

# VISIONS



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community impact  
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## Letter from THE PRESIDENT

*Reflecting on a Year of Community, Camaraderie, and Commitment*

As we close out this League year, it's a moment to pause—not just to look back on what we've done, but to recognize who we are as an organization and a community of women.

This year, the Junior League of Greenville lived out our theme of **Community, Camaraderie, and Commitment** in real and meaningful ways. Despite the challenges we faced—from Hurricane Helene's impact to having to replace many things at HQ (hello new roof! and ice maker and fence...)—we stayed grounded in our Mission and focused on what matters most: **advancing women's leadership for meaningful community impact.**

We've contributed over **30,000 volunteer hours** to our community, poured more than **10,000 hours into leadership development**, and awarded **\$50,000 in grants** to organizations doing critical work in the areas of Human Trafficking and Economic Mobility. Our fundraising efforts have been creative and effective—from the reliability of our Nearly New Shop (projected to raise nearly **\$250,000** this year) to community-driven events.

We strengthened our internal structure, introduced and refined roles that support our evolving needs, and centered service and training at every General Membership Meeting. Our Members were able to connect through community events, Special Interest Groups, and leadership training.

Through all of this, our Members showed up. Some with big ideas. Some with quiet dedication. Some through leading, some through learning. We've seen that when women come together with purpose, we can face anything—with grace, grit, and generosity.

If there's one guiding principle that has carried us through, it's this: Do good. Be good. That's what we strive for—every meeting, every shift, every decision.

Thank you for the heart you've brought to this work and to each other. It has been a privilege to serve in a year filled with not just challenges, but deep connection, renewed energy, and tangible impact.

Here's to continuing the journey—together.

With gratitude,

**Sarah Brand**  
President, 2024-2025  
The Junior League of Greenville, Inc.



*Originally from Cincinnati, Ohio, Sarah Brand has called Greenville home since 2014. She holds a degree in Marketing with a minor in Sociology from Clemson University and has spent the past decade building her career in Marketing and currently works at Michelin North America. Sarah has been a proud member of The Junior League of Greenville since 2015, which she joined upon relocating from Atlanta. Outside of her professional and League commitments, she is an active volunteer with Meals on Wheels, The Meyer Center, and John Knox Presbyterian Church. Sarah and her husband, Kemper, stay busy keeping up with their two energetic sons, Whit (6) and Tripp (2).*



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MISSION STATEMENT

The Junior League of Greenville, Inc. is an organization of women whose mission is to advance women's leadership for meaningful community impact through volunteer action, collaboration, and training.

FOCUS AREAS

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

ABOUT VISIONS

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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](mailto:Information@JLGreenville.org).

For more information about the Junior League of Greenville or becoming a member, visit us online at [JLGreenville.org](http://JLGreenville.org).



Letter from  
**THE SUSTAINER REPRESENTATIVE**

*Community. Camaraderie. Commitment.*

Which means more to you about your JLG Membership? For me right now, it's Commitment.

My goal while a Provisional, Active, and Sustaining Member, has always been to take full advantage of what the League has to offer, to offer to others what expertise I have, and to make sure the JLG is there for future women. We are an organization of women committed to advancing women's leadership for meaningful community impact through volunteer action, collaboration, and training. The Mission does not apply only to Provisional and Active Members. Sustainers are definitely included.

This year, under the leadership of Lesa Kastler, a Sustainer Council has been created. Why? We have 800 Sustainers, and we need to tap deeper into this wealth of knowledge and show them a reason to remain committed to the JLG. This Council will actively address the needs of our Sustainer Members. We will be asking Sustainers not just to pay their dues but to come back and give of themselves. We want more active Sustainers.

What makes these 800 Sustainers stay and sustain our League, and how do they support our Mission? Some stay because they enjoy the social activities. Some stay because they want to share their talents with other Members. Some stay because they want to learn new skills. Some stay because they believe in our Mission. We want to explore other reasons to have our Sustainers continue their commitment to the JLG.

Collectively we make an impact. Each year of our Membership, we work to make Greenville a better place - Community. We make new friends, build teams with other Members, build partnerships with other organizations - Camaraderie. We give our time, talents, and financial support to the organization and fellow Members. We train each other with the skills we bring to the organization but leave each year with more talents to bring back and share - Commitment.

Why do I stay committed as a Sustaining Member? Because I want all three "C's"! I believe in our Mission and want other women to have the advantages that I have as a Member of the Junior League of Greenville.

*Caroline B. Stewart*

**Caroline B. Stewart**  
*Sustainer Representative to the Board, 2024-2025*  
The Junior League of Greenville, Inc.

*Caroline Stewart is a native Greenville and a second generation member of the Junior League of Greenville. She and her husband, Dick, have three adult children and three precious (of course) grandchildren. She is retired and spends her spare time volunteering and taking care of her parents.*



Letter from  
**THE EDITOR**

Throughout this League year, Sarah Brand has exhorted us: do good; be good. In this edition of VISIONs, the Publications Committee and I hope to exhibit how the Junior League of Greenville has done just that. The writers of VISIONs have used the year's theme of Community, Camaraderie, and Commitment as a guide to delve deeper into our initiatives for the 2024-2025 League year.

**Community:** These features highlight the JLG's involvement in the Upstate community, from the longevity of The Nearly New Shop to the League's Legacy of Service. You'll get a glimpse of how invested the League is as a group and as individuals in the profiles on Pendleton Place and the profiles of JLG Members who serve on other nonprofit Boards.

**Camaraderie:** Camaraderie can take on many forms, even multiple spellings (comradery). The initiative of Special Interest Groups (SIGs) has enriched our camaraderie like never before. Yet, even before we had SIGs, the JLG has always been the starting place for deep friendships, as you'll read in "Bridging the Coasts" and "Thank You for Being a Friend". Rounding out this section is a profile of Betsy Littlejohn to celebrate her 30 years of service and the comradery she's created in the League.

**Commitment:** As you read through this section, you'll learn how commitment is the unwavering thread that holds our purpose steady, even when the path grows long or uncertain. To illustrate the lifespan of League Membership, we've included juxtaposed spotlights on a younger Member and a more experienced Member. The feature on Sustainer of the Year, Lori Center, showcases how one person can put the League's Mission into action with such steadfast commitment. Finally, the organizational commitment is on full display in Find the Good Day and the Annual Impact.

At the heart of meaningful contribution lie three quiet forces: community, camaraderie, and commitment. When League Members come together not just to gather, but to connect, the work becomes not only possible—but powerful. It's this shared sense of purpose that turns good intentions into lasting impact.

On behalf of all who worked tirelessly on VISIONs (writers, editors, proof-readers, photographers, graphic artists, etc.), we hope you enjoy reading it as much as we enjoyed creating it.

*Susan Elliot*

**Susan Elliot**  
*Editor, 2024-2025*  
The Junior League of Greenville, Inc.

*Susan joined the Junior League in 2015 in Atlanta and has been a part of the Junior League of Greenville since 2018. She completed her Bachelors at Furman University and her MBA at Emory University. Currently, Susan works in Marketing at Michelin North America.*

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Meet the 2024-2025

# 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—leading the organization in its Mission of advancing women’s leadership for meaningful community impact through volunteer action, collaboration, and training. Get to know this year’s Board of Directors and how they embodied the Junior League’s values.



**Sarah Brand**  
*President*

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

**Hometown**  
Cincinnati, OH

**Work outside the League**  
Senior Brand Manager at Michelin for Urban business

**What does being a committed leader mean to you?**  
Being a committed leader means showing up—consistently, intentionally, and with integrity. Committed leaders don’t just delegate—they model. They don’t just listen—they learn. They don’t just celebrate wins—they walk with their team through the tough parts, too. It means remembering why you stepped up in the first place—and letting that “why” shape every action you take.



**Mary-Neil Jackson**  
*President-Elect*

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

**Hometown**  
 Mooresville, NC

**Work outside the League**  
Senior Manager, Contractor Engagement at Gordian

**What does being a committed leader mean to you?**  
A committed leader is passionate about driving important change and showing up for their community, those around them, and themselves.



**Sarah Moore**  
*Communications Vice President*

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

**Hometown**  
Greer, SC

**Work outside the League**  
Marketing Communications Manager, Elliott Davis

**What does being a committed leader mean to you?**  
Being a committed leader means showing up for your role every day and doing your best, understanding that your best looks different each day. When you give your best each day, you help others be their best selves as leaders every day as well.



**Mary Latrick**  
*Community Impact Vice President*

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

**Hometown**  
Hampton, VA

**Work outside the League**  
Philanthropy Coordinator at Pendleton Place

**What does being a committed leader mean to you?**  
Having integrity always and holding yourself accountable when you make a mistake. Being a committed leader means leading by example.



**Barbara Purica**  
*Finance Vice President*

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

**Hometown**  
Tucson, AZ

**Work outside the League**  
Business Intelligence, Michelin North America

**What does being a committed leader mean to you?**  
Being committed means showing up consistently with purpose and passion, ready to support the Junior League’s Mission of empowering women and improving communities. It also means holding myself accountable to the responsibilities of leadership, collaboration, and service that drive meaningful impact.



**Emily Paterra**  
*Fund Development Vice President*

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

**Hometown**  
Hendersonville, NC

**Work outside the League**  
Transportation specialist Averitt express

**What does being a committed leader mean to you?**  
Being a committed leader in the Junior League means serving with purpose, integrity, and a commitment to empowering others.



**Michelle Gray**  
*Membership Vice President*

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

**Hometown**  
Anderson, SC

**Work outside the League**  
Realtor

**What does being a committed leader mean to you?**  
Being a committed leader means being willing to listen to the needs of others and doing your best to advocate for them.



**Cara Carne**  
*Corresponding Secretary*

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

**Hometown**  
Greenville, SC

**Work outside the League**  
Project Designer with Cushman Wakefield

**What does being a committed leader mean to you?**  
Being a committed leader means actively working with others to achieve our shared goals. No task is too small. Leadership is established through teamwork, a shared sense of purpose and belonging to achieve our Mission to support our community.

Meet the 2024-2025

# JLG BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Cayce McCullough**  
*Recording Secretary*

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

**Hometown**  
Williamston, NC

**Work outside the League**  
Stay at Home Mama to the two cutest little girls

**What does being a committed leader mean to you?**  
Committed leadership is about showing up with purpose and humility. Even small efforts can lead to lasting change in our community. My late father instilled in me to “improvise, adapt, and overcome.” In all circumstances, being a committed leader means staying flexible, steady, and rooted in the Mission.



**Elizabeth Barnhill**  
*Governance Director*

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

**Hometown**  
Greenville, SC

**Work outside the League**  
Realtor

**What does being a committed leader mean to you?**  
Being a committed leader means helping others grow, supporting all Members with their needs and goals, and staying aligned with the vision and purpose of JLG!



**Erin Milner**  
*Treasurer*

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

**Hometown**  
Gray, GA

**Work outside the League**  
Financial Planner at Global View Investment Advisors

**What does being a committed leader mean to you?**  
Being a committed leader means investing time, effort, and energy into team members to drive the success of the organization’s values and goals



**Caroline Stewart**  
*Sustainer Representative*

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

**Hometown**  
Greenville, SC

**Work outside the League**  
Retired

**What does being a committed leader mean to you?**  
Someone who believes in the Mission, recognizes and promotes the skills of those she/he leads and who coordinates all efforts to ensure that the task/role/goals are on track.



**Tina Hampton**  
*Director of Operations*

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

**Hometown**  
Hendersonville, NC

**Work outside the League**  
Blessed to work at the Junior League of Greenville

**What does being a committed leader mean to you?**  
A leader’s role extends beyond simply directing tasks; it involves creating a positive and supportive work environment where people feel valued and motivated. This includes recognizing and celebrating achievements, providing constructive feedback, and simply providing an ear when needed.

## A LIFE OF CONSEQUENCE A Tribute to Patricia Haskell-Robinson

// By *Mary-Neil Jackson*

Greenville recently mourned the passing of Patricia (Pat) Corbin Haskell-Robinson, a true titan of the community whose profound impact stretched across numerous sectors. Pat, JLG President for 1969 and 1970, was a trailblazer in every sense of the word. Her professional journey began in television at WFBC (now WYFF), where she hosted programs like “Telescope,” featuring local news and interviews, and “Sunday at Home,” showcasing local talent. This early foray into media laid a foundation for her incredible ability to connect with the community. She then ventured into the world of real estate, co-founding and brokering The Robinson Company for 25 years. There, she achieved the distinction of becoming the first International Property Specialist in South Carolina. Her leadership in real estate was further solidified through her presidencies of the Greenville Association of Realtors and the Multiple Listing Service, as well as her board membership with the South Carolina Association of Realtors.

Beyond her remarkable business acumen, Pat’s civic engagement was unparalleled. She shattered glass ceilings, notably becoming the first woman to serve as Chairman of both the Greenville Chamber of Commerce and the Christ Church Episcopal School Board. Her commitment to education extended to her instrumental role in initiating the first International Baccalaureate Program in Greenville County Schools.

Her influence permeated numerous community organizations. She served two terms on the Greenville City Council, as Mayor Pro Tempore and Acting Mayor, demonstrating her direct involvement in shaping the city’s governance. Pat also served the financial sector as a board member for the United Carolina Bank (later BB&T) and contributed significantly to healthcare as a trustee of the Greenville Hospital System and on the board of the Greenville Hospital Foundation. Furthermore, she wore the badge of President in many organizations, including The Junior League of Greenville, Greenville Sister Cities, the Metropolitan Arts Council, the Professional Women’s Forum, Greenville Housing Futures, The Carillon, and The Quadrille.

Pat Haskell-Robinson’s legacy is one of profound impact and selfless service. She was not only a leader but also a mentor, an advocate, and a visionary who consistently worked to empower others and uplift the community. Her contributions left an indelible mark on Greenville, and her spirit of pioneering leadership will continue to inspire generations to come.



SUSTAINER YEAR IN REVIEW

# A Celebration for Sustainers

// By *Mary Catherine Srofe*

## What is a Sustainer?

A Member may become a Sustainer after they have met all current year membership requirements as well as completing 7 Active years or 3 Active years and turned 40 by March 31, 2024.

Did you know that the Junior League of Greenville has almost 800 Sustainers?



Sustainer Emeritus Members, Members over 80 years old, gather for their Annual Emeritus Tea.

## A Packed Schedule

This year's Sustainer events included a Tailgate themed Bunco party, a Young Sustainers Cocktails & Creativity event, an annual Christmas Party, an Emeritus Tea for our Members 80 years and older, a March Mixology event, a Flower Picking Picnic, a Meals on Wheels volunteer event, and a Derby themed Garden Party.



Attendees of the tailgate themed Bunco party sporting their favorite teams

*"It is always great getting to know our Sustaining Members as they are a huge part of our League and community. Our committee works really hard to make sure there are a variety of opportunities year round for our Sustaining Members to attend and stay connected."*

Parrish Stone

The Sustainer Outreach Committee gathering during the Derby themed Garden Party



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COMMUNITY

# NEARLY NEW SHOP Styles & Clothing through the Decades

// By *Emily Young*

Through carefully preserved photographs spanning from the 1940s to today, this collection captures the enduring spirit of volunteerism that has kept The Nearly New Shop thriving for generations. These images tell the story of countless women who have donated their time and energy to support the community through thrift shop operations. Each photograph represents a testament to the unwavering commitment that has made this organization a cornerstone of community support, illustrating how dedication and service create lasting impact across the decades.

## 1940's



The Junior League of Greenville opens The Opportunity Shop in 1948



Members model the latest autumn-winter fashions at a "Fashion Revue"

## 1950's



A Member oversees the cash box at the Opportunity Shop in 1955

A Member sorts through donations at the Opportunity Shop



Mamie Bruce and Mary Pearce Sterling sift through statements together



Two volunteers gather housewares donations



# 1960's



Mrs. J.W. Norwood III & Mrs. A.D. Asbury modeling the latest fashions in 1961

# 1980's



The Nearly New Shop celebrates 40 years in 1988

# 1990's



Members prepare for an event outside The Nearly New Shop



Local visitors to the Opportunity Shop, around the same time frame



Anna Katherine Freeland assists a customer at the 1999 bag day sale

# 2000's



**Toy sale** Mary Forrester, right, and Pam Simpson sort through a few of the new and used toys that will be available at the Junior League of Greenville's Nearly New Shop, 17 W. North St., Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The annual toy sale benefits Junior League projects, which receive about \$75,000 from shop sales proceeds each year.

Mary Forrester and Pam Simpson preparing for the 2000 Toy Sale at the Shop



Enjoying a service shift at the Nearly New Shop



Scenes from Bag Day 2000



# 2020's



Jeanmarie Tankersley on the news from The Nearly New Shop in 2023




Tiffany Peer, Ava Braatz, April Fuller and Melissa Marsh gather for a news segment with Access Carolina




Members serve refreshments during a shopping event in 2023





Members at a shopping event in 2023



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COMMUNITY

# JLG In The Community

// By Jennifer McGraw

The Junior League of Greenville supports many businesses and nonprofits in our community. This year we supported Jasmine Road, the Julie Valentine Center, Meals on Wheels, Pendleton Place, Serenity Place, SWITCH and United Ministries. Each is unique and supports a different need within the Greenville community.



**Mission:** To offer long-term recovery programs for female survivors of human trafficking; services include housing, therapy, and job training. Jasmine Road focuses on financial independence for women, helping them rebuild their lives through education and career readiness.

**Interesting Fact:** You can support Jasmine Road by going out to eat! Jasmine Kitchen is a social enterprise lunch café located at 503 Augusta Street. It serves as a job training and employment hub for survivors of human trafficking, prostitution, and addiction.

**JLG Involvement:** This year, the JLG provided toiletries, gift cards, and a new hammock for the program. We were a table sponsor and attended their annual luncheon.



**Mission:** To provide advocacy and services for survivors of sexual assault and child abuse, including counseling, legal support, and crisis intervention.

**Interesting Fact:** Named after a baby girl who tragically died after being abandoned in a field, the Center honors her legacy by helping victims of child abuse and sexual violence.

**JLG Involvement:** JLG Members volunteered for the Run2Overcome event, assisted with setup for their annual luncheon, and attended the luncheon, where the JLG sponsored a table.



**Mission:** To deliver nutritious meals to homebound seniors and individuals with disabilities, ensuring they receive the nutrition they need for a healthy lifestyle.

**Interesting Fact:** The Meals on Wheels program is vital to reducing food insecurity, especially among the elderly, providing more than just food, but also social interaction and support.

**JLG Involvement:** This year, JLG Members helped pack and deliver meals, set up the Sweetheart Charity Ball, took photos of attendees, and worked the live auction. We have supported through grants that assist with meal preparation, delivery, and ensuring those in need continue to receive vital services.



**Mission:** To provide safe housing and crisis intervention for children and youth who are victims of abuse, neglect, or homelessness; counseling and life skills programs are also available.

**Interesting Fact:** Pendleton Place commits not only to providing shelter, but also to empowering young people with the skills they need for a successful future.

**JLG Involvement:** This year, the JLG helped with weekly food deliveries, provided support during drop-in sessions for at-risk youth, and purchased items from their wish list. Through grants, the JLG has contributed to Pendleton Place's programs that support at-risk youth, focusing on trauma recovery and helping children break the cycle of abuse. Additionally, this year, Pendleton Place assisted JLG Members with background checks so they could volunteer at multiple agencies.



**Mission:** To focus on helping mothers overcome substance use disorders while keeping families together, promoting both individual and family healing.

**Interesting Fact:** Serenity Place allows women to undergo treatment without being separated from their children. This unique model supports the entire family, creating a nurturing, recovery-focused environment that helps break the generational cycle of addiction.

**JLG Involvement:** The JLG provides volunteers to assist with their family-centered therapy and recovery services. We also provide volunteers for Rally for Recovery, donations for wishlist items, gift cards, games, diapers, and candy for their trunk-or-treat event.



**Mission:** To end sex trafficking and sexual exploitation in the Upstate of South Carolina.

**Interesting Fact:** Since being founded in 2012, Switch has mobilized over 750 volunteers and has served more than 2,600 families.

**JLG Involvement:** This year, the JLG offered support through their prayer team, victim advocates, and donations of wishlist items. We also provided volunteers for their annual Gala and sponsored a table.



**Mission:** To provide housing, employment support, and case management for individuals and families struggling with poverty.

**Interesting Fact:** In response to Hurricane Helene in October 2024, United Ministries organized one of its largest food drives to assist those affected by the disaster.

**JLG Involvement:** This year, the JLG provided volunteers for a holiday hot chocolate bar, Christmas gift wrapping, and holiday crafts. Donations were collected for Christmas gifts for an adopted family, snacks, toiletries, Black hair care products for Black History Month, and hurricane relief items. We also sponsored a table at their annual luncheon and had participants at their Day of Service in April.

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COMMUNITY

CELEBRATING 95 YEARS OF IMPACT

# The Junior League of Greenville's Legacy of Service

// By Elizabeth Bagden

Since its founding in 1929 by 20 visionary women, The Junior League of Greenville (JLG) has been a cornerstone of community service and women's leadership in the Upstate. Now, with over 1,100 Members, the League continues to uphold its Mission: advance women's leadership for meaningful community impact through volunteer action, collaboration, and training.

## A Legacy of Community Building

Over the past 95 years, the JLG has contributed more than \$3 million in funding and supported over 300 agencies across Greenville County. Beyond financial support, its Members have played a pivotal role in founding and growing cornerstone institutions in our community, including the Peace Center for the Performing Arts, Pendleton Place, The Children's Museum of the Upstate, and the Warehouse Theatre—each a testament to the League's lasting impact on Greenville's cultural, social, and educational landscape.

The League's Nearly New Shop, which opened in 1948 as The Opportunity Shop, remains a vital source of funding for community programs and projects, while also serving as a training ground for volunteers.

## Strategic Focus: Empowering Women and Addressing Critical Issues

In recent years, the JLG has sharpened its focus on two critical areas: Human Trafficking and Economic Mobility. Through partnerships with organizations like SWITCH and the Julie Valentine Center, the League raises awareness of human trafficking and supports survivors on their path to healing. At the same time, collaborations with United Ministries and Pendleton Place aim to expand economic opportunities for women by providing resources such as financial education and employment readiness training.

The Leadership, Education, and Development (LEAD) Committee plays a pivotal role in educating both League Members and the broader community about these focus areas, fostering informed, and effective advocacy.

## Signature Programs and Initiatives

The JLG's commitment to community service is exemplified through various programs:

- **Holiday Bag Project:** Each December, Sustainers undertake an incredibly large project that brings joy, cheer, and support to cancer patients within the Greenville Community. The JLG raised over \$180,000 and provides 350 bags annually.



Each year, Sustainer Members stuff over 300 Holiday Bags for Cancer Patients annually

- **Junior League of Greenville Scholarship:** The Scholarship is designed to help Greenville County women who aspire to advance their education, build their professional skills, and become community leaders. The Scholarship can be used for tuition, non-degree certifications, or professional licensing fees.



Lesla Kastler and Sarah Brand present Stella Warren-Page with a scholarship check

## Investing in the Future

The JLG's grant programs have provided substantial support to local nonprofits. In the 2024-2025 League Year, a total of \$50,000 in grants were awarded to: Applied Theater Center, The Family Effect, Project Host, Safe Harbor, and YouthBASE.

## Celebrating 95 Years

To commemorate its 95th anniversary, the JLG hosted the "Celebrating With Purpose: Mardi Gras Magic" fundraiser on March 1, 2025. The event honored grant recipients and celebrated nearly a century of community impact. Proceeds from the event support the League's ongoing Mission to empower women and effect positive change in Greenville.



Members take a break from dancing to snap a photo during Mardi Gras Magic

## Looking Ahead

As The Junior League of Greenville approaches its centennial, the organization remains steadfast in its commitment to service, leadership, and community improvement. With a rich history and a clear vision for the future, The JLG continues to be a driving force for positive change in the Upstate.

## COMMUNITY

# ROOTED IN CARE, GROWING IN COMMUNITY Pendleton Place

// By *Jennifer McGraw*

Pendleton Place is located on Pendleton Street in the heart of Greenville. It serves as housing, educational programming, and support for youth, families, and caregivers across the city.

While it was initially a group home for children from birth to age 18, it now has four distinctive programmatic services:

- **Family Resource Center:** provides concrete support to families facing homelessness and offers classes for parents to support families.
- **Shelter Services Program:** serves youth experiencing homelessness and includes an Emergency Youth Shelter for youth ages 12-21 and a Transitional Living Program for ages 16-21.
- **Smith House:** foster care group home for teenagers aged 12-21.
- **Community Youth Services Program:** drop-in day center for youth ages 17-24, three days a week, a street outreach program, and housing supports.

### JLG Paves the Way

The partnership between the JLG of today and Pendleton Place would not have existed had it not been for three Junior League Members: Caroline Johnston, Tunky Riley, and Sheila Lee. Their empathy and drive to help children ultimately led to the creation of Pendleton Place in 1975. The Junior League set out to improve the situation after discovering that when children were removed from their homes due to traumatic circumstances, they were housed in the county jail while awaiting foster care. The Junior League worked with partners in the community to find a way to create an emergency shelter for those children entering foster care. Over time, not only has it fulfilled that goal, but it has become a community for those “experiencing foster care, homelessness, poverty, and other forms of trauma.”

### How the Junior League Helps

The JLG has given over \$280,000 to Pendleton Place since 1975, which, adjusted for inflation, would amount to over \$750,000 today. In addition to monetary aid, we also help with volunteer work. The Community Enrichment Committee places volunteers at Pendleton Place each year. This year, there are three JLG Members currently serving on the Pendleton Place Board of Directors: Denise Richter, Shira Simon, and Jeanmarie Tankersley.



### Volunteer Turned Employee

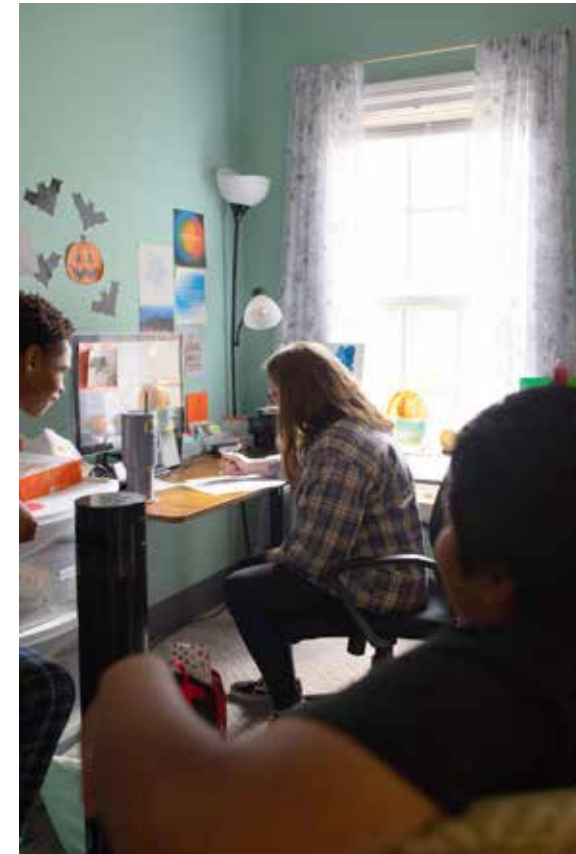
Our very own Member, Mary Latrick, has gone from volunteering through the League to becoming a Philanthropy Coordinator at Pendleton Place. In her own words, the impact of this experience was life-changing:

“In 2020-2021, I was a Member of the Economic Mobility Impact Committee. Although we were not able to volunteer in person that year, I had the opportunity to tutor a teenager at Smith House, Pendleton Place’s foster care group home for teens. Every week, I would have a Google Meet call to help out with Algebra 2 homework and study for tests. What stuck with me was the connection I made with the teenager I was tutoring. Most days, we would just get on the call, work through homework, and be done. One day, she got on the call, and as I was about to get to work, she asked if she could share something that happened at school that day. I was thrilled that she wanted to open up to me and immediately said yes. She told me that she was named Student of the Week at her high school and held up her certificate for me to see. Watching the pride on her face in that moment was unforgettable, and I was honored that she let me into her world to celebrate her accomplishment.

When I found out there was a job opening at Pendleton Place, I jumped at the chance to apply because of the amazing volunteer experience I had. It wouldn’t be a leap to say that the JLG is the reason I’m working here today. Getting to work somewhere that provides essential services to youth, young adults, and families is truly a dream realized for me. Without the JLG, I never would have known Pendleton Place existed, so just on a personal level, the opportunity to volunteer here changed my whole world.”

### What Volunteering at Pendleton Place Looks Like

Volunteer opportunities can range from organizing donation closets to supporting clients during Youth Resource Center drop-in hours to conducting Independent Living Skills classes. In order to volunteer with Pendleton Place, there is an application process and background check. This can be done through the Community Enrichment Committee, or a League Member can volunteer on her own. If you are interested in volunteering, simply connect with our Community Engagement team to set up volunteer shifts.



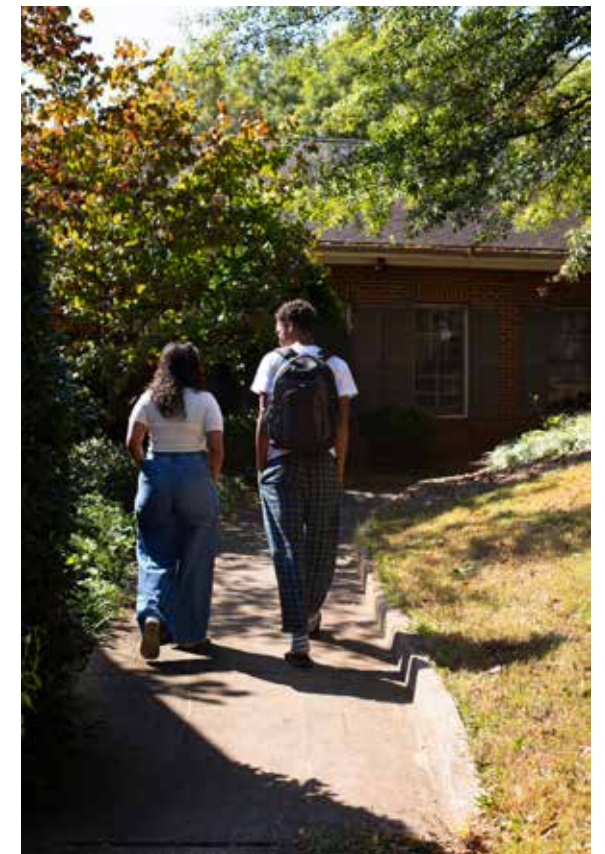
A Pendleton Place employee helps a family with their needs.



A child utilizing one of Pendleton Place’s many services.



Two children receive mental health services from a Pendleton Place employee.



Mentorship between Pendleton Place employees, volunteers and clients is a critical component to family healing.

COMMUNITY

# ACROSS THE BOARDS Members of the JLG on Nonprofit Boards

// By Susan Elliot

So many of our Members live out their commitment to community through serving on boards in addition to their involvement with the League—we've highlighted several to showcase what motivates them!

1. What motivated you to join the board of the organization?
2. How has the organization made an impact in the community or in your life?

*"Step out and support our community! Embrace a non-profit that you are passionate about and bring others along with you in serving."* Lori Center

**Lillian Parr—Carolina Youth Symphony (CYS)**

1. When I was asked to serve on the Carolina Youth Symphony (CYS) board, my initial response was not to do it. I knew generally about CYS and made donations to its work but didn't know enough to be passionate. I have been humbled to witness the role CYS plays in our community and in the lives of students and their families.

2. Carolina Youth Symphony has three orchestras and a preparatory orchestra. As a result, students can start at many different levels and continue to mature with the CYS community of orchestras. I love seeing SO MANY middle and high school students thriving in this place of belonging which fosters focus, responsibility, and creativity.



Carolina Youth Symphony

**Donnice Wilkerson • United Way of Greenville County, Habitat of Greenville and the Prisma Foundation**

1. I have been a long time volunteer (25+ years) in the community with United Way, Habitat of Greenville, HOG day, Fall for Greenville, Artisphere, and many other Greenville festivals. I knew once I retired from a 31-year career with Michelin that I wanted to give more of myself to the community. It has always been important to me to help make a better Greenville County for all.

2. I would encourage people to consider boards only where they have a true passion to contribute. I currently chair the Women's United affinity group and serve on the United Way Board. I am chair-elect for Habitat of Greenville, and I serve on the Hope Forward Campaign committee through the Prisma Foundation and serve as a Board Member.



**Courtney Atkinson—South Carolina Children's Theatre (SCCT)**

1. I actually participated in SCCT programs when I was growing up in Greenville, and the SCCT was in its early years. Having that personal connection with the organization made it an easy answer when SCCT's former Executive Director Debbie Bell contacted me and asked me to serve on the SCCT board many years later after I had graduated from law school and was back practicing law in Greenville.

2. I have served in many roles with the SCCT Board, Chair of the Board and multiple Board committees, including the personnel committee. In the time since I joined the SCCT Board, we have successfully raised funds to build and construct our own facility. Since its opening in the spring of 2020, the organization has had the added ability to reach even more children and families in the Upstate area, not only through our stage productions, but also through our many education and outreach programs.

**Rebecca Whittam • Project Host**

1. It is a great organization that works locally, and I wanted to find a way to continue giving back to the community. Once learning more about them I saw all that they do and wanted to be a part of it.

2. Project Host provides a warm meal six days a week. They also provide meals for after school programs and travel to low income areas to provide meals. They are focused on hunger in the community and are very successful in their response to it!



**MaryEllis Deacon • Greenville Women Giving**

1. I was motivated to join the Board of Greenville Women Giving because I deeply believe in the power of collective action, especially when women come together to make a lasting impact. I also saw it as an opportunity to not only give back to the Greenville area but to work alongside passionate, driven women who share a commitment to creating positive change. Greenville Women Giving has been a catalyst for meaningful transformation, and I wanted to be part of that movement to make a real difference, one decision at a time.

2. As a Board Member of Greenville Women Giving, my main role this year is to help welcome new members and continue to engage our membership in innovative ways. One of the greatest lessons I've learned is that the ripple effect of a single act of kindness or a single investment in a local initiative can snowball into something much larger.



**Liz Seman • Community Foundation**

1. Throughout my time in Greenville, I have enjoyed serving on several boards, including the Community Foundation. I was motivated to join the Community Foundation Board because of its mission to leverage philanthropy to improve lives. The idea of engaging leaders in collaborative efforts and investing strategically really spoke to me as a way to significantly impact the community.

2. Board members are responsible for attending meetings, being prepared, understanding the organization's mission and vision, and advocating for those efforts in the community. It is also imperative that board members contribute financially to the organizations they serve—in whatever way is meaningful to them personally.



Charitable Giving Awards in 2023 when Liz Seman was presented with the Ruth Nicholson award from the Community Foundation

**Randolph Armstrong • Greenville Center for Creative Arts**

1. Art has always been a part of my heart, my solace, and my passion. Almost 13 years ago, the Greenville County Museum of Art School closed its doors which left Carrie Burns Brown's art class of 25 years homeless. After drifting from pillar to post for a few years, renting spaces for class, my beloved mentor, teacher, and friend, the late Carrie Burns Brown, and I began a search for our new home. We began by gathering a group of art advocates to join this exciting new journey. In May of 2015, we opened our doors in a part of the historic Brandon Mill. All of the founders became the first Board of the Greenville Center of Creative Arts.

2. We began our first year formulating goals and by-laws then hired our first staff, began fundraising in earnest and opened our doors for art classes and events to the community. Daily we see the impact that GCCA has on our community from classes, events, outreach, childrens' summer camp, Greenville County School exhibits, and an array of other outstanding artists that rotate every three months. We also invite the public to utilize our space for events.



**Beth Lee • International Ballet**

1. A demand for more opportunities in the arts began to grow throughout Greenville County in the mid 1990s. Despite advanced training in music, I was motivated to learn about ballet. At the time, multiple kinds of dance schools were providing shows and training at various levels.



After years of volunteers and professionals working to refine our unique vision and offerings for this community, the initial Board of the International Ballet evolved in 2005.

2. As a Board Member, your main duty is to support the organization's mission to inspire joy and success through professional ballet training and performances, and the vision of making ballet accessible to all. Our Board and Staff have attracted professionals focused on teaching high-level technique to create the beauty and expressiveness of classical ballet. With goals to reach outside the stage and studio, IB operates free ballet classes and performances: an Accessibility Class for adults with intellectual disabilities; a partnership with Meyer Center for Special Children; Storytime Ballet for younger children in libraries; and Project Pirouette in underserved neighborhoods.

**Linda Brees • Greenville Women Giving (GWG)**

1. I have been a member of GWG since 2019. After serving on multiple Committees, including special events and grant evaluation, I was recruited to the Board. During my tenure, we were able to recruit almost 60 new members. I love the mission of GWG:



Giving Collectively, Granting Strategically, and Growing a Greater Greenville. I wanted to be a part of seeing how this organization can make this community a better place to live for all of us.

2. My duties are to be an ambassador for GWG. I recruit new members by meeting with potential candidates and planning events called Each One Bring One. I'm responsible for working with our Membership Growth Team and serving on the new GWG Strategic Planning Committee.

**Ingrid Erwin • The Salvation Army**

1. In 2014, a Salvation Army Women's Auxiliary (SAWA) was formed in Greenville, and I signed up as a founding member. Over the past ten years, I've helped with Angel Tree and Red Kettles, along with other projects that further the mission of The Salvation Army. I've seen first-hand the kind and compassionate way that The Salvation Army serves people in the Upstate. I like that The Salvation Army provides help in so many ways to those in our community who need help. I was thrilled to be asked to serve on the Advisory Board.



2. The Salvation Army seeks to meet human needs without discrimination. One of the most visible ways that the organization accomplishes this is by providing shelters for those without a place to stay. In fact, the Salvation Army shelter is one of the few places in Greenville where a woman with a young son can find a bed. We also provide rent and utility assistance, including over 80,000 meals per year to people in Greenville. The impact of The Salvation Army is incredibly far-reaching, and I find that being a part of that in even a small way is very fulfilling.

**Minor Shaw • United Way of Greenville**

1. When I moved here 40 years ago, I started volunteering with the United Way as a way to learn about our community and make a positive difference. My service on the United Way Board has been one of the most impactful and important roles I have had in our community. I am grateful to have had this opportunity.



2. The United Way has its fingers on the pulse of our community by working with other nonprofits, corporations, foundations, local governments, and national organizations to understand the issues we face in Greenville. Through our outreach and our network, the United Way coalesces and mobilizes our community to address ongoing needs in Greenville and the Upstate. The United Way leverages its network of hundreds of community partners, accomplishing more together as a community than we could ever do alone.

**Jeanmarie Tankersley • Pendleton Place**

1. My late grandmother, Caroline Cannon Johnston, was one of the founders of Pendleton Place, so the organization has always had a special place in my family and in our hearts. I was very excited at the possibility of helping continue her legacy with the organization by joining the Board. Pendleton Place is a wonderful organization, and serving on its Board is a great way to serve the organization and help it thrive.



2. Pendleton Place has been serving the youth of Greenville for 50 years. It has grown to now include an emergency homeless shelter for youth ages 12-21, housing for teenagers in foster care, a transitional living residence, and programs to serve youth in Greenville including meeting their basic needs, providing family resources, and more.

**Denise Richter • Pendleton Place**

1. Witnessing the positive impact Pendleton Place has with our youth and families in the community inspired me to seek a more strategic role in supporting Pendleton Place. My background in accounting and finance would be valuable in supporting the Board's financial oversight and strategic planning.

2. Serving on the Board is a significant commitment, including meeting attendance, advocacy for Pendleton Place's mission and cause, fundraising efforts to support financial needs, fiduciary oversight, and strategic planning.

**Rebecca Feldman • euphoria**

1. euphoria is a food, wine, and music festival that benefits local nonprofits through grants from Local Boys Do Good. I love food, wine, music, and our Greenville nonprofit community, so it seemed like a great fit! I had a few friends who had been involved over the years, and they encouraged me to apply for a Board Position.



Rebecca Feldman and husband Bryan at the final event of each festival, Sunday Supper, at Sitton Hill Barn

2. euphoria is celebrating its 20th year in 2025. Since 2006, over 45 charities have received grants. This year, 7 organizations each received \$20,000. What a fantastic gift to the community in year 20! Each year the festival has an impressive economic impact on the Greenville community. In 2024 the impact was \$5,000,000 and brought visitors from 23 states.

**Amy Vanderwerff • euphoria**

1. My motivation to join the Board of euphoria came from a passion for community, culture, and connection. Serving on the Board and in leadership roles such as Chairman and Vice-Chairman has allowed me to combine my professional strengths—like relationship-building, event execution, and team management—with my love for Greenville. Helping euphoria grow while staying true to its grassroots origins has been incredibly rewarding. It's been an honor to work alongside such a passionate group of volunteers, staff, and partners who all believe in making a lasting impact on our community.



Amy Vanderwerff and friends at euphoria

2. As a Board Member of euphoria, my responsibilities include providing strategic direction, supporting fundraising efforts, and ensuring the organization fulfills its mission to enrich Greenville's community through food, wine, and music. In past leadership roles, such as Chairman of the Board, I've managed committee members, worked closely with our staff, and helped oversee event logistics and grant distribution. Whether it's behind-the-scenes planning or helping hands-on during festival weekend, I take pride in contributing to an event that truly showcases the best of Greenville.

**Whitney Howell • United Way & Habitat for Humanity**

1. Everyone in our community deserves the opportunity for economic mobility and to have a decent place to live so they can reach their maximum potential. I saw how both the United Way and Habitat for Humanity are impacting individual lives while making a difference in our community overall.

2. Both the United Way and Habitat for Humanity are focused on providing opportunities to individuals and families to overcome barriers, which in turn benefits our community in a collective way. The United Way is focused on improving lives by providing access to education, childcare, housing, and transportation. Habitat for Humanity is providing a pathway to homeownership that includes "sweat equity" and financial literacy for long-term stability. These organizations are changing lives and bettering our community each and every day.

**Mary Allison Zimmerman • Gateway House**

1. Just a few years before I joined the Gateway Board, one of my college roommates committed suicide. It broke my heart, and I knew that I had to get involved in some meaningful way to

help others facing a similar situation. Gateway originally contacted me for consulting work, and what was intended to be a one-hour consultation turned into a multi-hour deep dive. That evening, as I was working on my proposal for the organization, my aunt called to extend a formal invitation to join Gateway's Board of Directors. I accepted without hesitation. Gateway is so much more than just an organization; it's a family, and I am so blessed to have been able to be a part of that family for the past 13 years.

2. Gateway has a very real impact on individuals living with severe mental illness, as it provides them with the resources, support, and community they need to lead fulfilling lives. Gateway empowers its Members to achieve stability, independence, and a sense of belonging through its comprehensive programs—including employment, education, housing, social engagement, and training. Gateway has a massive impact on the Greenville community as well, via reduced hospitalization, homelessness, and incarceration. In the time that I've been on the Gateway board, I've served in a variety of roles. I've helped spearhead the creation of our signature fundraiser, Beautiful Music for Beautiful Minds. Additionally, I have undertaken a number of speaking engagements in the community on Gateway's behalf. I've even listed and sold property for the organization. There's not much about the organization I haven't been involved with over the years.

**Lesla Kastler • The Community Foundation of Greenville**

1. Serving on the Board of The Community Foundation of Greenville provided an incredible opportunity to be immersed in the community in a broader way than my work with Center for Developmental Services and A Child's Haven.

2. The Community Foundation is a collaborative partner at the forefront of assessing community needs and providing responsive leadership. They support strategic philanthropic opportunities for their donors, offer Capacity Building grants for community nonprofits, and support initiatives such as the new Greenville Together: A Home for All and OnTrack Greenville.

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**CAMARADERIE**

**BRIDGING THE COASTS**

**From Napa to Greenville with Heart**

// By *Elizabeth Facen*

When Haley Brussock transferred back to The Junior League of Greenville in 2022, it didn't feel like starting over—it felt like a heartfelt return. After beginning her League journey here as a Provisional in 2019, she had built friendships and community ties that made the transition home both smooth and meaningful. "It's been nice reconnecting with old friends and meeting new ones," she reflects.



But Haley didn't return empty-handed—she brought with her the insight and adaptability forged in another League hundreds of miles away. While living in Napa, California, she served with The Junior League of Napa-Sonoma, a uniquely intimate League of just 25 women serving two expansive counties. "Most of our events and meetings were over an hour away for many Members," she shares. "It made in-person engagement more difficult and infrequent." Yet despite the challenge of distance, she admired the League's ability to strategically advocate for state legislation and maximize their limited resources.

Returning to Greenville, she found herself appreciating the local rhythm and accessibility of community service in new ways. "Greenville's League is larger and deeply rooted in the local community," she notes. "It's a different kind of impact—more personal, more hands-on—but just as meaningful."

Through her time in both Leagues, one value has crystallized: the power of collaboration. "I've learned that Junior League service isn't

just about getting the work done," she explains. "It's about combining different strengths, skills, and personalities to create something bigger than ourselves."

Outside the League, Haley embraces Greenville with the same thoughtful energy. Her ideal day off begins with a long run or cycle class, followed by a breakfast sandwich from Swamp Rabbit Cafe. From there, you'll likely find her spending the afternoon downtown with her husband and friends, enjoying a happy hour or catching a Greenville Drive game.

Her favorite hidden gem? The beloved M. Judson Booksellers on Main Street. "It's a Greenville treasure," she says. A recent highlight? Attending a luncheon with one of her favorite mystery authors, Lucy Foley, hosted at Soby's.

Whether navigating two coasts, two Leagues, or two very different seasons of life, Haley carries with her a warmth and intentionality that's impossible to miss. Her journey reminds us that no matter how far we go, our heart for service will always bring us home.



Haley Brussock



Haley and husband sightseeing on the West Coast

CAMARADERIE

# The Year of the SIG

WITH MEMBER EXPERIENCES CHAIR LINDSAY HALL

// By *Mary Catherine Srofe*

## What is a SIG?

Special Interest Groups, better known as SIGs, took the JLG Greenville world by storm this calendar year. The League had some informal meet ups in the past and this year the League combined the Socials and Special Interest Groups into one committee. Special Interest Groups are small informal meet ups that engage members with similar interests.

## How were SIGs selected for the year?

The Special Interest Groups were made by reviewing Member Feedback of events with high attendance, and requested demand. SIG leader Lindsay Hall also spoke with her Sustaining Advisor, Marlena Nabke on the topics. A survey was done in the past as well as we had some feedback from the Member Speak Outs GMMs.

## How were SIG's led?

"I really wanted the Member Experience committee to be engaged and enjoy the year, so at our first meeting, we worked together to choose leaders based on people's schedules and interests and have fun with them!"

## This years' program included:

- MAHJONG
- WINE & DINE
- EXPLORE GREENVILLE
- MOM MEET UP
- LET'S TRY
  - DIY
  - BUSINESS NETWORKING

## What are some of the highlights of the SIGs this year?

"Well, we all know Mahjong has kicked off in popularity in not only the JLG, but in Greenville and all over the country, but I have to say one of my highlights was just seeing the comradery and members connecting on the topics of the SIGs.... completely on their own! The SIGs gave members an outlet to connect, and a reason to connect with one another outside the league to deepen their relationships. I also was very encouraged to see members use the SIGs as an outlet for connection during Hurricane Helene. In the Group texts and Group Me's, I saw folks offer their homes up for showers, power charging and in many other ways! That's what it's all about!"



JLG Members enjoy a game of Mahjong

CAMARADERIE

# A Tribute to Betsy Littlejohn

// By *Jill Schneider*

Thirty years ago the Junior League lost our beloved bookkeeper, Sarah Whitmire. Sarah was a fixture at the office, and everyone adored her. I was Treasurer at the time, and it was my responsibility to find a new bookkeeper. We had several applications, and one of those applications was from Betsy Littlejohn. I knew who Betsy was, but I didn't know her very well. We talked one day, and honestly, I was less than impressed. She had no accounting education or experience. She wanted to work part time on her schedule. A flex schedule was unheard of in 1995. Plus, I thought that she and Tina Hampton would NEVER get along. It was just a bad situation waiting to happen in my eyes. Then the phone calls started coming...this was pre-text and email. Betsy is so wonderful.

*Please give Betsy a chance. You will love Betsy. Betsy loves the League, and she will do a great job when she is there. Betsy really wants this job.*

And on and on.

So, the Finance Committee recommended to the Board that we hire Betsy, and she accepted the job offer. From day one, Betsy was determined to learn her responsibilities and the processes of accounting. She dug in, asked questions, learned more about accounting, learned more about our Junior League, and worked hard. It took some time, but she was determined to do a good job. Tina helped Betsy, especially with the history of that position. Before long, Tina and Betsy became fast friends.....and I ate my words!

Betsy has been dedicated to her job since the first day. She accomplishes her tasks on time with accuracy. Over time she has expanded her responsibilities. She understands the financial scope of our League and is determined to lead us in the right direction.

Betsy, you and I have laughed about all of this over years, but you are the best person for the job. I am grateful for you, and thankful for all those phone calls.



CAMARADERIE

CAMARADERIE IN THE LEAGUE

# Some of Our Sweetest Friendships

// By *Emily Young*

## Camaraderie in the League: Some of Our Sweetest Friendships

The Oxford dictionary defines camaraderie as “mutual trust and friendship among people who spend a lot of time together.” You will recognize the following women as leaders, whose mutual interest in making an impact paired with service to the League, have sparked trusting, meaningful connections with one another. Their bonds are a powerful testament that our shared values, visions, and goals as League Members are the perfect ingredients for sweet, long-lasting friendships.



*Sustainers and Past Presidents Jane Furman Pressly and Marcia Barker have known one another since their youth. They became reacquainted as young professionals when they served together as President and President-Elect of the JLG and formed a lasting bond. Together with their shared talents, skills, and passion, they have made a lasting impact on our community through their*

*contributions to the founding of both Serenity Place and FAVOR. Now, they serve together as advocates for End of Life Planning, with the national organization Compassion and Choices.*

### Marcia Barker and Jane Furman Pressly

Though Jane and Marcia were both born and raised in Greenville and first met in high school in 1963, they weren’t close friends. It wasn’t until they reconnected in the Junior League in their late twenties that their friendship truly began to blossom. They collaborated on a variety of League projects, from show houses to setting up bleachers for a tennis tournament, and even lobbied for child abuse laws in Columbia. However, their bond solidified when Jane became President in 1983 with Marcia as President-Elect. They quickly discovered their shared vision and complementary leadership styles. Jane describes Marcia as a “no-nonsense leader” who is smart, fearless, and reliable, while Marcia praises Jane as an “outstanding President” from whom she learned a great deal.

### A Shared Passion for Advocacy

Even after their time as leaders in the League ended, their shared passion for advocacy kept them connected. In the mid-90s, when Marcia learned that The Phoenix Center’s detox services were at risk of closing, she immediately called Jane, who was on the Center’s board. This phone call rekindled a powerful partnership, leading them to collaborate on multiple projects related to substance abuse, including the founding of **FAVOR Upstate**.

In their recent retirements—Marcia from the Solicitor’s Office and Jane from her career as a fundraising consultant—they describe themselves as “social workers” who thrive on working together to accomplish shared goals. This drive led them to their current focus: becoming advocates for **End of Life Planning** through the national organization, Compassion & Choices.

### Advice for Lifelong Friendships

When asked for advice for Members, both women emphasize the importance of engagement. Jane encourages Members to “**work on every Committee you can**” to find kindred spirits. Marcia agrees, advising others to get involved in projects and take on leadership

roles. They believe the Junior League offers a unique opportunity to find passions and form lasting friendships, a belief they have proven true through their decades-long bond.

“To me, the best thing about the Junior League is it gives you the opportunity to explore your interests and find opportunities to work on those issues that are important to you and to the community. When you find something that speaks to you, get involved!”



*Another outstanding pair of Sustainers and Past-Presidents, Lesa Kastler and Caroline Stewart first served on the Board together in 1996. They’ve been “joined at the hip”, traveling the country and making ground-breaking progress in the League and in the Greenville community together ever since!*

Lesla and Caroline’s friendship began in 1995 at a Junior League of Greenville training at Headquarters. Lesa immediately recognized Caroline’s capability, remembering her as the obvious choice to handle a technical issue for the presenter. While Caroline doesn’t recall that specific meeting, she and Lesa agree their friendship truly blossomed a few years later when they served together on the Board.

## A Partnership Forged in Leadership

The women’s bond solidified during their time as President-Elect and President. Lesa served as Community Vice President while Caroline was President-Elect on Michelle Shain’s Board. The following year, their roles reversed, with Lesa as President-Elect during Caroline’s presidency. This provided the perfect opportunity for their partnership to flourish. Caroline’s extensive in-League history complemented Lesa’s deep knowledge of the community, making them an ideal team. Their connection was so strong that years later, a friend proclaimed they were “joined at the hip.” Now, they have a playful tradition of tapping their hips as a greeting.

## Adventures and Lifelong Bonds

Their friendship was strengthened not only by their leadership roles, but also by shared travels. They recall amazing League trips to Atlanta, Knoxville, and Denver, where they took a memorable overnight side trip to Leadville, including Pike’s Peak, before looping back for their meetings. Some of their travel stories are too funny to tell, but they still laugh about the time a security guard at the Denver airport questioned why Caroline had rocks in her luggage—souvenirs from the Rockies. They also enjoyed the daily “blonde jokes” faxed to them by Tina Hampton, which they’d pick up from the hotel business center, hoping the staff enjoyed them, too.

## A Shared Passion for Service

The bond between Lesa and Caroline is rooted in their shared passion for the League and community service. They continue to work together on projects like the Sustainer Holiday Bag, enjoy serving as Sustaining Advisors, and are currently focused on a new initiative: the Sustainer Council. This project aims to engage Sustainers and ensure they feel included, welcome, and needed for the future of the JLG.

When asked for advice, they encourage Members to be open to appreciating the unique gifts of others and to find opportunities to work alongside people. They emphasize you **can find lifelong friends by laughing and learning together**. As Caroline and Lesa prove, the Junior League provides the perfect environment for this kind of lasting friendship to flourish.

## CAMARADERIE



Kimberly Witherspoon and Kylee Heap met on the Nominating Committee in 2014, and almost 10 years later, Kylee announced Kimberly as the 2022-2023 President. Through years spent side-by-side in service to the League, they have survived an unspeakable boat ride, walked one another through health battles, and now celebrate life's great milestones together, leading together where they're called.

For Kylee and Kimberly, their friendship began with “food, spreadsheets, and lots of boxes” on the 2014 Nominating Committee. What started as weekly meetings quickly evolved into a deeper connection marked by trust and laughter. These two friends bonded over a shared commitment to service and a knack for showing up for one another, a bond that only grew stronger over time.

### A Foundation of Shared Service

The two women's friendship truly flourished during their time on the 2016-2017 Board of Directors. It was a formative time for both their leadership and their bond. They were there for each other through job transitions, the loss of loved ones, a global pandemic, and personal health battles. Their mutual support in both difficult and joyful times created a foundation of trust that has since blossomed into a friendship that feels like family. Their shared passion for service

remains a core part of their connection, as they recently teamed up to contribute to the **Sustainer Holiday Bag Project**.

### A Friendship of Laughter and Sisterhood

Beyond the serious work of the League, their friendship is full of humor and cherished memories. They recall a “League Lake Day” hosted by Kimberly, a capstone celebration of service and friendship. They also have fond memories from their time on the Nominating Committee, including a few stories that are sealed in confidentiality. However, one story capturing their bond involves a search for Kimberly's lost keys at the bottom of a french fry container, a tale that perfectly encapsulates their friendship rooted in “service, snacks, and showing up for each other.”

### Enduring Bonds

Even after their time on the Nominating Committee and Board ended, their friendship has only grown stronger. What started as teamwork has evolved into celebrating birthdays, toasting career milestones, hosting brunches and annual Derby parties, and expanding to include their families. They describe their friendship as different from others because it is rooted in a shared purpose—a heart for improving the lives of those around them. They are able to listen, challenge, and support each other without judgment, creating a bond that they consider a sisterhood that both grounds and lifts them higher.

For anyone looking to find lifelong friends in the League, they offer simple advice: **“Be open—to the twists and turns of your League journey... Say yes, show up, and let it surprise you.”**



Laura Sweet, Mary-Neil Jackson, Michelle Gray, and Miranda George connected separately at different times over the past six years or so, but during the 2023-2024 League year when Mary-Neil was serving as Membership VP, Michelle was Recruitment Chair, Laura was on the Recruitment Committee and Miranda was Sustainer Outreach Chair, the stars aligned. Speaking of “stars” – a quick glance at their group chat will reveal their mutual obsession with “Dancing With the Stars”! Beyond their shared taste in TV, the glue that holds this dynamic quartet together is really their commitment to supporting each other and other League members, and making a difference in our organization!

What started as a series of chance meetings and separate friendships blossomed into a tight-knit group for Mary-Neil, Miranda, Michelle, and Laura. Although Mary-Neil first met Miranda at the 2019 Home Run for Healthy Kids, the four women didn't truly connect until the 2023-2024 League year. During that time, Mary-Neil served as Membership VP, Michelle was Recruitment Chair, Miranda was Sustainer Outreach Chair, and Laura served on the Recruitment Committee. Their shared roles brought them together regularly, sparking a friendship that now feels like it has been forever.

The group's friendship quickly grew beyond League meetings. They bonded over their love for Mahjong, playing together both in and out of the Special Interest Groups. A shared passion for Dancing With the Stars led to a group text that became a daily source

of connection and conversation. They also have a tradition of attending League events and service shifts together, often grabbing dinner or drinks before or after. According to Michelle, their shared commitments make it easier to see each other and understand the passion they all have for the Junior League.

### A Different Kind of Friendship

For these four friends, their bond is unique from other friendships outside the League because it's rooted in service and a shared drive to better themselves and the Greenville community. They show up for each other with a heart full of passion and a desire to make an impact, both within the League and in their personal lives. Their friendships are based on a mutual understanding and support for each other's goals.

### Advice for Members

When asked what advice they would give to Members, all four women encourage an open mind and a willingness to get involved. Strike up conversations with new people and take the initiative to plan get-togethers. **Michelle emphasizes the importance of getting involved and finding placements that align with your goals, as this will lead you to like-minded women.** All four agree that putting yourself out there is the best way to find lifelong friends and truly experience all the League has to offer.

COMMITMENT

REMARKABLE IMPACTS

# The Active of the Year and The Provisional of the Year

// By Mary-Neil Jackson

Helen Horton Hunt was a member of the Junior League of Greenville for 10 years before her tragic death in 1989. She was an outstanding volunteer - pleasant, positive, responsible and thorough. Over 30 years ago, the Helen Horton Hunt Service Award was created in order to recognize outstanding volunteer service.

Kirby Frair has a long history of exceeding expectations through her work in the Junior League. This year, as Arrangements Chair, Kirby has continued to demonstrate her exceptional leadership. She has masterfully organized monthly meetings at various venues, even those that lacked standard amenities. Going above and beyond, she and her mother, Lori Center, have gone above and beyond to ensure the meetings run smoothly. Throughout all her roles, Kirby has maintained a positive attitude and a smile, consistently proving to be a dedicated and inspiring leader for the Junior League.

Each year, one Provisional is presented with the Frances Pearce Steele Provisional of the Year Award. An extremely talented artist and dedicated volunteer, Fran was a JLG member for over 25 years. She is most remembered for her love of and dedication to the Nearly New Shop, where she served as Chairman. Because of the fondness Fran had for the Nearly New Shop, its role in training Provisionals, and its service to the Greenville community, the Frances Pearce Steele Award Provisional of the Year Award was created.



Active Member of the Year, Kirby Frair with Mother and Sustainer of the Year, Lori Center

Britney Giryluk was the 2024-2025 recipient of the Frances Pearce Steele Provisional of the Year Award. Britney has made a remarkable impact through her service and leadership with the Junior League of Greenville (JLG) and the broader Greenville community. Beyond completing her obligations, she has eagerly pursued additional volunteer opportunities with organizations like Meals on Wheels, GirlUp GVL, and community cleanup efforts, reflecting her genuine passion for giving back. Within JLG, she has gone above and beyond her Provisional requirements by attending multiple leadership trainings, actively engaging in special interest groups, and fostering strong connections with her peers, advisors, and mentors. Her positivity, warmth, and enthusiasm inspire others to get involved, creating a welcoming and encouraging environment. Through her dedication to community service, leadership development, and uplifting spirit, Britney exemplifies JLG's mission and has set an outstanding example for her peers.



Marie Pius, Laura Sweet, Provisional of the Year Britney Giryluk and Kami Arledge



An advertisement for 'C&amp;M CRESCENT AND MAIN'. The text reads: 'Honored to support the women of The Junior League of Greenville.' and 'Our boutique curates the perfect style to help you feel confident, timeless, and authentically you. Come in and let us style you!'. At the bottom, it says 'SHOP ONLINE &amp; IN STORE' and provides store hours: 'We are open every Tuesday 10-3, Wednesday 12-5, Thursday 12-5 &amp; Friday 12-5 at 3515 Pelham Rd. STE 200, Greenville, SC 29615'. It also includes the website 'Shop 24/7 at crescentandmain.com'.

COMMITMENT

# From Age to Age in the JLG

// By *Caroline Morgan*

The Junior League of Greenville is a place where you can find the joys of youth along with the wisdom of experience. One of our unique features is the intergenerational camaraderie among Members. To illustrate this point, we've interviewed Members on opposite ends of the age spectrum.

## OLDEST MEMBER INTERVIEW

### Dot Grimball

Dot Grimball first joined the Junior League of Atlanta in 1952. It was right after graduating college, and her friends had enticed her to join. Dot felt a desire to get involved in something outside of work, and the social aspect of the League was a big draw for her. She had gone to school far away from her hometown and needed a way to make new friends. The League gave her the perfect outlet to find community and a solid group of female friendships.

The Junior League helped mold Dot into the leader that she is today. She says that you carry a lot of responsibility within your community because you have a duty to uphold the name and legacy of the League. When you're volunteering as a Member of the Junior League, there is a sense of obligation to be even better than a paid worker. When volunteering, Dot always ensured that she was honoring the Junior League in a way that would make the organization proud. One initiative that was particularly rewarding for her was The Opportunity Shop with the Junior League of Atlanta, which is similar to Greenville's Nearly New Shop. Dot acted as Treasurer of the Shop and was entrusted to manage a significant amount of money.

As far as advice for younger Members, Dot says to be conscientious about attending as many meetings as you can to explore the various avenues for service. If you don't feel that a placement is necessarily the best fit for you, don't get too discouraged. It's important to continue to explore different placements until you find the one that best suits your skills and abilities. She says to keep in mind that each job within the League will teach you something, so make sure to put as much energy into each placement as you can. Nowadays, there is such a wide offering of placements that weren't available back in the day, so take advantage of the opportunities.

Dot's past work outside of the League includes working with the organizations Loaves and Fishes and the Medical Auxiliary. She also earned a Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education

and worked with children with special needs. We are grateful to Dot for all her efforts to further the Mission and Vision of Junior League. Her impact and legacy is an inspiration to future generations of Junior League Members everywhere.



## YOUNGEST MEMBER INTERVIEW

### Hadley Heath

Hadley Heath, a native of Clinton, NC, was inspired to join the Junior League by one of her friends after graduating from Wofford and moving to Greenville in 2023. She was particularly interested in the community service aspect of the League and enjoyed the opportunity to help the underserved community in Greenville with her Provisional Class. Her main philanthropic interest is increasing awareness around financial opportunities for students who wish to further their education through college. Hadley is especially

drawn to United Ministries, a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting individuals and families by providing essential services. United Ministries aligns with her interests and passions when it comes to serving the local community.

Hadley has enjoyed getting to learn from more experienced League Members and says that it's inspiring to see how joining the League has given them a voice. She's eager to grow her public speaking skills so she can more confidently express her ideas and passions. Getting to look up to older Members has also been a source of encouragement for Hadley to get further involved as she grows her League career. The wealth of knowledge that older League Members provide is invaluable and provides countless opportunities for Hadley to grow both personally and professionally.

As far as her future in the League, Hadley hopes to build her professional skills and dive into professional development. In particular, she would love to learn more about marketing and communications to become well-rounded in the workplace. Her advice to those who are interested in joining the Junior League would be to simply put yourself outside of your comfort zone and talk to as many current Members as possible. She says that no matter your age or demographic, getting involved with the League will provide you the opportunity to learn from so many amazing and confident women.

COMMITMENT

STILL CALLED TO SERVE

# Lori Center's Quiet Legacy of Strength and Compassion

// By Elizabeth Facen

When Lori Center joined The Junior League of Greenville, she was drawn in by a simple but powerful truth: women lead the way when it comes to community impact. “Women leading volunteerism within a community—that’s what inspired me,” she says. “Sharing time and supporting community needs is a great example of service, and how one can inspire making a difference.”

Lori’s leadership has always been rooted in empathy and purpose. Her career as a nonprofit manager and hospital social worker—across inpatient, community, and ambulatory services—gave her a front-row seat to both the challenges and possibilities present in Greenville. Today, she serves as a Regional Practice Administrator for Bon Secours Medical Group, and credits her League experience with deepening her understanding of community resources and how to use them meaningfully. “Service was complemented by learning so much about the needs of the very community I live in,” she reflects.



One of Lori’s most memorable placements was during her time at the Nearly New Shop, which she still remembers with warmth and reverence. “This was before the Shop moved from downtown,” she recalls. “A young single mother came in during the week looking for clothes and small furniture for her children’s rooms. We were able to help her find exactly what she needed and what she could afford. As she left, she cried and thanked us for blessing her family.” That moment, for Lori, captured the true Mission of the League: practical, personal service that touches lives in unseen, but lasting ways.



Though she now serves as a Sustaining Member, Lori doesn’t believe the work is over—only deeper. “Just because we are older women, our knowledge, passion, faith, and seasoned approaches to life are still worth sharing,” she says. “We’re still called to support others in all circumstances—with love.”

She believes Sustainers have a special role to play in shaping the future of the League—not just through institutional knowledge, but through active mentorship. “It’s about committing to serve, even when there’s nothing in it for you,” she says. “It’s asking, ‘How may I keep serving others?’ And as Sustainers, that means mentoring younger women and encouraging them to keep sharing their gifts.” It is because of this mindset Lori received the 2025 Jane Cardwell Hughes Sustainer of the Year Award at the Annual Meeting in May.

The Jane Cardwell Hughes Award was established to recognize a woman who has continued to make a difference through her volunteer efforts by honoring her as the Sustainer of the year.



Outside the League, Lori’s warmth extends into every corner of her life. Her Hot Chicken Salad Pie, a recipe she makes annually at Easter from Uptown Downtown South, has become something of a family signature. Her ideal getaway? Maui, which she’ll be visiting soon thanks to a 40th wedding anniversary surprise from her husband, John. And on most Saturdays at 10AM, you’ll find her right where her heart leads—on the sidelines at her grandson Presnell’s sporting events, cheering him on like only a grandmother can.

Lori Center’s story is one of longevity and legacy. Her life and leadership remind us that the most powerful service often happens away from the spotlight—in everyday moments, quiet encouragement, and the deep well of wisdom passed from one woman to another.



COMMITMENT

# Find the Good Day

// By *Caroline Morgan*

This past September, Members of Junior Leagues across South Carolina joined together at the State House in Columbia in honor of Find the Good Day.

Find the Good Day is a celebration of compassion, community, and positive change! We invited the community to join us in embracing the spirit of kindness and empowerment as we commemorated this special occasion that echoed the core values of the Junior Leagues across the world.

At the heart of every Junior League lies a profound dedication to empowering women to become catalysts for change. Through training, mentorship, and hands-on experience, Junior League Members evolve into confident leaders who drive meaningful transformations in their communities.

Find the Good Day is not just a date on the calendar; it's a movement that reflects the timeless spirit of Junior Leagues – a legacy of kindness, empowerment, and community transformation. Together, we aim to make a difference by embracing the power of unity and positive change.

On Find the Good Day, we all created a legacy of compassion and positivity that will resonate for generations to come. Together, we can find the good in every day and make a real difference in the lives of others.

Below is a picture of the Proclamation The JLG received for Find the Good Day in conjunction with all seven Junior Leagues in South Carolina. President Sarah Brand and President-Elect Mary-Neil Jackson are pictured with Representative Beth Bernstein and Senator Penny Gustafson.



## 2024–2025 Impact Highlights for Advancing Women’s Leadership

### MISSION IN ACTION



Over 1,000 Members



30,000+ volunteer hours completed



10,000+ hours of leadership development training



20+ Members earned Executive Leadership Certification with capstone projects

### COMMUNITY INVESTMENT



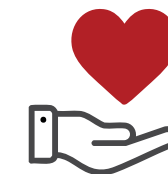
\$30K raised through Annual Fund and Endowment contributions



Our \$250K revenue from The Nearly New Shop



\$15K raised through creative fundraising events



\$50K awarded to nonprofits tackling human trafficking and boosting economic mobility.



JLG has raised over \$180,000 & provides approximately 350 holiday cancer gift bags each year!

### PUBLIC RECOGNITION



Received a Governor’s Proclamation



Celebrated 95 years of service to the Greenville community

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