatre provides classes and summer camps for aspiring thespians. The organization is also heavily involved in educational outreach in the community, including bullying prevention programs and educational classes with the Marshall Pickens Child and Adolescent Inpatient Program.

Prior to the JLG's \$100,000, the League has been actively involved with the South Carolina Children's Theatre with volunteers and donations totaling \$23,794. To date, the Junior League has donated \$58,794 to the South Carolina Children's Theatre, with two remaining installments scheduled over the course of the next two years.

As with all nonprofit agencies that the JLG supports, the League also provides volunteers to the South Carolina Children's Theatre. From marketing to hands-on help, JLG volunteers provide reliable manpower so the organization can focus on its mission.

The Children's Theatre relies heavily on volunteers to act as ushers for their productions. While many parents enjoy serving in this role, additional volunteers are often needed to ensure the show will run smoothly. JLG members volunteering with the Children's Theatre are able to directly interact with the children and families of the children on stage and in the audience.





“Many of the children visiting the Children’s Theatre on school field trips have never been introduced to theatre before,” said past South Carolina Children’s Theatre volunteer Anna Catherine English. “The children leave the theatre so excited, still singing the songs from the show. It is very fulfilling to witness them experiencing theatre for the very first time.”

JLG volunteers also assist the Children’s Theatre with advertising for upcoming shows by distributing event flyers to businesses across the Upstate.

The Junior League’s recent donation to the South Carolina Children’s Theatre was awarded in form of a developmental grant. Each year, the League provides community grants to agencies that enhance and promote the JLG’s three community impact areas: Education, Families & Children and Health & Wellness.

In addition to the JLG’s annual giving, the League is also open to requests from local nonprofit agencies for consideration of large monetary commitments. Such developmental grants are intended to be used for capital and/or developmental projects, including but not limited to buildings, new programs and large projects demonstrating potential significance to the community. The funds for the Junior League’s developmental grant to the Children’s Theatre and other organizations originate primarily from sales of The Nearly New Shop.

“The Junior League has been with the South Carolina Children’s Theatre since the very beginning,” said JLG President and South Carolina Children’s Theatre Board Member Courtney Atkinson. “From a tiny group for people that enjoyed theatre, to an organization with educational outreach programs, a paid staff and now their own physical location, we look forward to seeing the Children’s Theatre continue their work in the community.”



Photos courtesy of the South Carolina Children’s Theatre

Keeping Arts Accessible

A HISTORY OF INVESTING IN ARTS FOR THE COMMUNITY

// By **Kate Hudson**



As early donors of established organizations such as the Metropolitan Arts Council and the Peace Center, the Junior League of Greenville has been a longtime supporter of arts opportunities in the local community.

While many JLG members have historically been active in Greenville's art scene, the League does not provide grants to arts-based organizations because of member interest alone. For a nonprofit to qualify for funding from the Junior League, their purpose must align with our three Community Impact areas: Education, Families & Children and Health & Wellness.

"The JLG supports organizations that make the arts available to all of the community, especially to those who may otherwise not have access," said JLG Director of Administration Tina Hampton. "Organizations that receive funds must [use the funds] to help further their reach in the community."

The concept of communitywide access to the arts is not a new one for the JLG. In the 1950s, an Upstate group formed an organization called the Youth Concert Series. The organization put on symphony music productions specifically intended for children. In their first year, the organization was forced to turn away so many children, the group's founders immediately realized their need for financial and volunteer assistance and sought out the JLG for help.



By 1956, the League hosted their first Youth Concert Series for Greenville County students, and the program continued to grow. The Youth Concert Series began to host auditions prior to each performance to allow children to also participate in the production.

During the decades prior to the conception of the South Carolina Children's Theatre in 1987, the JLG was involved with the Children's Theatre of Greenville's Little Theatre. The League provided volunteers to create sets and costumes and assist with backstage logistics, as well as financial support for the organizations. The League's heavy involvement eventually led to interest in another local theatre organization, the Warehouse Theatre.

Housed in the old Duke Power Steam Company plant, the Warehouse Theatre conducted its first summer program for children in 1979. The program was comprised of daily, 90-minute classes for five consecutive weeks for elementary, middle and high school students. Recognizing a need to train all ages of the Greenville Community in the art of theatre, the League worked with the Warehouse Theatre to alter their concept of a children-specific theatre to avoid conflict with the Children's Theatre of the Greenville's Little Theatre. As a result, the concept of a School for Theatre Arts was born.

The Warehouse Theatre was described by its leadership as a "support institution" whose goal was "to involve the community in theatre." Aside from the different age targets, the Warehouse Theatre differed from other local theater organizations in that it focused on training actors instead of putting on a production. The group also sponsored drama-related workshops in the mornings for community groups free of charge.

In May 1980, the JLG committed to providing a \$30,000 grant to fund a salary for an executive director of the Warehouse Theatre, matched by a South Carolina Arts Commission grant, along with a \$25,000 donation over a two-year period for restoration of the exterior old steam plant.

As Warehouse Theatre's first director Greg Morrell once said, "When the quality of art improves, the quality of life improves." This has been a guiding principle in the JLG's arts investments.

In total, the JLG has invested in a large number of arts-related organizations including ARTREACH, Community Art Festival and Community Art Festival Children's Division, the Greenville County Schools District Fine Arts Center and Fine Arts Center scholarships, Foothills Philharmonic Orchestra, Greenville Chorale, Greenville Light Opera Works (GLOW), Little Theatre Capital Funds Drive, Metropolitan Arts Council, Peace Center, South Carolina Children's Theatre, the South Carolina Governor's School for the Arts and Humanities, the Children's Museum of the Upstate, and the Wytbe Center.

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A JUNIOR LEAGUE MEMBER *Travels Abroad*

// By **Erin Smith**

Imagine a beautiful coastline in Greece. There are crystal-clear waters, tinged with shades of blue and green. The sun reflects off the sea, bouncing back to an azure blue sky flecked with silken white clouds. Ancient bleached white-and-tan structures line the sandy shore. Boats of various size and stature fill the port. But on the shore, in a parking lot, are people in varying states of shabbiness, dwelling in white, metal “isobox” trailers donated by the United Arab Emirates. People from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq and Bangladesh have fled their homelands for a myriad of reasons and landed here. These people are refugees.

Enter the Association of Junior Leagues International (AJLI) and Jeanmarie Tankersley, an Active Member of the Junior League of Greenville. Every month, members of the Junior League receive email communications from our parent organization AJLI, offering opportunities to expand their reach and impact the community on a national and a global scale. Tankersley decided one day to take them up on an offer. She saw an opportunity to get involved with the refugee crisis in Greece by going on a trip to assist in a refugee camp. She thought about going for only one day before making arrangements to fly halfway across the world to make a difference.

“The refugee crisis is something that has really bothered me and broken my heart,” she said. “I thought, ‘I can’t not go’ if I have an opportunity to try and contribute in some way.”

And so she went. She traveled alone to Greece where she met up with a group of AJLI volunteers. The group was a collection of the best of what the Junior League has to offer: current board mem-

bers, past presidents, current leadership and other members interested in making a global impact. The group was coordinated by Cross Cultural Solutions, a volunteer organization that coordinates trips for the benefit of children in need around the world.

“Our mission is to mobilize cross-cultural impact volunteering that improves education and health opportunities for children who need it most,” states the Cross Cultural Solutions website. The group of AJLI volunteers worked for five days in a camp 20 minutes from the hostel they shared. The task was to provide vision screenings to children in the camp. When the refugees fled, many of them left belongings behind, including eyewear, and some children had never been tested. After the screenings, a Greek optometrist would examine the findings and provide the appropriate care.

A typical day found Tankersley and her team setting out early. The screenings took place during the day so that the children could attend school in the evenings after the local Greek children. When asked about her favorite part of the trip, Tankersley did not hesitate to say she most enjoyed getting to know the residents of the camp. Periods of downtime drug on as the day got hotter. Temperatures stayed between 95 and 100 degrees daily. So, the residents remained in the isoboxes to stay cool. Tankersley took it upon herself to visit with people, armed with a sense of purpose and the few words in Arabic she learned for the trip. The 3,000 people in the camp provided ample learning opportunities for both sides. The refugees would invite Tankersley in for coffee or tea and practice their English with her. Tankersley said she was struck by how kind and generous everyone was. Even though they had endured horrific experiences, they were welcoming and gracious.

The Junior League empowers women to serve their local communities, but we are all global citizens. Take a page out of Tankersley’s book and seize the next opportunity you have to make an impact on a global scale. You may just find yourself the true beneficiary.



YOUNG WOMEN'S *Writing Contest*

In February, the JLG held its annual Young Women's Writing Contest. Young women in grades 6-12 from Greenville County public, private, and home schools submitted original essays responding to the prompt, "Dear Future Me." We received a record-setting 58 entries. The author of the winning essay below, Samantha Rivera, received a \$500 scholarship.

Advice for our future selves

// By **Samantha Rivera**

Dear Future Me,

I have good news for you. You are prepared for life. You are prepared for life in its fullest form, life that grabs you by the shoulders, shakes you until you cannot see anymore, lets you fall to your knees, and then picks you up again. You are ready for this because your life has been a turbulent ride that has prepared you for any other trouble that could possibly come your way. To assist you when life knocks the wind out of you, here's a list to remind you of everything you have overcome. Read this when you need help seeing the immeasurable strength that lies within you.

You have overcome abuse. For the first 18 years of your life, you were told that you were not good enough. The man who is responsible for lifting you up did nothing but tear you down. I know you can still hear his sharp words when life preys on your own self-doubt, but like the sun, you rose everyday. You went to school, pretended to be fine, excelled in your classes (despite your father's discouragement towards your education), made good friends, went home, took more verbal beatings and then did it all over again. You could have curled into a ball and given up, but you pulled yourself up by the straps of your cowboy boots and kept going. You prayed to God every night for help to keep going. Your prayers were answered. You kept going. You kept going until you propelled yourself out of the toxic environment that you were raised in. Words cannot hurt you anymore, because their sting is all too familiar to you. Remember these words when you need strength to keep going, "If you're going through hell, keep going."

You have overcome being the heaviest kid on the playground. You have never been tall, but you have always weighed the most out of all your classmates. I do not know if you will change that, but it has definitely changed you in a positive way. I know the memories of being the slowest runner, being embarrassed after going up stairs, or feeling like you were going to pass out after walking in the heat for a short time still haunt you. It is not fun being the fat kid, but there is an advantage to it: you have something to prove. You never wanted to be seen as the lazy, fat girl; you wanted to be seen as a hard worker. When you feel inadequate in any endeavors, I remind you again to look deep for the immense power within you. When you were in high school marching band, you worked yourself to death running all over the field, desperately trying to get in place to perform. You were definitely not the fastest runner, but you were the hardest worker. You also always went the extra mile to prove yourself in your classes. Remember when you would get an A on a test or have a teacher praise your essay? You did not worry about being the heavy girl then. Work like you have something to prove, because you do. Do not let them see a battered, overweight, indolent girl; let them see a fierce, tenacious woman.

As you continue to climb through your future and battle with your past, here are a few things to remember when you need something a little stronger than coffee to get you through the day. You can always call your mom. I do not need to remind you how hard adolescence was for you, but at least you always had your mom. Always. Finding a person willing and strong enough to play the part of mom and dad is a rarity. Mom has always been there to encourage you or show tough love when you needed the most. Do not forget what she always preached to you, "Use your common sense." That sentiment will take you further in life than you would think.

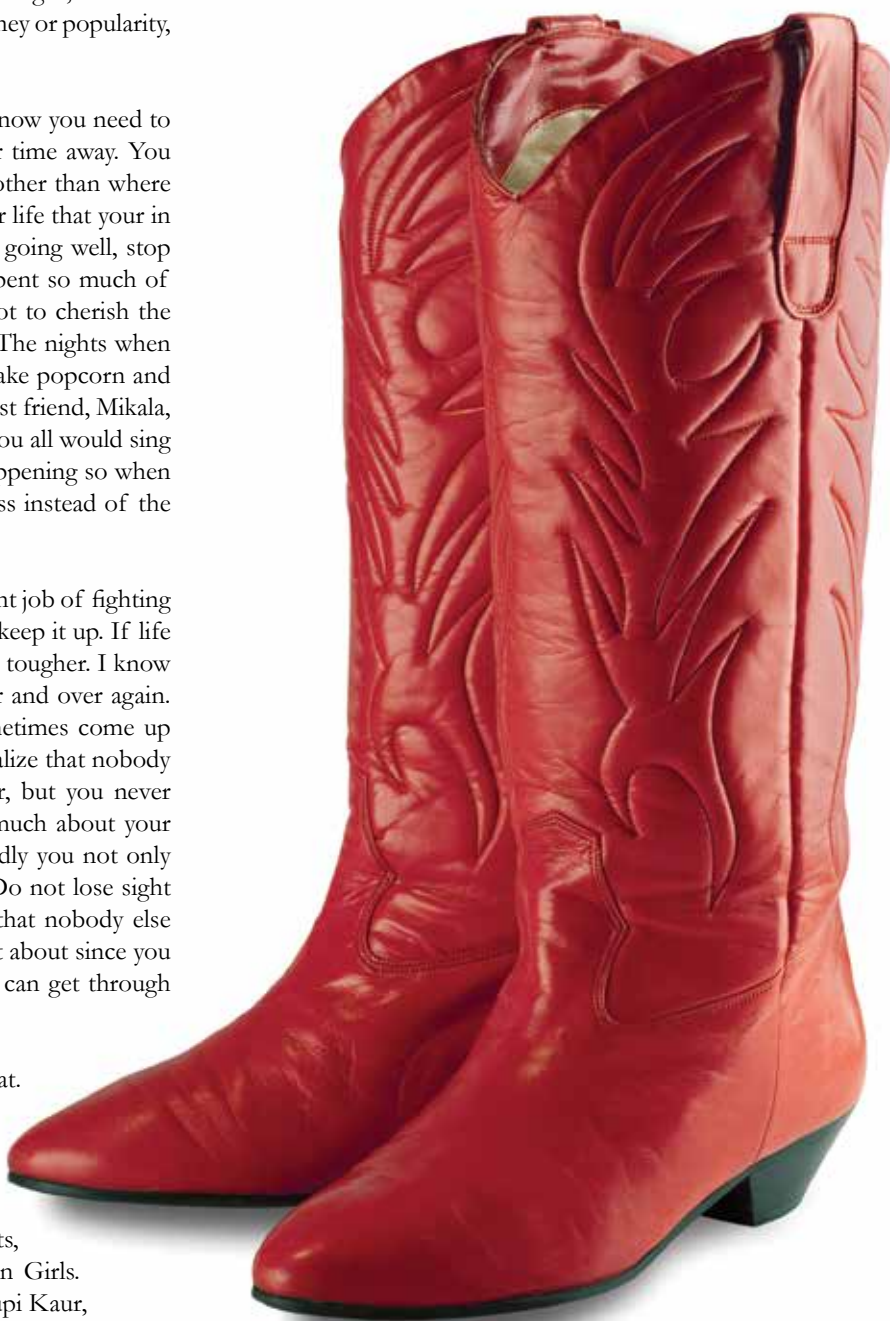
Do not stop playing the flute. It has always brought you so much joy (and made you want to pull your hair out at times). For the most part, it has been fun. It feels good to work hard. Please do not lose that quality. Life can be so discouraging sometimes and it can be so gratifying to have a special skill. Do not rob yourself of the joy of finding a difficult piece of music, learning it, perfecting it, and then performing it. Life's beauty does not come from money or popularity, it comes from little moments of pure joy.

Since I have told you what you are able to do, now you need to hear what you need to do. First, do not wish your time away. You have a very bad habit of wanting to be anywhere other than where you are. Be where your feet are. If the stage of your life that you're in is difficult, find joy in the little moments. If life is going well, stop and smell the roses; do not rush your time. You spent so much of your adolescence wanting to escape, and you forgot to cherish the little moments that made your home life bearable. The nights when your dad was working and you and Mom would make popcorn and watch *The Golden Girls*. The car rides with your best friend, Mikala, when you would turn the radio all the way up and you all would sing and dance. Enjoy these moments while they are happening so when you look back on them, you will look with fondness instead of the regret of rushing time.

Second, stay busy. You have always done a decent job of fighting the urge to stop trying to excel in anything you do; keep it up. If life is going to keep getting harder, then you need to be tougher. I know in high school you followed the same process over and over again. You would work yourself to death in a class, sometimes come up short on grades, look around at your classmates, realize that nobody else cared, and then consider giving up altogether, but you never could go through with giving up. You cared too much about your grades to give up. Hold onto that. I know how badly you not only want to contribute to society, but to exceed in it. Do not lose sight of how much you care when the world tells you that nobody else does. Tell yourself the same thing you have thought about since you were 14, "If you can get through band camp, you can get through anything."

Use this letter as your survival guide. Scratch that. Use this as your guide to thrive. Stop surviving and start living. You have gone through hell and kept going by trusting in the Lord, surrounding yourself with good people, and doing what you love. Keep playing the flute, wearing cowboy boots, listening to show tunes, and watching *The Golden Girls*. Remember these words from your favorite poet, Rupi Kaur, "And here you are living despite it all."

Your past,
Sam





Samantha Rivera was born and raised in the Upstate of South Carolina and lives with her mom and sister. Growing up, she enjoyed playing the flute, reading, writing, participating in youth group activities and spending time with friends.

Samantha marched piccolo in the Blue Ridge High School Corp of Cadets for four years and has played the flute for eight years. Throughout high school, she has remained on the Honor Roll and is a member of the National Honor Society and Beta Club.

Next year, Samantha will be attending the University of Tennessee, Knoxville and majoring in Child and Family Studies with a concentration in Community Outreach. She has been given the opportunity to march piccolo with the Pride of the Southland Band, one of the most prestigious college bands in the country.

After college, Samantha plans to travel as much as she can through international mission work, combining her love of travel, serving the Lord and meeting new people.

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Little Black Dress

A NEW MUST-HAVE FOR THE
JUNIOR LEAGUE OF GREENVILLE

// By *Hannah Barfield Spellmeyer*

In November 2017, the Junior League of Greenville hosted its inaugural Little Black Dress Initiative. Twenty-nine women in the membership gladly volunteered to do something that would make most women squirm; they wore the same black dress five days in a row with a prominent pin that read, "Ask Me About My Little Black Dress."

Participants used the Little Black Dress as a platform to raise funds from their personal networks. When friends and family learned more about the Junior League's programs and the women's commitment to this campaign, they were eager to support them with donations and lots of social media sharing.



The iconic wardrobe staple within this campaign served as a symbol of how socioeconomic limitations can affect women and highlighted the Junior League's mission to improve the lives women, children and families in Greenville. In its first year, The Little Black Dress Initiative raised more than \$18,000 that will go directly to outreach and community programs for the Junior League.

A huge thank you is in order for our participants and the Social Media Committee for helping us achieve such incredible results in our first year!

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Two women are standing on a beach, smiling. They are both wearing bright, colorful Lilly Pulitzer dresses with a floral and bird pattern. The woman on the left has her arms crossed. The background shows the ocean and a sandy beach.

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SHOP FOR GREENVILLE

Shop for Greenville buys the Junior League a big win!

// By Hannah Spellmeyer

As you may have read elsewhere in this issue of VISIONS, the Junior League of Greenville is constantly evaluating its programs and seeking new ways to make a difference. When we learned Junior League organizations around the country initiated retail shopping guides that were enormously successful, we knew that the growing Greenville economy would be an ideal market for these initiatives, too!

In its inaugural year, our *Shop for Greenville* program included 78 of Greenville's most popular retailers, restaurants and businesses. Participants took advantage of discounts up to 20 percent off for a ten-day period in March. With more than 300 shopping guides sold to members of the League and the community, the Junior League surpassed \$15,000 in dollars raised, 100 percent of which will go directly to the League's programs and community outreach.

Amy Tinsley, Active Member in the League, used the shopping guide and discounts to stock her gift closet with wedding, graduation and birthday gifts from some of her favorite stores that rarely offer discounts. "*Shop for Greenville* was a great fundraiser for the Junior League," she said, "I can't wait for next year's event which I know will offer more great deals and include even more participants!"

According to Joanna Sherman, owner of Pink Bee, the fundraiser was a great success for her store as well. She had heard of this event being very successful in Atlanta and other cities and was glad to participate.

"We were excited to support Junior League of Greenville because of their reputation in the community. And, it was nice to see old and new customers shop to support the Junior League," said Sherman. "Being the first year, we were very pleased with the response. We are looking forward to next year and more shops participating in this great event."

The Junior League of Greenville is thrilled at the success of this new program and is already looking forward to next year's shopping week, scheduled for Spring 2019.



Junior League of Greenville Awards 2018 Grants

// By *Tierney Gallagher*

This year, the Junior League of Greenville (JLG) awarded \$40,399.28 to four non profit agencies in the Greenville community in early January during a General Membership Meeting.

“Our mission is to promote voluntarism, develop the potential of women and improve the community through the effective action of trained volunteers,” said Courtney Atkinson, JLG President. “Our members are the heart of our organization and work tirelessly for the benefit of our community. Since our inception, we have looked to the needs of our community and worked to help meet those needs. Supporting local organizations is just one way we can continue to make an impact and we are excited to be able to give over \$40,000 to support agencies that make a difference in the community and the lives of those they serve.”

SWITCH \$10,950.24

Impact Area: Health and Wellness

SWITCH's mission is to fight human trafficking and sexual exploitation in the Upstate of South Carolina through awareness, prevention, fighting demand, intervention and restoration. JLG funding will provide training and materials for 20 volunteers to teach “Love146's Not a #Number” curriculum in schools, churches and other community organizations. “Not a #Number” is an interactive, five-module prevention curriculum designed to teach youth how to protect themselves from human trafficking and exploitation through information, critical thinking and skill development.



Each year, the JLG provides volunteers and grants via its community grant process. Throughout its history, the JLG has contributed over \$2.8 million in funding to local organizations and provided countless hours of volunteer service to the community. The following non-profit agencies received 2018 grant funding is to implement an after-school program for Title 1 schools that will provide apparel, shoes and transportation to the studio for six months. Instruction will include sessions on classical ballet, healthy eating and other health-related topics. The program will culminate with the students' participation in a performance with Carolina Ballet Theatre.

Diaper Bank of the Carolinas \$10,000

Impact Area: Families & Children

Diaper Bank of the Carolinas' mission is to provide diapers for children in the community who would not otherwise receive them. JLG funding will support the “Community Baby Shower Series 2018,” a series of coordinated diaper distribution events held in various communities throughout Greenville County. Events will distribute diapers and other baby, infant and toddler-related items directly to families in need close to where those families live.





West Greenville School

\$15,699.04

Impact Area: Education

West Greenville School's mission is to provide the variety of specialized educational opportunities necessary for students to acquire academic knowledge and to develop the social and emotional skills necessary for productive citizenship. JLG funding is for Project Discovery curriculum kits to support improved student outcomes by providing a research-based, hands-on career education curriculum. Project Discovery includes instructional binders and lessons aligned to state and common core standards, and assessments and work performance benchmarks to measure and track data to manage transition and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) compliance.

Carolina Ballet Theatre

\$3,750

Impact Area: Education

Carolina Ballet Theatre's mission is to engage, entertain and educate its audience through the dynamic medium of dance. JLG funding is to implement an after-school program for Title 1 schools that will provide apparel, shoes and transportation to the studio for six months. Instruction will include sessions on classical ballet, healthy eating and other health-related topics. The program will culminate with the students' participation in a performance with Carolina Ballet Theatre.

OUT WITH THE OLD AND IN WITH THE NEARLY NEW!

Drop off your gently used clothes and housewares today.

Donations to The Nearly New Shop support the Junior League of Greenville's mission to give back to our community. *Your donation is always tax deductible!*



2017 - 2018

JLG YEAR IN REVIEW

// By *Hannah Barfield Spellmeyer*

The Junior League of Greenville is proud of our involvement in the community. From partnerships with other local nonprofit organizations to financial contributions and volunteer hours, we are committed to promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of

women and improving the community. Below is a summary of some of our accomplishments and contributions over the previous twelve months.



HOMERUN FOR HEALTHY KIDS®

21 Vendors

150 Volunteers

2,700 Kids

from 26 Greenville County Schools during the three-day event



SHOP FOR GREENVILLE

350 Books Sold

78 Restaurants and Retailers Participated

\$15,000+ Raised



LITTLE BLACK DRESS INITIATIVE

Over **\$18,000**

29 Participants

10,000+

Social Media Impressions



MEMBERSHIP

15 transfer members
from other Leagues

Actives = **333**

Provisionals = **85**

Sustainers = **771**

TOTAL: **1,189 Members**



GRANT MONEY

\$40,399.28 to SWITCH, Diaper Bank of the Carolinas, West Greenville School, and Carolina Ballet Theatre

\$100,000 pledged
to South Carolina Children's Theatre



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The Emeritus Tea

// By **Gina Blohm**

The Emeritus Tea is held annually to honor Sustainer Members who have Emeritus status, which means they are at least 80 years of age and no longer are required to pay dues. In many case these members paid dues for four decades!

This year's 'Tea' was held in the afternoon at Stella' Southern Brasserie Restaurant which offers cuisine with French/European flair and a Southern twist. Nearly 20 Sustainers attended and enjoyed catching up with friends over buttermilk biscuits with pimento cheese, pickled shrimp, mini pavlovas, and tea. Conversations were filled with laughter while reminiscing about the "good old times" when the "Opportunity Shop" was still downtown and arrangements were still made by phone as no email or text exchanges took place.

Caroline Stewart, Sustainer Representative to the Board, made arrangements for this year's event and Sustainers Lesa Kastler and Jill Schneider joined the Sustainer Outreach Committee to serve as hosts for the afternoon.

Thank you to our Sustainer Emeritus Members for continuing to impart your wisdom on us and for the many ways you continue to support the Junior League's mission!



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// CORRECTION // Due to an editorial oversight, René Morrow was excluded from the Board of Directors' feature in the Fall 2017 issue of VISIONS. The VISIONS editorial staff apologizes for the omission. We are so grateful for her service in the League.

René Morrow

Strategic Planner I have been active in the League for a very long time, and I've had the privilege of meeting countless smart, strong, talented women from all walks of life, each of whom have touched me in some way. From my years on my favorite placement, Provisional Development, I've witnessed young women grow into strong leaders both within the JLG and our community; I love that about this organization! Learning from others while also learning to work alongside them to combine our talents and strengths has been a huge benefit for me while also bringing impactful learning opportunities that I would not have experienced outside the JLG. I'm excited for the future of our community through the thoughtful efforts of the Junior League of Greenville.



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Southern Spring Brunch

// By Hope Collins

In each Spring edition of VISIONS, we feature recipes from our Junior League Cookbooks. We wanted to continue this tradition while also celebrating our theme for this year, “Celebrating our Legacy - Embracing our Future.” I personally had so much fun looking through our old cookbook “Uptown Down South” and couldn’t help but imagine the fun had at dinner parties and luncheons past that featured these recipes.

In keeping with our theme, we revamped some recipes to give them a modern twist that both provisional and sustaining members could enjoy. We hope you’ll be excited to show off your cooking skills at your next gathering. Enjoy!

Be sure to visit our new website for the full recipes soon!



Pimiento Cheese Grits

(Remake of Baked Garlic Cheese Grits)

These grits scream Southern brunch! The original recipe called for Boursin garlic cheese, but you won't miss this flavor when you top these cheesy grits with garlicky wilted kale and warm shallot vinaigrette!



Ham and Spinach Filo Cups

(Remake of Ham and Spinach Rolls)

This midcentury recipe was positively screaming for a makeover. Originally, this recipe consisted of deli meat stuffed with cottage cheese, cream of celery soup, sour cream, mustard and spinach topped with breadcrumbs and baked. This remake still includes many of the original ingredients, but opts for salty prosciutto instead of ham and parmesan cheese instead of cottage cheese. Piled into a flaky filo cup, this retro-made-modern appetizer will remind many Sustainers of brunches past.



Wilted Kale with Warm Shallot Vinaigrette

(Remake of Marinated Vegetables with Salad Greens)

You won't miss the canned vegetables from this original recipe! Using kale instead of canned green beans adds a fresher flavor. Swapping onion for shallots and white wine vinegar for apple cider vinegar ensure a bright pop of flavor. You'll get the original pimiento taste from this medley when you serve these greens on top of pimiento cheese grits!



Shortcut Sweet Potato Drop Biscuits

(Remake of Sweet Potato Biscuits)

Shorten your shopping list and your time in the kitchen by swapping several ingredients from the original recipe for Bisquick! Also, who has a biscuit cutter in their kitchen these days? To keep it simple, make these into mini drop biscuits. They will be equally delicious, and there will be less fuss than rolling out your dough! And since they are mini, no one will judge you for having more than one!



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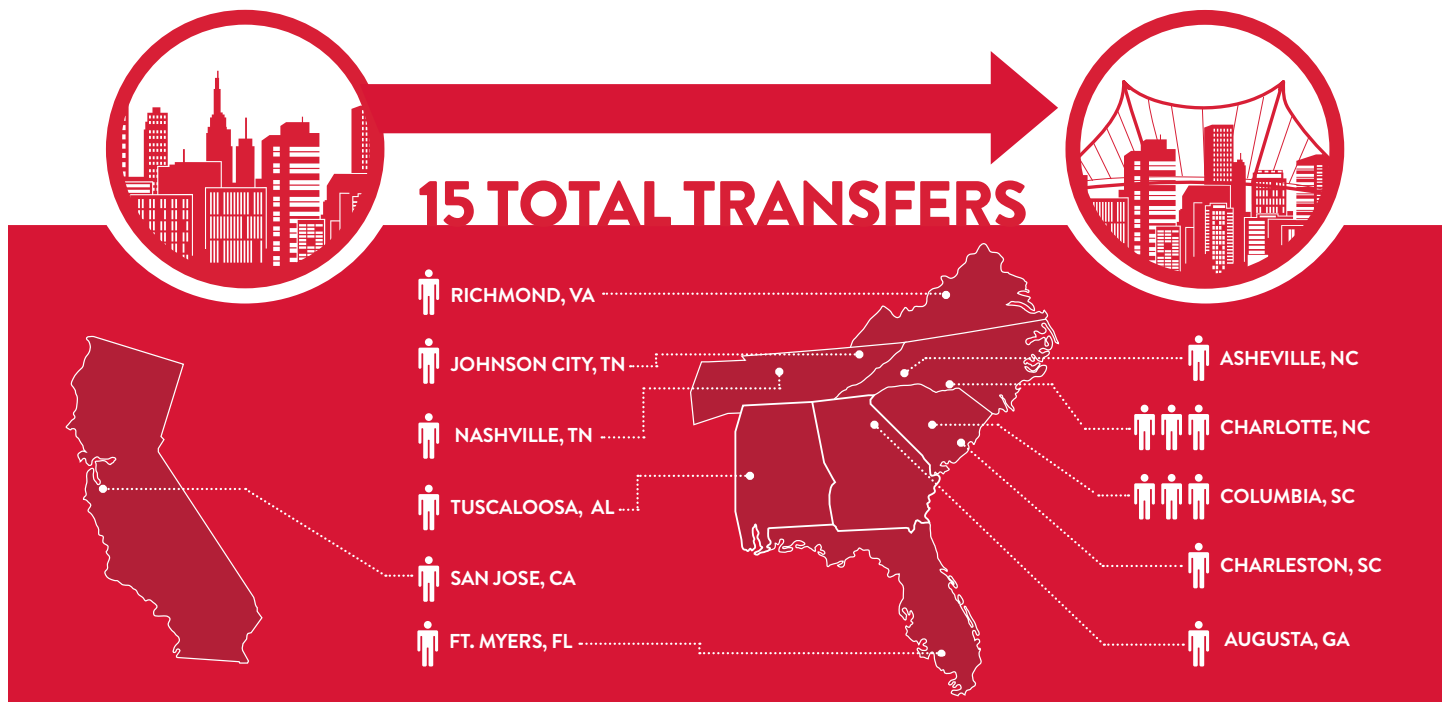
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