

VISIONS



PARTNERS IN GROWTH

The Junior League of Greenville's
role in downtown development



contents & **FEATURES** //

Summer 2022

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With a love for Greenville architecture and her background in marketing and public relations, Virginia moved to residential real estate in 2005. Her 17-year business has been built primarily by referrals, which she attributes to always going the extra-mile.

JLG MEMBER since 2004.



Letter from
THE PRESIDENT

“Individually, we are one drop. Together, we are an ocean.” ~ Ryunosuke Satoro
As I began to think about a theme for the 2021-2022 League year, “Stronger Together” kept popping in my mind. It was February 2021, vaccinations had begun to roll out, and we were hopeful the end of COVID-19 was near. After a year of virtual meetings and pivoting (quite successfully!) to fulfill our mission and focus, I was craving togetherness and being with my JLG friends in person. Additionally, I have always believed that a benefit of community work through the JLG is collaboration with our partner agencies for a bigger impact—“Stronger Together.” Our members and the women we serve grow more when we work and train together—“Stronger Together.” Finally, our organization is at its best when our leaders and members work cross-functionally—“Stronger Together.”

This year, our Little Black Dress Initiative raised more than \$42,000 to support the JLG’s services and programs, and 154 businesses participated in Shop for Greenville, which raised more than \$23,000. We have received generous donations from community sponsors and donors to the Annual and Endowment Funds, and the Nearly New Shop is on track for another record-breaking year. Thank you to all who have participated in our fundraisers, donated funds and merchandise, and shopped!

These fundraising efforts enabled the JLG to train and empower our members, support our partner agencies, and host our first in-person Empowered Women of Greenville event. Our members and partner agencies truly came together to make EWG successful, and I cannot wait to watch this event grow!

As the year comes to a close, I could not be prouder of the JLG, our members, our partners, and the work we have done together. With the uncertainties of the last two years, what has remained constant are our members and their dedication to make a difference by fulfilling our mission. A mission that has helped so many in Greenville over the last almost 93 years. Just as we have since 1929, our members continue to take chances and evolve. That evolution is represented today in each of our members, the League, and our Greenville community.

Thank you for the most incredible experience! It has been a true gift to work alongside and learn from the super women in the Junior League of Greenville. We truly are Stronger Together!

Gratefully,

Heath Beard

Heath Beard
President, 2021-2022
Junior League of Greenville, Inc.



Heath Beard is the 2021-2022 President of the Junior League of Greenville and has been a JLG member for 13 years. A career judicial clerk for a United States Magistrate Judge, Heath earned her Bachelor of Science degree from the University of South Carolina and her Juris Doctor degree from Emory University School of Law. Heath and her husband, Chris, have one daughter, Ella Graham (9).



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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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Please recycle after you have enjoyed this publication.

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.



Letter from
THE SUSTAINER
REPRESENTATIVE

Four years ago, when Elizabeth Keaton reached out to invite me to become a sustaining advisor, all I could think was that she had made a mistake. I painfully added up the 25 years since I had been a Provisional and realized I was a literal “dinosaur” as I had actually worked on the Carolina Creatures Dinosaur exhibit. What did I know about today’s JLG? Fortunately, I accepted and was rewarded with a renewed passion for the JLG and a new understanding of its continued impact in so many areas of our community.

This year, I am thankful to be the sustainer representative to the Board and now know a group of smart, dedicated women who have all made my life richer. In return, I hope that I offered this Board a little perspective and “dinosaur” wisdom as they have guided the JLG to rebound confidently from the repercussions of a global pandemic.

After a year of limited in-person events, our goal for sustainers this year was to provide meaningful opportunities to reconnect. With the help of Kimberly Cooley, Heath Beard, Kimberly Witherspoon, Casey, Annie, Jamie, Katlyn, Taylor, Melissa, Sam and Emily, and the dynamic duo of Tina and Betsy, I can honestly say this year has been a huge success! Angi Einstein, Sally Seaver and Susie White opened their homes to host amazing events. Kim Geddie and Courtney Thomas led a record-breaking year for Holiday Bags. We spread the word that previous Junior League members are easily welcomed back as sustainers and more than 20 prior members and transfers rejoined!

I encourage everyone to reach out and get involved in their own way as we start our new JLG year. Invite an old friend to rejoin, come to sustainer events, try doing a placement, be a sustaining advisor, donate a little extra to our Endowment, fill Holiday Bags in December, stop by HQ and ask Tina to tell you her Mardi Gras story...

I guarantee that a reestablished connection with The Junior League of Greenville will include friendship and laughter and will make you feel rewarded, renewed and, perhaps – like me, 25 years younger!

Karen Arrington

Karen Arrington
Sustainer Representative, 2021-2022
Junior League of Greenville, Inc.

Karen Arrington is the 2021-2022 Sustainer Representative to the Board and a native of Huntsville, Alabama. She received her undergraduate degree in English Literature from Sewanee: The University of the South, a magical, but completely useless, degree for her career in residential Real Estate Appraisal and Investing. Karen moved to Greenville to marry her husband, Nelson, who she says makes her life “better each day.” She has two delightful daughters, Hayn and Page, and a newish son-in-law, Mason.



Letter from
THE EDITOR

Whether you are new to Greenville or you’ve grown up here, it’s no secret that this community is changing! Whether it’s the construction cranes, changing skyline or increase in traffic, there are many reminders of change around every corner. I can clearly remember my first visit to downtown Greenville in 2006, when my then-boyfriend-now-husband took me to the one spot he knew of worth visiting on Main Street: Mast General Store. Mast General is still there – but nearly everything else has changed – mostly for the better!

It seems like every week there is a new accolade for Greenville. In general, these accolades are a point of pride, even though sometimes it feels like we may not want the secret of how special Greenville is to get out too far. But these accolades and development also represent the changing community.

This change did not happen overnight and it wasn’t by accident. It has been a result of decades of intentional planning, partnerships and follow-through. What’s often not acknowledged is how the Junior League of Greenville has played a role in supporting this change in important ways to help Greenville – like its members- develop to its true potential. But along with this positive change comes new concerns or growing pains that must be addressed. The JLG has supported the community through these issues too – rising to the occasion to address issues that are surfacing, such as economic mobility and human trafficking. Just like Greenville, the JLG has had its own changes and growing pains over the years. As the community needs and member preferences have changed, so too has the JLG pivoted to continue fulfilling its mission on all fronts. The leadership of the JLG has helped to weather this change internally, as we continue to work toward a common purpose and help Greenville evolve as a community too.

It’s often said that the only constant is change. We can only continue to work together – as a League and as a community – to encourage positive change. I’m personally grateful to be a part of a community and an organization that does work together so intentionally to create a better life for everyone. Cheers to another successful year for the JLG and to more accolades for Greenville!

Emily Moseley

Emily Moseley
Editor, 2021-2022
Junior League of Greenville, Inc.

Emily Moseley is the 2021-2022 Editor of VISIONS and a member of the Junior League of Greenville since 2014. She is a Mid-western “transplant” who has enjoyed making a home in Greenville with her husband Graham, and two children, Eleanor (5) and Max (2). She is the Manager of Public Relations for Cranford agency and enjoys experiencing the new developments around Greenville, especially the ones that cater to toddlers!



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Meet the 2021-2022

JLG BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Every year the Junior League of Greenville (JLG) elects a new set of leaders within the organization who serve on the Board of Directors (BOD). These women are not only responsible for the operations and ongoing financial stability of the organization, but they also serve with a strategic focus, preparing the JLG for future changes by assessing ways to develop and strengthen the JLG for years to come.



Heath Beard
President

Hometown
Sumter, SC and
Greenville, SC

**Number of years
in the League:**
13 years

**What is your
favorite thing(s)
about Greenville?**
I love so much! I love that the Peace Center offers shows that travel to larger cities. I love that the climate allows for time outdoors most of the year. My family loves riding bikes through our neighborhood and on the Swamp Rabbit Trail. Greenville is a great size town with opportunities of a larger city but less hustle and bustle!



Kimberly Witherspoon
President-Elect

Hometown
New Zion, SC

**Number of years
in the League:**
11 years

**What is your
favorite thing(s)
about Greenville?**
I love Greenville's spirit of community and inclusion. When I arrived, I was welcomed into Greenville's philanthropic community. So many people are working to move the community forward and improve the lives of others. I'm proud to be part of JLG - an organization laser-focused on the community and training civic leaders.



Elizabeth Campbell
Treasurer

Hometown
Greenville, SC

**Number of years
in the League:**
9 years

**What is your
favorite thing(s)
about Greenville?**
I love that there is always something to do and see! Having young kids, we're always looking to get out of the house and do something fun and Greenville always has an event or fun space for the kids!



Meredith O'Malley
Finance Vice President

Hometown
Dallas, TX

**Number of years
in the League:**
7 years

**What is your
favorite thing(s)
about Greenville?**
Small town feel with big city opportunities



Emily Buchanan
Recording Secretary

Hometown
Peachtree Corners,
GA

**Number of years
in the League:**
8 years

**What is your
favorite thing(s)
about Greenville?**
Watching the growth over the past several years. Closeness to mountains and the beach. As a Clemson alum, the proximity to my University!



Lenna Meieli Blaser
*Communications
Vice President*

Hometown
Washington, DC

**Number of years
in the League:**
4 years

**What is your
favorite thing(s)
about Greenville?**
My favorite thing is how dog-friendly Greenville is! When I first moved here, it was great to be able to take my dog to sit outside at a brewery or on long walks on the Swamp Rabbit Trail.



Elizabeth Wylie Keaton
Board Manager

Hometown
Greenville, SC

**Number of years
in the League:**
16 years

**What is your
favorite thing(s)
about Greenville?**
Being born and raised here, I have loved watching Greenville grow. We have all the big city amenities, but still maintain our small town feel.



Sarah Brand
Strategic Planner

Hometown
Cincinnati, OH

**Number of years
in the League:**
6 years

**What is your
favorite thing(s)
about Greenville?**
I think Greenville has the community of a small city but amenities of a big city. With the festivals, food, shows, and multi-cultural influence thanks to international companies, it feels like a much bigger city. Yet I love running into people I know, and a sense of belonging that I never had living in a bigger city.



Elizabeth DuBose
*Community Impact
Vice President*

Hometown
Florence, SC

**Number of years
in the League:**
12 years

**What is your
favorite thing(s)
about Greenville?**
The people and the culture of wanting to help others! I feel like Greenville is a community that truly wants to give back!



Laura Riddle
*Fund Development
Vice President*

Hometown
Greenville, SC

**Number of years
in the League:**
4 years

**What is your
favorite thing(s)
about Greenville?**
Accessibility to wonderful performing arts, many types of entertainment, and excellent cuisine!

Meet the 2021-2022

JLG BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Meredith Mason
Corresponding Secretary

Hometown
Greenville, SC

Number of years in the League:
12 years

What is your favorite thing(s) about Greenville?
It has been an incredible experience to watch Greenville grow. I think people outside Greenville view it as a small town, but they don't realize Greenville has tremendous business investment as well as international diversity thanks to the companies based here. I regularly meet people who moved their families to Greenville because of our reputation and I think that is a testament to our culture and people.



Cassie Shaw
Membership Vice President

Hometown
Irmo, SC

Number of years in the League:
14 years

What is your favorite thing(s) about Greenville?
I love the sense of community and pride that the citizens have in Greenville. Everyone has the same sense of betterment for our city. Whether that is bringing arts, a new park, a new restaurant, a new non-profit or even a new festival, the list goes on, there is pride in the people that live here.



Karen B. Arrington
Sustainer Representative

Hometown
Huntsville, AL

Number of years in the League:
27 years

What is your favorite thing(s) about Greenville?
So many things! four generations of family all close together in Greenville, Sweet Potato Cake from Brick Street Cafe, The Greenville Zoo, Greenville Public Library, my Supper Club, my Cocktail Club, my Tailgate Friends and, of course, my JLG friends from the last four years of being a sustaining advisor!



Tina Hampton
Executive Administrator

Hometown
Hendersonville, NC

Number of years in the League:
35 years

What is your favorite thing(s) about Greenville?
The people and the four seasons

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GROWING WITH GREENVILLE

// By *Emily Moseley*

Whether you have lived your entire life in Greenville, or you’re a new resident, it’s no secret that Greenville is growing – and changing. The downtown skyline is constantly evolving, there’s always a new restaurant to try and new housing developments, apartments and condos keep popping up around the area. According to an article in the *Post and Courier* in 2021, Greenville added more residents than almost every other county in the entire state over the past decade – more than 70,000 new people. If it feels like things are changing, it’s because they are.

But Greenville’s growth did not just start in recent years. Many are probably familiar with the history of the redevelopment of downtown Greenville, started by the opening of the Hyatt on Main Street in 1982, followed by the creation of the Peace Center in 1990 and then the establishment of Falls Park and the Liberty Bridge in 2004. Greenville has seen tremendous change over the past 30+ years, and is undoubtedly on track to continue.

But what story is often not told is the important role played by the Junior League of Greenville in supporting the growth and evolution of this community. For decades, the JLG has been invested in the success of this community, and not only in small ways.

DOWNTOWN PIONEERS

In 1981, the JLG purchased its new headquarters at 17 West North Street, in the heart of downtown Greenville. At this time, most other businesses were moving *out* of downtown. But the JLG wanted to be located in an area that would have the most impact. Not only did the JLG move to the building, they purchased it, making a significant investment in what at the time could be a somewhat unsafe downtown area. The four-story building included the Nearly New Shop on the first floor (which opened its doors in 1983) and meeting rooms, offices and NNS merchandise storage on the upper floors.

In 1984, the League also participated in the second Designer Showhouse at Court Square One downtown. Located across from what is now the Westin Poinsett, this was a central downtown location. But the hotel did not reopen until October 2000, so this area was not nearly as desirable then as it is today. The Designer Showhouse drew attention to downtown and showcased what could be.

“Our investment in downtown Greenville paid off for all of Greenville and for the JLG.”

Caroline Stewart former Headquarters Chairman and JLG President



“The JLG partnered with other visionary Greenville leaders and entities who knew that downtown Greenville could return to a vibrant community. We made the commitment to be a contributing member early on by locating our resale shop downtown and having our first headquarters building in an area that others considered high risk for investment. Our investment in downtown Greenville paid off for all of Greenville and for the JLG,” says Caroline Stewart, former Headquarters Chairman and JLG President.

At the same time, the JLG adopted a formal position statement supporting the revitalization of downtown Greenville. As part of this commitment, the League worked with community partners to bring some well-known projects to fruition. members wrote letters to Hyatt’s corporate office to help convince them to locate the hotel on Main Street (opened in January 1982). Other letter writing campaigns were done to support development efforts in the West End. The League also pledged \$50,000 in 1988-89 toward establishing a performing arts center in Greenville – a little project known today as the Peace Center.

“The biggest accomplishment we’ve done is to help revitalize downtown Greenville,” says Tina Hampton, JLG’s Executive Administrator. “We moved in, and everyone else moved out. Everyone thought it was a good idea, but nobody else actually did anything.”



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

During much of this time, the JLG frequently collaborated with local officials like current and past mayors of Greenville and other members of City Council, including some Sustaining members Michelle Shain, Pat Haskell Robinson and others. As part of this effort, the JLG had a Community Advisory Panel with various local leaders from diverse groups to help guide the League on the community’s true needs. This helped the League to keep a pulse on where they could make the biggest impact or and be the most effective.

It was through this group that it eventually became apparent that the JLG’s efforts downtown had been largely successful, and after more than 20 years downtown, it was time for the League to consider making an impact elsewhere. After careful consideration of several properties around Greenville, the current property became available. This prompted the move to 120 Greenacre Road, where the League could be closer to the communities it hopes to serve but also help to revitalize the 291 (Pleasantburg Rd.) corridor, which by then was starting to evolve as well. “Along with serving surrounding communities, we were able to triple the sales area of the Nearly New Shop. That extra space allowed us to meet more needs for more members of the community,” said Jill Schneider, sustaining advisor to the President at the time and head of the Relocation Task Force. “This new location really checked all the boxes on our list.”

The Nearly New Shop was a former paint store and Headquarters was a vacant lot. Both were redeveloped prior to official move-in by the Nearly New Shop in 2003 and Headquarters in 2004. The location has proven to be successful, with its close proximity to Nicholtown, Greenville Technical College, and bus routes. In one weekend, Two Men and A Truck moved the furniture and fixtures while League volunteers moved all the clothing, making it possible to open Greenacre on a Monday morning. “It was hard work (also lots of fun, laughter and pizza) but truly rewarding to see it happen. It is up there as one of the most memorable times of the Junior League of Greenville,” recalled Schneider.

With the move from downtown, the League expanded its position statement to support the Greater Greenville Area. And the League has continued to do just that. It played a critical supporting role in the establishment of The Children’s Museum of the Upstate, similar to its support for Roper Mountain Science Center years earlier – two incredible educational enrichment resources for our community’s youth. Most recently, the League also provided meaningful financial support to the South Carolina Children’s Theater and their new permanent facility in the West End that opened in 2021.

EVOLUTION OF NEEDS

The League continues to adapt its focus as the community’s needs change. This is best demonstrated in the recent adoption of the Position Statement regarding Human Trafficking and Economic Mobility. Greenville County was one of the top three counties in South Carolina for human trafficking incidents in 2021. As this issue has become more urgent in the community, the JLG recognized an opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of the barriers facing women regarding economic mobility and human trafficking within Greenville. The JLG Advocacy Committee, in partnership with the JLG Education and Impact Committees, is working to identify causes, impacts, and potential advocacy efforts related to each area.

The League also continues to stay closely connected with the elected officials of this community. Current County Council Liz Seman is a Sustaining member. Former City Councilwoman Amy Ryberg Doyle actively participates as a sustaining advisor.

Over the course of more than 90 years, the Junior League of Greenville has given over \$3 million, supported more than 300 agencies and impacted countless members of the community. But the League takes great care to evolve with the community and tailor its activities that will help the community become the best it can be.

“The biggest accomplishment we’ve done is to help revitalize downtown Greenville.”
Tina Hampton Executive Administrator











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NEW RELATIONSHIPS

Junior League of Greenville adds the Julie Valentine Center as an official community partner

// By Kathryn Pond

New business and growth across the Upstate brings the Junior League of Greenville opportunities to connect with new community partners. After initially launching the Human Trafficking Impact Committee with partnerships with community organizations SWITCH and Jasmine Road, the Committee added an additional partner this year: the Julie Valentine Center (JVC).

JVC is an important source of support for victims of sexual assault and child abuse in the Upstate community. From their rape crisis center to their child advocacy center, they ensure survivors are respected and most importantly, heard.

As JVC CEO since 2009, Shauna Galloway-Williams has seen the impact that just one individual can have. With more than 25 years in the mental health field, she found her passion as a mental health counselor specializing in sexual assault and child abuse. Fulfillment came not only from survivors, but also those who work alongside her. As Galloway-Williams reflects on the job, she shares that “the most rewarding part of my work is the hope and healing that happens.” Thinking about the partners she has worked with in our community, she says, “I get to interact with real life heroes on a regular basis.”

As one of only 14 rape crisis centers in the state of South Carolina, the JLG has begun its work with JVC through collection drives and promoting JVC events. One such example is sponsoring a table at the JVC Annual Lunch on February 14th. This luncheon not only brought greater awareness to the community, but spotlighted five Hometown Heroes to share their journeys.

Outside of the committee activities, Galloway-Williams says there are other ways to get involved with the JVC. Their greatest need for volunteers is in the Volunteer Victim Advocate Program. She emphasizes the importance of this program, “We could not do our work without our dedicated victim advocates.” This dedication is not an understatement. Volunteers go through a 29-hour training program to learn how to give the victims comfort and support.



Other opportunities include their Run2Overcome and holiday assistance program. Whatever you’re looking for, one of JVC’s full-time volunteer coordinators will work with you to determine how you can best meet the needs of the center while also providing you with a rewarding volunteer experience.

So whether you are a part of the Human Trafficking Impact Committee or not, there are a variety of ways in which you can support JVC and the Greenville area fight against human trafficking. Human Trafficking Impact Committee Chair Kate Weaver anticipates great opportunities in the years to come, “We are so thrilled to continue and deepen our partnership with JVC in the coming years. The Center provides essential services to survivors in the Greenville area and gives our members an opportunity to really make a difference in the lives of thousands of Greenville residents who have experienced trauma”. We look forward to how this partnership will continue to grow in the years to come.

IMPACTING ECONOMIC MOBILITY

An expanded partnership with United Ministries

// By Paige Siniard

Since its earliest days, United Ministries has been impacting economic mobility in the Greenville community. The organization was founded in 1970 to assist the unemployed church members in Greenville’s mill villages. So when the Junior League of Greenville chose to focus on the impact areas of Human Trafficking and Economic Mobility, United Ministries topped a short list of local agencies to consider for a partnership. Community Impact Committee members voted last year, and the appeal to add United Ministries as one of the JLG’s partner agencies received unanimous support.

The team at United Ministries envisions a community working together to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to thrive in Greenville. Their mission is to serve and empower those on the transformative journey to self-sufficiency. By partnering with United Ministries, the JLG is a part of that community. Economic Mobility is one of the single most important issues facing our community, and the League mission corresponds directly with that of the staff, volunteers, and donors of United Ministries.

United Ministries focuses on three areas to achieve their mission of empowering participants: education and employment, crisis assistance, and homeless services. JLG is most involved in the educational initiatives, and the partnership with United Ministries has opened up several volunteer opportunities for the 20+ volunteers on the Economic Mobility Impact Committee.

Many JLG volunteers focused on adult education for GED readiness. Participants striving to earn their GED shared hopes of finding careers that would open doors for themselves and their families. Stephanie Bedard, an Economic Mobility Impact Committee member, shared her experience saying, “I’ve really enjoyed settling into the Adult Education program. I’d encourage others who are interested to explore United Ministries as we work together to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to thrive in Greenville.”

Volunteers also spent time scouring local listings for affordable housing opportunities in safe areas and career opportunities for program participants. One volunteer routinely helped with



administrative duties at United Ministries’ Pendleton Street headquarters. Pandemic restrictions limited some opportunities, but volunteers helped wherever they were needed.

On April 13, 2022, the Junior League of Greenville sponsored a table at the annual Uniting for Change Luncheon at the Greenville Convention Center. Bryan Stevenson, the founder and Executive Director of the Equal Justice Initiative, delivered the keynote speech. He is quoted saying, “Each of us is more than the worst thing we’ve ever done.” His message encourages grace with oneself and with others. This theme is pervasive in both the mission and actions of United Ministries.

Leaders in the League hope to expand the partnership in coming years. Future volunteer opportunities may include housing projects among other initiatives. United Ministries is always in need of volunteers who are available on short notice to freshen paint, clean, and prepare houses before families move in.

If you are interested in being added to this list of volunteers, contact Tori Greer at torigreerjlg@gmail.com.

JLG Hosts First In-Person
*Empowered Women
of Greenville Event*

// By *Randi A. Plake*

On March 12, 2022, the Junior League of Greenville hosted the second Empowered Women of Greenville, a one-day conference focused on encouraging women to thrive personally and professionally through sessions on wellness and self-care, career and job searching, financial literacy, and community building.

After navigating the inaugural year as a virtual event, the committee was able to successfully plan the event in person for 2022 at the Greenville Convention Center. Last year, seminars were recorded, and the JLG’s partner agencies held watch parties for the attendees. It was a great opportunity to learn takeaways that helped enhance the in-person event in its second year. Ticket sales were open to all women in the Greenville community in 2022, not just clients of the JLG’s partner agencies, which include Jasmine Road, the Julie Valentine Center, SWITCH, Pendleton Place, United Ministries, and The Family Effect.

This signature event spotlights the League’s mission, which is to promote voluntarism, improve community, and develop the potential of women.

The EWG Committee was pleased to host keynote speaker Liz Ferro of Girls with Sole, a nonprofit based in Ohio that uses free fitness and wellness programs to empower at-risk girls.

“Liz Ferro has a personal story that we knew would resonate with so many of our attendees,” said Cara Sims, Empowered Women of Greenville Chair. “She was in foster care and she’s a survivor of abuse. She learned to channel her anger, hurt, and frustration into something positive: exercise! That’s how Girls with Sole was born. Liz is an empowered woman, empowering women everywhere she goes!”

Attendees participated in breakout sessions designed to help women feel confident and equipped to start taking steps to better their lives, whether it be through learning the value of sleep, having tools to set up and stick to a budget, growing their business through connections on LinkedIn, or feeling ready to tackle a job interview. The breakout sessions were hosted by JLG members and community members alike.

“The Empowered Women of Greenville Event was very enlightening,” said Tierra Hodges, a member of the Furman University women’s basketball team who attended the event. “Being around so many powerful women and getting to hear different speakers talk about their experiences as professionals (as well as give advice to us as college athletes) helped prepare me for my next chapter in life.”

It took the effort of the full League to pull the event off in its expanded state this year. JLG members got involved through service shifts, sponsorships, social media promotion, and professional clothing donations. One JLG Committee made floral arrangements and another created the website for the event.

As for next year, the EWG Committee is already thinking about how the conference will improve. “Although this was technically our second year of EWG, it felt like another first,” explained Sims. “I expect that each year will be bigger and better than the one before it!”



BACK TO FUNDRAISING

Another successful year
for Shop for Greenville

// By *Kathryn Pond*

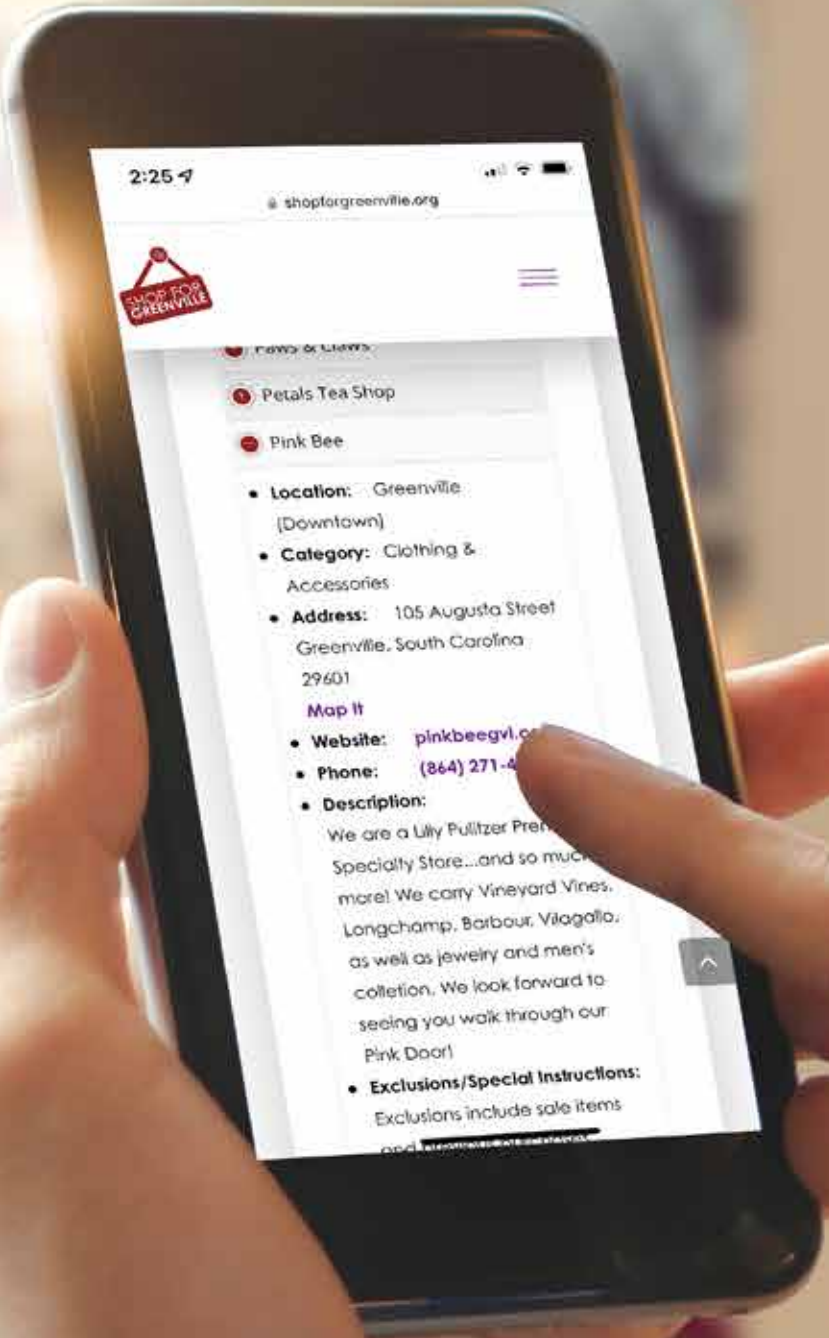
The League’s members are very diverse, but there’s one thing that we can all agree upon—retail therapy! When spring is right around the corner, we can count on the Shop for Greenville event to get us ready for a new season. However, this year looked a little different.

The Committee, along with SFG Business Manager Claire Stam, worked double time to develop a website (shopforgreenville.org) specifically dedicated to the event. It successfully launched in time for book purchases to begin in early 2022. The site proved to be a great source of information, including an FAQ section and direct links to the retailers, along with any online discount codes. In addition to the site being easy to navigate, it was also a great way to save paper!

2022 was an incredible year for this fundraiser, boasting 153 business participants, more than double the number of participants from 2021! As a League, we are proud to be fostering these relationships within the Upstate and could not do it without the work of the Shop for Greenville committee. Teel Jarvis, committee chair, explained the benefits of working on such an impactful project in the community: “Making asks and learning more about local businesses has been very rewarding.”

With new businesses popping up all over the Upstate, this event has proved to be a great way for the League and local owners to support one another. One such business was Natalie Laster’s retail store, Vagabond Trader. Laster closed her store in Asheville and opened a new location downtown when she relocated to Greenville. This was her first year participating in Shop For Greenville.

Another year in the books for a great event to showcase the diverse local businesses within the Upstate. And maybe you scored a handbag or two as well? #worthit



SUSTAINER HOLIDAY BAG PROJECT

Collecting hope and happiness for cancer patients in the community

// By Emily Moseley

The JLG Sustainer Holiday Bag project has a long history of success in providing a special holiday gift to adults, teens and children undergoing cancer treatment in Greenville County. Over the past 30 years, more than 8,000 bags have been donated to cancer patients through the Cancer Society of Greenville County. Each year, the effort has been led by dedicated sustainers who donate their time and energy to give back to those suffering from cancer in our community.

This League year, the project was led by Kim Geddie and Courtney Thomas, who took it on for the first time. It sounded like a worthwhile adventure for the two women, who have been friends since high school. Thomas, who served as past president, has been active as a sustainer for several years, but this was Geddie’s first year to become involved in this capacity.

As they began to plan for this year’s bags, Geddie and Thomas recognized an opportunity to create an even more meaningful gift, based on their own personal experiences with cancer.

“My mom, Melodye Putman, is a breast cancer survivor and I have very vivid memories of the discomfort she experienced — nausea, dry mouth, headaches, fatigue, etc. It was my feeling that if we REALLY wanted to make a difference, we needed to take the patients into consideration and provide items of comfort and use,” said Geddie.

So Thomas and Geddie set about identifying what items would be most useful to people currently undergoing chemotherapy and radiation, and then how they might be able to procure those items at the lowest cost possible. This involved several community partners or businesses that donated items or helped the team purchase items at discounted prices, helping the funds go further. This included:

- **HUGGAROO**s helped the team purchase eye compresses for the teens and adults and compression sheets for the children at a discounted cost. The eye compresses provide comfort for headaches, fatigue and have a soothing lavender scent. The compression sheets are very much like a weighted blanket without the bulk and help the kids feel “cuddled”.
- **THE GINGER PEOPLE** provided ginger candy - ginger chews often help with nausea from the chemo treatments.
- **FOWLER’S PHARMACY** allowed the team to order hand sanitizer, Luden’s lozenges, dry mouth wash and chap-stick all at cost.
- **DR. KOKO COVINGTON**, dentist with **FAMILY DENTAL HEALTH** and Junior League member, donated toothpaste and toothbrushes.
- **FOOD LION** provided bottled waters and individual packs of Crystal Light.
- **WILSON’S 5&10** significantly discounted pop-its in holiday shapes for the kids’ bags.
- **EMILY BRASHER (EMILY FAYE COOKIES)** donated several cookie decorating kits.



Any JLG member or community member can donate to this program. The team is also looking for ideas on helpful items to include next holiday season!



While most of the bags are given to adults, some bags are given to teens or children, and the team went to great lengths to fill the bags with items that were age-appropriate. The teen bags had very cute phone chargers adorned with Christmas lights and the kids’ bags included play-doh and magic hand towels. Coloring can be enjoyable at any age, so all the bags contained coloring books and colored pencils, something to help pass all the waiting time during treatments.

This year, the JLG ultimately prepared 25 bags for children, 15 for teens and 310 bags for adults for the Cancer Society.

This project has a long history of partnership and enthusiasm from many sustainers. Geddie says that is one part of it that she cherishes. “It was very rewarding working together with old friends and new to bring joy to very deserving patients. I knew it was special the moment I started working on it and realized the legacy it has.

Cheves Sherard Steck continues to support the project, one that her mom, Ann Sherard, once enjoyed as well. When a daughter picks up her mother’s baton and continues where she left off, you know this is a special project.”

The team enjoyed the project so much this year, that they have had conversations about expanding the program to more than just cancer patients and possibly tweaking the project gradually. “Wherever we land, I can assure you the sustainer project will be of significant value to the donors and the recipients,” says Geddie. “Our goal is to make the most out of the dollars donated by providing bags that are of great use to those we aim to serve. My hope is that we have a positive impact on the most deserving individuals who may feel alone or isolated during the holiday season and that our gift provides them with hope. That, after all, is what the season is about.”

COMING TOGETHER FOR OUR COMMUNITY

2021 Little Black Dress Initiative shatters its goals

// By *Randi A. Plake*

“Ask me about my little black dress!”

was a phrase plastered across social media by the 57 Junior League of Greenville members who donned the same black dress five days in a row, appealing to friends, family, coworkers, and community members to donate to the Little Black Dress Initiative.

The Junior League of Greenville’s signature fundraiser exceeded expectations and raised more than \$42,000 in November 2021. This was the fifth year the JLG has participated in this fundraiser.

The Little Black Dress Initiative is a week-long, social media driven fundraising campaign that uses the iconic LBD to raise awareness about the mission of the Junior League of Greenville and those less fortunate in the Greenville community. Wearing the same dress five days in a row symbolizes how poverty gives women fewer choices for growth and opportunities.

In an era of remote work and staying connected through social media, LBDI participants relied on technology to raise money and spread the word about the initiative.

“This year we saw people get creative across all platforms,” explains Lizz Pingry, Vice-Chair of the Little Black Dress Initiative. “Members were posting Instagram Reels, TikToks, and sharing across many platforms.”

For the first time, people could also text to donate to the campaign, making it simpler than ever to donate to the cause. These new measures, along with the enthusiasm of this year’s participants, helped contribute to the fundraising achievements.

It was not just active members that contributed to this fundraising success; JLG Provisionals joined in stride. In fact, 2021 marks the participation of the largest group of Provisional members.

New this year, Sustaining members banded together to participate in groups and there was even a mother-daughter team made up of Charlotte Sarvis Hoffman and Taylor Johnston who tackled the fundraising together.

The funds raised through the initiative will help to make the Junior League of Greenville’s mission possible and grow the League’s impact on the community.

For next year, the LBDI committee hopes to increase the fundraising goal of the initiative. actives, sustainers, and Provisionals—get ready to make next year’s LBDI even bigger!





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