

VISIONS

ACHIEVE MORE BY ADAPTING TO CHANGE

How prominent roles lead to success



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& **FEATURES** // Spring 2020



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Letter from
THE PRESIDENT

When brainstorming on what the theme of the 2019-2020 Junior League of Greenville year should be, the word “Community” resonated with me, not only because we have been serving the Greenville Community for the past 90 years, but also because within the JLG, we each have a sense of belonging and connection... our own internal community!

There’s no way any of us could have predicted that in the spring of 2020, our work and social lives would essentially come to a screeching halt due to COVID-19. But here we are...homeschooling our kids, conducting tons of web conferences for work and social distancing in an effort to “flatten the curve” of the coronavirus. Now, more than ever, our JLG community, connection and sense of belonging are of utmost importance.

Thanks to the JLG, many of us have daily and weekly phone calls, text messages and face-to-face web conferences in order to maintain our sanity and human connection with women who encourage and uplift us.

I cannot imagine what our founding mothers thought in 1929 when, just one month after chartering what we now call the Junior League of Greenville, the U.S. stock market crashed, sending our country into a 10-year long Great Depression. These women would have had every reason to throw in the towel and restart the JLG (then known as Junior Charities) in more prosperous times. But they did not. They persevered and rose to the occasion of helping the Greenville community amid major economic turmoil.

Like these women, we, too, will persevere. We will weather this storm and find creative and effective ways to raise funds to keep our operations afloat, all while supporting our Community Partners to make sure they continue to make an impact on Economic Mobility and Human Trafficking in our area.

No doubt, we are living in unprecedented times. But together, as a COMMUNITY of like-minded, philanthropic leaders, we will further our traditions of developing the potential of women and impacting our community for 90+ more years in Greenville.

Kindest regards,

Sarah Lynne Howie

Sarah Lynne Howie
President, 2019 - 2020
Junior League of Greenville, Inc.



Sarah Lynne Howie



Sarah Lynne Howie grew up in Abbeville, SC and graduated from the University of Georgia in 1999. She moved to Greenville in 2002, after working in Atlanta and Augusta, GA for a few years. For the past 15 years she has worked as the Director of Operations for her family's business, Rail Training & Consulting. Sarah Lynne, spouse Lamar Williams, and children, Harry (7) and Lyda (4) love college football, Spring festivals and rock concerts!



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Letter from
**THE SUSTAINER
REPRESENTATIVE**

Happy Summer Sustainers! I recently heard these questions asked...“What do we want to do when things go back to normal?” “Who do we want to be after this national event?” We probably have asked that a dozen times in our lives. We continue to see internet memes about when we go back to “normal.” Is there such a place as normal? Doesn’t every life stage have a challenge causing us to want to “go back”- a new baby, a job, a marriage, a divorce, end of a friendship, a tragedy, a new friendship...the list goes on. In fact, every challenge we should ask ourselves who do we want to be *during* the event and what do we want to carry forward.

During this pandemic and lockdown, the leadership of the Nearly New Shop stepped up with grace and generosity. One of the main priorities was continuing to pay the staff of the Shop and ensuring their livelihood. The Shop is the Junior League’s largest fundraiser the staff have earned record sales all year. Thank you to all of you who continue to donate quality clothes and housewares to make this record revenue. In addition, the Community Impact team reached out to our partners at SWITCH, Jasmine Road, Pendleton Place and Serenity Place to ensure their stability. In times of crisis, women with domestic challenges are most vulnerable. Those of you may recall it was the Junior League who filled suitcases of clothes and delivered to the Greenville Convention Center to await the hurricane evacuees fleeing New Orleans during Hurricane Katrina.

The one thing we do want to carry forward is the WHO in our lives. We certainly will appreciate the short visit in the grocery store, the morning walks, after work meetings, Girl Scouts knocking at the door, a swim meet (yes, even those!) and volunteering at church. How refreshing it will be to see people IN PERSON!

I must take time to thank the Sustainers Hallie Gilbert, Elizabeth Rasor and Harriet Goldsmith who graciously offered to open their lovely home and gardens for springtime social events, but unfortunately they were canceled. We do look forward to next year seeing people IN REAL LIFE and will cherish those moments even more.

It will all work out in the end and if it has not worked out, it is not the end. Let’s get involved and keep moving the Junior League of Greenville forward. See you next year.

Amy Ryberg Doyle

Amy Ryberg Doyle
Sustainer Representative, 2019 - 2020
Junior League of Greenville, Inc.

Amy Ryberg Doyle grew up in Aiken, South Carolina. She is married to Jonathan and has four children ages 7 to 17. She has served on Greenville City Council for 12 years and her favorite outdoor activity is hiking with her family.



Letter from
THE EDITOR

This issue is the 2020 Election issue, celebrating women who answered the call to run for office, examining the important role of advocacy and previewing issues on the ballot. But I can’t ignore the obvious, the coronavirus disease. COVID-19 is consuming my life, our lives, whether we’ve contracted it or not.

The coronavirus has turned our world upside down and inside out. Social distancing; no large crowd gathering (hello, Junior League of Greenville); stay-at-home orders; sudden home schooling; instant work-from-home (if you’re fortunate); no more eating out; churches, malls, movies and gyms closed; trips, events, conferences and sports canceled; unimaginable economic devastation to countless industries; healthcare workers jeopardizing their health to treat the sick; and hospitals facing a shortage of personal protective equipment, ventilators and beds, all while the cases and death toll rises.

I pray that by the time this is published, we are out of the woods and seeing the numbers recede. It is going to take a while to recover.

I would like to thank all the healthcare workers, first responders, academic personnel, food service staff, grocery store associates, janitorial and sanitation employees, transportation drivers and carriers, and essential workforce for keeping America running.

This too shall pass.

J. Lisa Maronie

J. Lisa Maronie
Editor, 2019 - 2020
Junior League of Greenville, Inc.

J. Lisa Maronie is a Greenville native. She and her high school sweetheart (husband, Jamie) attended college in Tennessee and returned home thereafter. She works for the Institute for Child Success and serves on the board of Palmetto Shared Services Alliance and on the Prisma Health Children’s Hospital - Upstate Community Advisory Council. She is a Leadership Greenville alumna, Class 38. She and Jamie have two children, Logan and Lyris, and two dogs.



MISSION STATEMENT

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

The Junior League of Greenville engages in initiatives that help women in our community overcome barriers, focusing on Human Trafficking and Economic Mobility.

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We would love to hear from you! Email us 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.



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A League of Their Own: WOMEN IN POLITICS

// By *Meghan Pavelka*

According to the Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP) 2019 study, only 29.3% of U.S. statewide elected officials are women. Though this number may seem low, it is a part of a growing statistic. Today, more women than ever before are serving in an elected official role. The Upstate is home to three of these women: Sustainer Amy Ryberg Doyle, Sustainer Liz Seman, and Representative Chandra Dillard. These women have served, and some currently are serving Greenville with hopes to better the lives of all people in the community. Having overcome a statistical adversity in their career, Doyle, Seman and Dillard comment on their definitions of success, inspirations and what they want to see for the future of Greenville.

A political colleague once told Doyle, “It isn’t the mountains ahead to climb that wear you out; it’s the pebble in your shoe.” Doyle comments that while she served, she found that dealing with “pebbles” was a large part of her city service and subsequent success. Anything from a newly paved road, a new playground at a neighborhood park, a sidewalk, local policing or improved recycling and trash pick-up were small things that really added up. And when these small things added up, Doyle commented, “people’s lives and businesses thrive. That’s what I found most rewarding: dealing with these thousands of pebbles throughout the city.” Dillard agrees with Doyle, stating “I’m only successful when the people I represent are pleased with my service and the outcomes of my efforts on their behalf.”

Alongside looking at opportunities outward, Seman responds that success comes from inside as well. She said, “I define success as any moment in time when you’ve accomplished something you set out to do.” Seman believes that success could be landing a new job, completing a major project, running a productive meeting, eating healthy for an entire day, finishing multiple loads of laundry before bedtime, having zero unread messages in your inbox or simply carving out some quiet time during a busy week.”

With their success, these three women have become inspirations to many in our community, however they also have others they look up to. Dillard noted that she has too many inspirations to name. She

said, “I am inspired by women who beat the odds, who show courage in the face of fear and who are resilient.” Doyle also commented that among the many women who have defined and shaped her life, her mother is her biggest inspiration. She believes her mother’s service-minded attitude helped shape her childhood, and eventually led her to public service and joining the Junior League of Greenville. She comments, “I joined the Junior League of Greenville because I knew I would be with a group of people who thought giving back was not just a priority but a necessity to daily life.”

Seman responded that the one woman who inspired her most is her boss, Dr. Elizabeth Davis. As the President of Furman University, Seman added “she is a thoughtful and smart leader with a savvy sense of humor. She has a vision for the university and a quiet confidence that inspires the entire campus.” Alongside these qualities, Seman noted how she appreciates the way that Dr. Davis leads. Her leadership has been a catalyst for Seman’s own personal growth as a public servant.

As Seman, Doyle and Dillard work to lead the Greenville community through their careers and volunteer work, they each noted aspirations they have for the Upstate as it continues to grow and expand. Doyle comments that Greenville needs to be laser focused on jobs as a way to continue to grow our economy. Doyle commented that one way to secure a growing job market would be to recruit new industry to the Upstate or working with local businesses to grow. She stated that, “At the very heart of a family’s success is employment. If we lose the focus of jobs, we lose the lifeline to success.”

Alongside creating jobs, both Seman and Dillard note that we must be deliberate about addressing other challenges, such as affordable housing and transportation. Dillard has high hopes for this as she knows that Greenville is a wonderful place to live and it is a community that values diversity and inclusiveness. Seman stated, “As Greenville continues to grow and expand, I hope that we never lose that philanthropic spirit.”

ACHIEVE a more prominent role in your organization

- **Seek and build relationships with a mentor or sponsor**
- **Communicate and be adaptable – pivot, change and keep moving forward**



As our nation and state continue to see a rise in women in leadership positions, Doyle, Dillard and Seman all reflect on strategies that can help women achieve a more prominent role in their organizations. Both Seman and Dillard believe that seeking and building relationships with a mentor or sponsor can be an invaluable way to achieve upward mobility in an organization. Doyle believes that communication and adaptability to change is key. She believes that it is easy to say “you need to overcome failure,” however it is a whole other thing to pivot, change, and keep moving forward.

Advice she gives to future leaders: “read the paper, turn off social media and be open to new ideas.”

Editor’s Note: In addition to Liz Seman, Amanda McDougald Scott, JLG Active Member, is running for elected office (County Council) this year. The JLG is a non-partisan organization and does not endorse a candidate in this, or any other race. We are proud of our Members and their dedication to the community.



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The New Normal

// By *Kate Dabbs*

As a marketing and communications professional, I feel as if I have been living in a case study for crisis communications. The way we have been communicating with one another to build relationships, conduct business and market has changed dramatically in a shockingly short period of time. I thought about making a word cloud from all of the emails I received and have some strong guesses of what would rise to the top in frequency.

Unprecedented.
The new normal.
I hope you are well.
Let's hop on a call.

Abundance of caution.
Flattening the curve.
WFH.
Social Distancing.

The reality is, no one knew how to handle this situation. It IS unprecedented and we all went from a state of cautious hopefulness to a new normal measured in six feet increments of social distancing. Hard decisions have been made by many with consequences we will feel for years to come. Like so many organizations, the Junior League has pivoted VISIONS to this online edition you are currently reading.

While our nation deals with crippling unemployment, a deflated economy, and no clear path for what “over” will look like, we wanted to check in with a few of our Members to see what their experience looks like from the inside.

Baby and Me: Kate Dabbs

My submission of this article to our VISIONS Editor is late. But that is not because I am lazy or slow. There simply wasn't a moment to spare and that is how I have felt every day since I began working from home full-time while also mothering my now six-month-old baby boy. Now seven weeks in, we have found our routines of bottles and naps, screaming fits and Zoom calls. In the early days, my stress and tension were so high I would wake up with sore jaws from grinding my teeth all night. I began to lose my hair, but still am not sure if it was postpartum hormones or stress. Then, the guilt set in – I am so privileged to be able to work safely in my home with my baby protected and resting beside me. How can I let myself feel anything but gratefulness?



As I have fought with all of these emotions, one thing is clear. COVID-19 will affect and has affected every single one of us in different ways. Your experience is unique to you and you are allowed to feel the way you do. Even if it seems trivial to mourn the small things that defined life “before,” you can give yourself permission to have those feelings.

Teaching in the Time of Corona: Meghan Pavelka

Meghan teaches high school English at Greer High School and has already had a trying year with a husband deployed with the Army [he is thankfully now home]. Today, she is adapting to teaching online. She says:

“Teaching online had definitely posed challenges, however it has also allowed me to learn and grow as a teacher. Having school closed for the rest of the year was definitely sad, but the right decision. The graduating 2020 seniors were the first class I ever taught. I taught some three years in a row, and I even served as their class advisor and planned their prom. I will definitely miss them.

I have learned that even in circumstances like these, students want to learn. I see my students growing soft skills such as responsibility and time management. I also enjoy seeing them attempt the work without my direct supervision. I notice students taking bigger leaps in their writing, and they are not afraid to make educated guesses without the fear of getting things wrong.”

Work from Home: Maronie Diaries

In addition to her role as Editor of VISIONS for the past League year, Lisa Maronie has been juggling working from home for the Institute of Child Success as a Communications Associate. She says: “Some aspects are a struggle. My work schedule is easy to adhere to as I work-from-home, and I have an eighth grader and an 18-year-old senior (celebrated birthdays during the pandemic) who are capable of feeding themselves during the day and who e-learn from 9:00 am until they are finished. I can retreat to my garden whenever I get weary. We take a walk as a family every day that it isn't raining. That's mandatory, because they wouldn't get any Vitamin D if it wasn't for that. We eat dinner about the same time every evening, either home cooked, take-out or a food truck comes to the neighborhood. But what is hard is being consistent with getting dressed and not being able to go to the gym.

I'll admit, I don't always have the desire to put on nice clothes and style my hair. And before coronavirus, I had been going to the gym 3-5 times a week because I suffered a medical emergency last December that I was overcoming. I haven't established a solid routine because my mood varies, and I've witnessed my children have breaking points. We'll get there, though.”

Dentists with no patience: Kathryn Freedman

For Kathryn Freedman, the current Vice-President, a break from practicing dentistry was already in progress as she has a sabbatical in process to pursue additional education. However, she has a unique perspective on the challenges many in the field have been facing. She says:

“The field of dentistry is struggling with this right now. Most dental offices are closed, and dentists are only seeing emergency patients. As a health care provider, it is hard for me to sit and watch a public health crisis take place all around me and not act.

When dentists begin to open their offices again, they will face a multitude of issues which will need to be addressed. Because general dentists typically book patients for their dental cleanings six months in advance, offices will have many patients who missed their cleaning appointments during the quarantine, but there will be few spots to put them.

Disinfection and sterility of instruments have always been important in every dental practice, but now dentists must find ways to cut down on the aerosol produced during procedures and to eliminate the potential for airborne transmission of the coronavirus. You may see dental practices decreasing the number of patients they see throughout the day.

Also, dentists and their staff members may need to wear more extensive Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) than they have worn before the coronavirus. Unfortunately ordering N95 masks and proper cleaning materials is extremely difficult right now.”

Like all of us, you are likely experiencing your own version of a wildly different life in a world with COVID-19. We hope, above all, that you and your family are well and stay well. May we all be able to gather together when this is over with stronger hearts and braver minds from enduring.

SWITCH

A Crash Course in Middle and High Schools

// By *Meghan Pavelka*

According to South Carolina Attorney General Alan Wilson, there has been a reported 360% increase in recorded human trafficking victims in the state. Greenville County leads second in South Carolina in these reported cases. While this increase may seem high, it really speaks to the building awareness behind the major problem of human trafficking in South Carolina. Awareness allows for victims of sex trafficking and other members of the community to reach out for help. Within Greenville County, one of the top leaders in the fight to end human trafficking and sexual exploitation is SWITCH.

Since 2012, SWITCH has worked in the Upstate to bring awareness, implement intervention strategies for victims and help them find assistance in restoration programs. In the 2018-2019 League year, the Junior League of Greenville took on Human Trafficking as a Community Impact Focus Area and formed partnerships with SWITCH and Jasmine Road. The Human Trafficking Impact Committee’s focus is to provide trained and skilled JLG volunteers to support organizations as they continue to grow and scale to meet the need of the community. During the 2019-2020 League year, JLG had 20 volunteer Members servicing SWITCH. Their roles ranged depending on the needs of SWITCH, and five League Members have been formally trained as Love146 educators.

As Greenville has grown conscious of the increasing problem of human trafficking, SWITCH has begun to implement prevention programs throughout the community. One of their programs, Love146 #NotANumber campaign, works with Upstate middle and high schools, as well as youth groups and at-risk youth centers, to educate students through this evidence-based prevention curriculum. Love146 is designed to teach youth how to protect themselves from human trafficking and exploitation through information, critical thinking and skill development. SWITCH states, “This international curriculum provides young people with the tools and knowledge to have healthy relationships, recognize red flags, know their safe places and strengthen their vulnerabilities in order to protect themselves and their friends from victimization.” The program meets the national health education standard, so it works well in health classes, science classes or even social studies courses.

Over the course of five modules, the curriculum covers a handful of topics such as: real examples of human trafficking, healthy and unhealthy relationships, victim blaming and developing safety plans. Through open conversations, engaging activities, the use of media and opportunities for self-disclosure, participants do many things including:

- Raise their awareness of what constitutes human trafficking and exploitation.
- Learn how to recognize recruitment tactics and understand vulnerabilities.
- Challenge harmful stereotypes and societal attitudes.
- Identify healthy support systems.
- Develop skills to safely navigate potential and existing exploitative situations.
- Learn how to access community resources when situations occur that increase their vulnerability (or if exploitation is already underway).

Greenville County Schools 2019-2020 Teacher of the Year Susan McCoy is a trained volunteer with SWITCH. She believes, “This training helped me to see more of what [my students] may encounter in situations that are outside of the classroom. I also felt it gave me a much better hold on what to look for when dealing with students who come to me with issues. Training also helped me to see what resources were available.”



McCoy explained that the biggest stereotype she works to break as a SWITCH volunteer and teacher is that human trafficking is not defined by a neighborhood or demographic; it does not respect economic and racial classes and “is everyone’s problem.” Training has influenced her teaching style as well, she states “I now see that many things we as teachers think are bad behaviors or poor effort can be masking a vulnerable student. I think it is also important to say we can’t see everyone as a victim, but we can see signs of victimization and give those situations a second or deeper look.”

In 2019, SWITCH and its volunteers, like McCoy, taught a total of 70 classes in different schools or youth groups around Greenville, Spartanburg, Greer and other surrounding areas, and they had the ability to reach and educate 288 Upstate students. McCoy believes that getting more people involved in SWITCH’s program requires the right people hearing the truth: “Training our school nurses and guidance or mental health professionals is key. They are very likely to be the first to see and we need to make sure they are trained and aware. I think we have to start with those on the front lines of teaching seeing the benefit because right now, I do not think the majority realize this is real, it is right here and maybe right in your classroom.”

INTRODUCING
Empowered Women of Greenville
A new signature community event

// By *Kate Dabbs*

Last October, the sun set on a final Home Run for Healthy Kids® (HRHK) at the Greenville Drive Stadium at Fluor Field. While we all breathed a collective sigh of relief at the conclusion of another year of managed chaos, there was a palpable sadness for this chapter in the Junior League of Greenville’s story to come to a close.

2019 brought change to the Mission of the League and a pivot in alignment. As we are becoming students in the new vernacular of human trafficking, economic mobility and the many layers of experiences they entail, we are shifting our signature programming as well.

In January of 2020, two new Committees formed to develop capstone events around our key Focus Areas of Human Trafficking and Economic Mobility. The goal of these Committees is to develop coalition support with other nonprofits in the area to align efforts and maximize impact. Whitney Hanna, Community Impact Vice President, says “Our goal is to explore partnerships with existing

events so that we are coming together to help women in the community overcome barriers.” Tentative plans are underway to connect to a human trafficking symposium focusing on education and advocacy later in 2020.

“ Women who attend will visit educational stations like HRHK and attend breakout sessions with speakers to work on their resumes, financial literacy, dressing for success and even learning more about things like expungement and other legal actions that can be taken to chart a new course in their lives. ”



The signature event surrounding Economic Mobility will mirror the style and substance of Home Run for Healthy Kids®. Currently titled ‘Empowered Women of Greenville,’ this event is in its infancy and will be shaped by the women on the Committee. Early plans indicate it will take place on a Sunday so participants will not have to miss work to attend. It will be held at the Junior League Headquarters to include involvement with the Nearly New Shop as well.

Women who attend will visit educational stations like HRHK and attend breakout sessions with speakers to work on their resumes, financial literacy, dressing for success and even learning more about things like expungement and other legal actions that can be taken to chart a new course in their lives. Organizers hope to include some healthcare elements like a dental clinic van.

“We hope to hold the event after churches end services on Sundays in the hopes that they may support the effort by even providing transportation for women in their congregations,” Nicole McAden, Education Chair of the League said. The Committee will partner with many organizations around the Upstate to provide services and education opportunities while also ensuring women who are underserved or underemployed learn about the event.

The Committee hopes to launch the inaugural Empowered Women of Greenville event in spring of 2021.



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Proud supporter of the Junior League of Greenville since 2018. Brittany is a provisional member, and has been involved in:

- Shop for Greenville Participant 2018, 2019, and 2020
- JLG Little Black Dress Initiative Participant 2019

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Four Perspectives on Advocacy

Within the Junior League and Beyond

// By *Kate Dabbs*

For this story, we talked to four Members with unique perspectives on how they came to become students of advocacy and what this concept means to them.



Robin Blackwood
SUSTAINER

Robin Blackwood’s advocacy was shaped by her journey through parenting a son with special needs. Her ten-year-old son was born with Fragile X syndrome, an extremely rare disorder that often manifests itself through autism, ADHD and anxiety. How would she navigate this new journey of copious tests, doctor visits, insurance and all that having a rare medical condition entails?

“When you don’t know a lot of people raising a child with a disability, it can feel isolating. You don’t have someone to share this with and go through it with. That is hard with anything in life,” she said regarding the early days of adjusting to her new normal. That pushed Robin to connect with other families with children with special needs/disabilities. The more she learned about the world of

“The world of disabilities is like modern day civil rights. So many people are discriminated against – in education, daycare, the workplace, housing, or older individuals living with disabilities. They are constantly fighting for their rights.”

disabilities, the more she saw things that needed to be improved. It pushed her to rely on her background of being a communications professional who tells stories for her business. It was a natural fit to look for ways to advocate for people living with disabilities.

This advocacy took on many forms. Sometimes, it looked like traveling to DC to meet with legislators with the Fragile X Foundation to encourage them to fund research. Robin says, “The CDC, NIH and Department of Defense put a lot of money into researching Fragile X because it is connected to so many other brain disorders that are genetic.” She has met with members of Congress to advocate for that funding source to not be cut, to share the benefits from her perspective. They have been successful in protecting those funds in the eight years she has lobbied.

Other days, Robin’s advocacy looks a little more familiar to most parents, ensuring her child has a meaningful and equitable experience at school. “I noticed that the special education students were separated in their class picture from the rest of the students. I have advocated for inclusion throughout his schooling as much as possible and suggested the class picture be of the entire class. While it may seem minor, it meant so much.”

Nine years from that initial diagnosis of Fragile X, Robin describes her journey as enlightening and empowering: “Our journey will never end. The topics we are focusing on will change as my son grows up. The world of disabilities is like modern day civil rights. So many people are discriminated against -- in education, daycare, the workplace, housing or older individuals living with disabilities. They are constantly fighting for their rights.”



Elizabeth Earle
ACTIVE MEMBER

Elizabeth Earle’s daily life is a regular exercise in advocacy in her nine-to-five role as a school counselor at Hillcrest High School. While she focuses specifically on career and academic counseling today, she has spent 12 years helping middle and high school students make their way through some of the most agonizing years of their lives. “Kids are not learning coping skills and how to advocate for themselves now. It is hard for them to reach out on their own and tend to want people to do things for them,” she says. She teaches her students how to be resilient and learn to pursue their dreams as their own advocates.

“With my students, I like to match their strengths and interests to career opportunities and identify reachable goals.”

Elizabeth has 300 students in her caseload, and while that number may be overwhelming to some, she sees it as motivational. “I know I am making a positive impact, even if the results will not be seen right away,” she says. “I have heard from students years later telling me the impact our time together had on their path. Those situations give me faith that my efforts were not in vain,” she added.

Elizabeth has served in the Junior League for 15 years in a variety of roles and like her professional job, her Placement today focuses on being a connector. “With my students, I like to match their strengths and interests to career opportunities and identify reachable goals,” she says. As a coordinator for Transfers for the League, she serves a similar purpose in cultivating connections to help them feel a part of the organization.

She says, “Those who want to be advocates...the first step is exploration and getting more information. Try different things to find out what you are passionate about -- it is easier to find what you don’t like than what you do like.”



Jan Clements

SUSTAINER

Newer additions to the Junior League will likely be surprised to learn the way the League rallied to form a coalition that would ultimately lead to legislation for the funding of all-day kindergarten statewide. But in June of 1996, Jan Clements was celebrating the passage of a law dedicating \$14.1 million to the state budget that would extend the school day to a full day schedule, initially focusing on needy children before expanding to the full population.

“ At the time, the League was focused on women, children and families. They formed a coalition with other Junior Leagues across the state and hospital systems, and decided to advocate for full-day kindergarten. ”

Jan transferred to the Junior League of Greenville in 1990 from the Decatur, AL chapter. Her initial Placement was on the so-named Advocacy/Public Affairs Committee, where she eventually became Co-Chair. She grew to love advocacy because it was an exciting time, looking at various bills to gather support around in the legislature. At the time, the League was focused on women, children and families. They formed a coalition with other Junior Leagues across the state and hospital systems, and decided to advocate for full-day kindergarten. “We held a vote to decide what issue we wanted to rally behind, and this became the one,” she said. “That was the most important piece of legislation the Junior League came up with that had an impact on our state. It wouldn’t have happened without the coalition and Junior League of Greenville taking the lead on the issue,” Jan adds.

At the time of this monumental effort, Jan was a stay-at-home-mom while her husband traveled for work. Her free moments from running the household were consumed with the fight to convince legislators of the merit of this bill. “I probably spent 40 hours a week on the phone--often when the kids were in bed and my husband was traveling,” she says. When the phone wasn’t enough, she would go to Columbia with other League Members to meet with legislators in person. “We would all drop our kids off at school and then jet to the State House, only to be back in time to pick them up at the end of the day. It was intense...we chased after representatives in our heels to get their attention sometimes,” she said.

Their exhaustive work was successful and made dramatic impacts on early childhood education. Jan’s advocacy efforts were a launching pad for other initiatives like First Steps, and she remains engaged over 20 years later.



Linda Brees

SUSTAINER

In August of 2019, Linda Brees retired from a career leading child advocacy efforts through the Prisma Health Children’s Hospital - Upstate. She has received numerous awards, including the prestigious Order of the Palmetto. Today, she serves as a Senior Fellow with the Institute for Child Success (ICS), an organization she helped found in 2010 that focuses on research and policy.

Linda spent 25 years as the director of the Bradshaw Institute for Community Child Health and Advocacy. She started with a department of one and grew that to a team of over 35. They focused on prevention and wellness, keeping children healthy and safe in the community.

“I knew the importance of those early years of development. As I grew professionally, I was really able to witness how important those formative years really were. That is when the brain is transforming, really. If we don’t address the needs of children, especially during that birth to five years, then we are allowing children to start out their school and life experience in a way that will have an impact on their development for the rest of their lives,” she says.

Linda’s legislative track focused on promoting issues around child safety. She was active in the early years in getting car seat legislation updated. Her advocacy grew to things that promoted early learning and accessibility to healthcare for young children. “I either had on a strong early childhood hat or a healthcare hat,” she says. “No matter what, I was going to be involved in legislation that is going to address the health, safety and welfare of our children,” she adds.

Throughout her career, Linda has done multiple trainings on what advocacy really means. She says, “The word [advocacy] itself means ‘to give voice.’ We have done that throughout time as we advocate for our own children, families. Advocacy is an opportunity to change our communities, our state, and our country in a way that we truly can make a difference.”

“ If you don’t speak up and make the elected officials that you have put into place know how their constituents are feeling, who is going to? ”

Linda likes to tell people that if you don’t speak up and make the elected officials that you have put into place know how their constituents are feeling, who is going to? “It is an obligation for us, as individual citizens, to make sure the elected officials understand clearly what we want them to do and why. Collective voices are more powerful than individual voices, but you have to start somewhere,” she concludes.

For all of these women, advocacy at its core is making sure people in power learn about issues that matter. The first step is making sure you know who represents you in local and national government or even school boards. After all, if they don’t hear it from us, who is going to tell them?

scstatehouse.gov/legislatorssearch.php

Why You Should Care About Public Transportation for Greenville Residents

// By *J. Lisa Maronie*

The Junior League of Greenville strives for women and children to climb the economic ladder out of poverty. Greenlink Transit, our mass transit system, defines economic mobility as the ability to improve economic status – often measured by the movement between income quintiles. In Greenville County, that climb is more difficult for people born into poverty, and unfortunately, our current bus system makes it an uphill battle for some.

On February 28, JLG Members rode the bus and had an informative lunch session at the Greenlink facility with Nicole McAden, Marketing and Public Affairs Manager with the City of Greenville and Education Chair of the Community Impact Council of JLG. She spoke to us about some of the potholes on the road out of poverty.

Nicole explained what Greenlink riders face by barriers to education, employment, health, housing and social. They are also restricted by Greenlink’s hours of operation and the number of routes.

Nearly every job (even low-paying) requires a high school diploma or a GED. To earn her way out of poverty, a women needs access to higher education opportunities or job skills training. How can the bus only go to the main campus of Greenville Tech? Does she earn a fair wage? Does she need a dual income or roommate to afford the cost of living?

The fictitious Tess we learned about is a kitchen manager at a downtown restaurant, but she can’t rely on the bus for transportation home because she would need to leave before 6:30pm to catch the last ride. Can a single mother afford childcare? Is her job on the route? The hypothetical Amanda landed a job with Lockheed Martin, but the bus doesn’t go to Donaldson.

Transportation affects health, nutrition and lifestyle. She cannot provide healthy food if she lives in a food desert and the only options nearby are a convenience store and a fast food restaurant. She does not have sidewalks in her neighborhood to access the bus, and there was not a stop outside of the JLG for us to use on our tour.

That is where the Greenville Area Paratransit (GAP) comes in. It is for people with a disability (e.g., mobility, cognitive, visual, etc.) that prevents them from catching the traditional bus. It is \$3 per ride and it will take them to a medical appointment, grocery store, even a friend’s house – anywhere on the route, within service hours.

With all of the condos and luxury apartments in downtown Greenville, lower-income residents are pushed out to other areas like White Horse Rd. and Slater/Marietta. She no longer has access points. For instance, where will her children go to school? Will it have the same resources as an A.J. Whittenburg or Blythe Academy? Has she altered her children’s path to graduation?

The social ramifications abound. She does not live in a close-knit community – she does not feel comfortable asking a neighbor to watch her child, or asking for a ride to work in an emergency. And what if she has an years’ old, non-violent offense for drug possession charges. Is she aware of the expungement laws that went into effect in 2019? Does she have \$200 to get it expunged from her record so she can get a job earning more money? The current bus system has 12 routes. The bus comes by once an hour and it runs Monday – Friday, 5:30a.m. to 7:30p.m., Saturday from 8:30a.m. to 6:30p.m.; and there is no service on Sunday. That presents quite a dilemma for her. But help is on the way!

To achieve all of these improvements, and create a more useful system for our residents, it is estimated that this all will require at least \$16 million in operating funds. But for a budget increase this large, up from just \$4.4 million in 2017, the community needs to express support for transit and let elected officials know if these improvements are desired.



TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN

PHASE 1

Greenlink transit has received money from the County and City to extend hours of all bus routes to 11:30 p.m. It will be phased in as they hire drivers.

PHASE 2

Go to 30-minute service which requires Greenville Transit to double its fleet and build a maintenance facility.

PHASE 3

Add Sunday service and incorporate 10 additional routes and 9 new routes including Greer, Fountain Inn and Travelers Rest.

It is estimated that this all will require \$16 million in operating funds.

YOUNG WOMEN'S *Writing Contest*

The eighth annual Young Women's Writing Contest required writers (female students in grades 6-12 from Greenville County public, private and home schools) to submit an essay about a time when her pre-existing worldview was challenged. She had to demonstrate that she listened to and learned from experiences and perspectives contrary to her own with respect and maturity.

For her winning essay, Charlotte Cross received a \$500 scholarship award and was recognized at our annual (Zoom) meeting, May 19. Charlotte is a 16-year-old homeschool student and native of Greenville, SC, who reads extensively, writes prolifically, and savors the study of history, ethics, and Christian apologetics, among other topics. Competing in speech and debate tournaments, singing for the Greenville Youth Chorale, and playing piano are a few of her extracurricular pursuits. Important to her are attending church and participating in its ministries as well as contributing to the community through independent volunteer work and Beta Club projects. Charlotte also enjoys keeping up with current events, politics, and the stock market. She is currently planning for a career in law.

Respect: A Key Ingredient to Debate

// By **Charlotte Cross**

In a world where persuasive devices are everywhere, inviting you to subscribe to certain ideas, validate certain decisions, and buy certain goods, the ability to discern what you believe is a precious asset. Unfortunately, if you do not actively work to research both sides of an issue, you can fall prey to convincing gimmicks. I spend a lot of time studying subjects from curricula with a Christian perspective. While my studies are edifying, the materials I learn from often contain non-Christian or opposing viewpoints purely to defend the Christian worldview. But I have learned how important it is—vital, even—to examine in-depth what other people believe in order to wrestle with and cement my own beliefs, whether theological, philosophical, or political. Team policy debate proved to be a valuable conduit for exposing me to policies and ideologies I was unfamiliar with, for learning exactly what certain people believe about an issue, and for enabling me to advocate for both sides of that issue.

In team policy debate, you receive a resolution for which you and your partner then have to formulate a plan of reform. This debate season, the resolution concerns United States energy policy. Energy policy was not a topic I had interacted with much before; however, this subject actually offered me an opportunity to explore an issue that holds much more importance than I first believed. Energy policy encompasses national security, greenhouse gas, tax, and even popular concern. As an American citizen who deeply cares for a protected country, clean air, lower taxes, and personal safety, I discovered energy policy is vastly more interesting than I expected, and it should be a topic more prevalent within everyday conversation. I realized that although I may not know much about a subject, I should never hesitate to learn about it.

My debate teammate and I were to argue for a specific energy policy reform plan of action: to prohibit proposed oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR). The ANWR is located in the northeast corner of Alaska and is home to a variety of animals as well as several Native American tribes. From my research, it was clear that ANWR oil exploration and drilling was a highly controversial issue. Some sources touted substantial benefits of it, not only for stabilizing American oil independence but also for improving the



Alaskan economy through lease sales and revenue brought in by the actual drilling. However, other sources claimed that there is no certainty about how much oil awaits extraction from the refuge and that the drilling process would have a negative impact not only on the ecology and wildlife but also the people living in or near the region. It was a difficult process, weighing each new piece of evidence and deciding how it might be used to prove my points. Preparing my case taught me that everyone's voice is important. I couldn't discount one source because its information had just as much value as another.

The ANWR drilling issue, with its heavy focus on environmental protection over economic benefits, gave me pause when I first heard of it. Nine times out of ten, I support ventures that will support and/or stabilize the economy. However, ANWR is an area where Native American tribes have been living for millennia. Tampering with their homeland seemed unjust. The more I researched for our plan, the more I could see how prohibiting drilling in the ANWR was not a bad policy. The issue of drilling was important, but the arguments for both sides were more important. The extensive preparation put my feet in my opponents' shoes, helping me to understand where they come from to the best of my ability. Team policy debate taught me that I should never discard opposing viewpoints purely because of my biases, but to equally consider both sides.

Debate has taught me to research in-depth about both sides of an issue, to treat everyone's opinion equally, and to better respect informed argumentation between two contrasting beliefs. As a debater, I have to know just as much about the side I am not advocating for in order to anticipate and refute their contentions. One of the best things about team policy debate is that it is not merely applicable to the resolution at hand; it also forms a foundation of reverence for any disagreement, whether political, familial, or internal. The mindset I possessed before I began debate has since been replaced with humble respect not only for energy policy, but for the people behind every dispute I have encountered since.

Shop for Greenville

A WRAP-UP

// By *J. Lisa Maronie*

Shop for Greenville (SFG), the Junior League of Greenville’s third annual shopping event fundraiser to support the programs and community of the JLG, took place over 10 days in March. From March 6-15, savvy shoppers accessed their SFG coupon books of nearly 100 local and online businesses – eateries, boutiques, jewelers, service providers and specialty stores. The discount cards cost \$40 and all proceeds benefited the Mission of the JLG.

A General Membership Meeting was held March 10 at Pour Taproom (a SFG vendor). It was a night of retail therapy at participating area downtown businesses with folks dropping in the GMM for drinks, shop talk and raffled door prizes. Not to be outdone, Sustainers and Active Tenures got in on the action too, by attending an early-access shopping event at Augusta Commons on March 5, followed by dinner at Augusta Grill. Overall the event was fun and profitable for everyone evolved.



SAVE THE DATE TO HELP US IMPROVE THE COMMUNITY

The Little Black Dress Initiative is the Junior League of Greenville's awareness and fundraising campaign that underscores our mission to help women in our community overcome barriers, focusing on human trafficking and economic mobility. Each participant wears the same little black dress to illustrate the effects economic hardships can have on a woman's access to resources, confidence and opportunities.

Join us November 9-13, 2020



JLGreenville.org
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Switch-a-Roos

// By *Meghan Pavelka*

The Junior League of Greenville partnered with the children’s consignment event, Switch-a-Roos this past February. Switch-a-Roos is the largest children’s consignment sale in South Carolina, and its semi-annual events are put on in the Upstate and Charleston. The sale consisted of new and gently used children’s clothing, baby equipment, and maternity clothes. It allows for name brand and specialty shop items to be sold at more affordable prices.



Held at the Greenville Convention Center, Junior League Members volunteered their time on February 23-24 as they assisted in helping make the event a success. Members helped with set-up and check-in, as well as sorted the donated items at the end of the community sale. Additionally, members from the Junior League of Greenville’s partner agency Committees signed up to personally help gather any needed items during the sale. The League’s partnership with Switch-a-Roos also allowed them to receive free items to pass along to JLG partner agencies. Because of their volunteer efforts, the JLG was given first pick on many donated items and there were many wonderful items that we were able to sell at the Nearly New Shop.

The League hopes that we will be recipients for the foreseeable future. Switch-a-roos is a great opportunity for us to not only directly help our partners, but supply merchandise for free for our shop.

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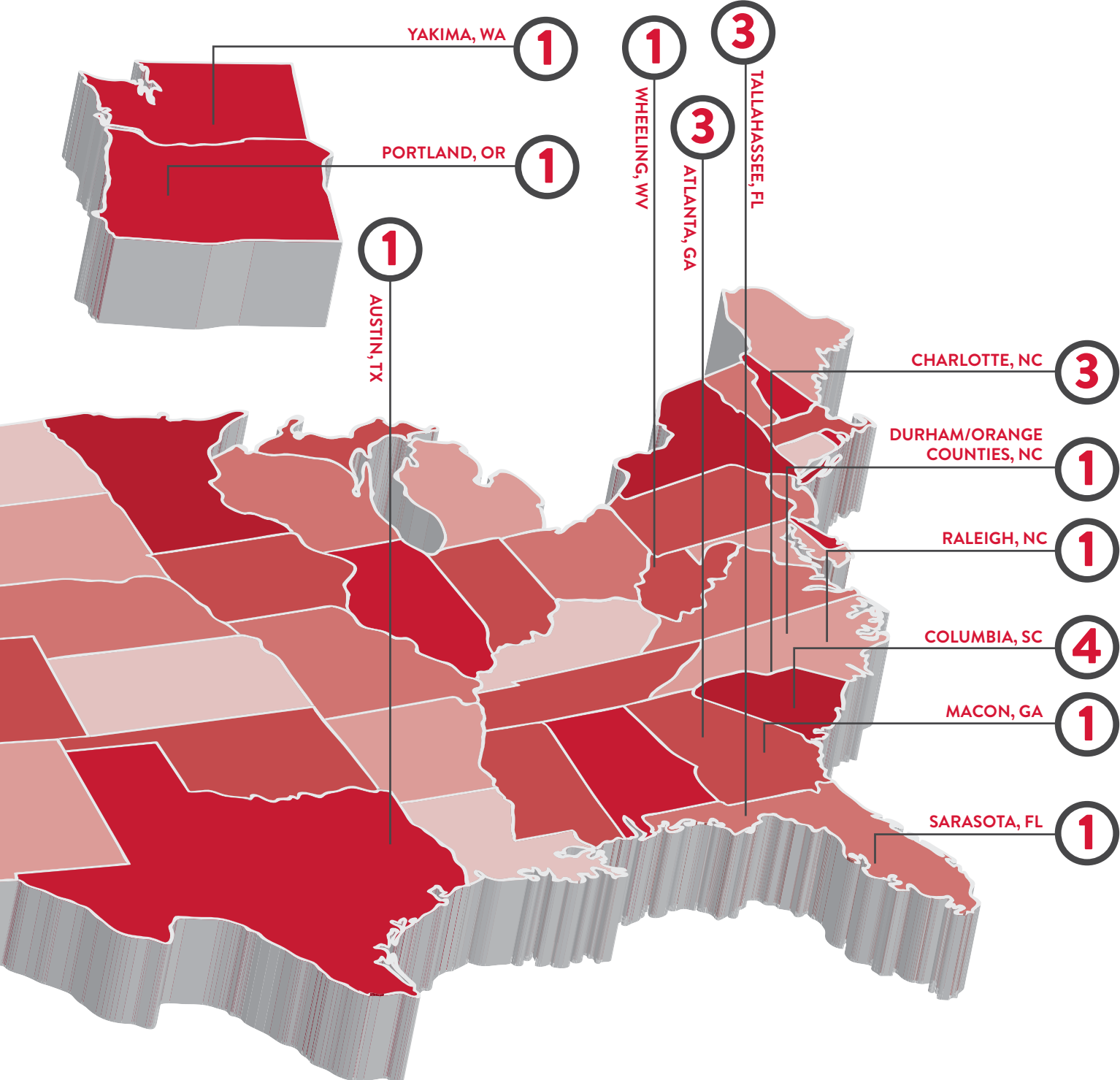
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Stay healthy by practicing social distancing and following these tips:



Wash your hands for 20 seconds each time.



Cover your mouth when coughing or sneezing.



Stay home if you feel sick or if you are at high risk for COVID-19 exposure.

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