

Connections

A Battle Creek Junior League Publication

Autumn 2015

Junior League of Battle Creek

From the President

By Tracie Tomak, 2015-16 President

As fall officially envelops Michigan, I am excited for the changes that are about to happen in our Michigan weather. I am likewise excited about the future of the Junior League of Battle Creek!

Our League is experiencing a level of commitment among our membership that is strengthening our organization, now and as we move into the future. In addition, we are blessed to have three active Past Presidents and three Sustaining Advisors who have recommitted themselves to a year active participation and guidance. I am so fortunate to find myself surrounded by caring, capable and committed women who are ready to embark on projects and fundraisers to lead us into the future.

Just two years ago, League was faced with the option of retiring. But, the small and mighty membership dug in our heels and promised to find a way to keep going. In the last year, new League members attended the Association of Junior League International (AJLI) training in Texas and outlined a vision for League to not only continue, but to create new initiatives that will be more meaningful than ever!



Tracie Tomak, 2015-16
President

Our Community Impact team is developing projects that will have life changing impact on women and children. Our fundraising team is working on building upon Guess Who, the new fundraiser introduced last League year and developing a new fundraiser for the spring. As we continue to work on reigniting the passion and fun of giving to our organization. Membership is working on redesigning the membership training program to keep it engaging and relevant. And our newest members are following suit from last year and headed to New Orleans, Seattle, Miami and Austin for additional training opportunities. The differences these women will make in our community will amaze us all, and I am so blessed to a small part of the journey.

What can you do to help? We need active and sustaining members to stay engaged and to participate in activities and fundraising. We need everyone to recommend women for membership. And we need to continue to uplift one another as we face the challenges and tribulations, not only of JLBC but in our lives as friends. I can honestly say, I have met my personal goal in belonging to JLBC, finding the lifelong bonds and friendship that I see so clearly among our sustainers. I couldn't be more blessed to experience everything we have to offer, and I thank you all for being part of this incredible journey. Watch out Battle Creek, JLBC is here to stay!

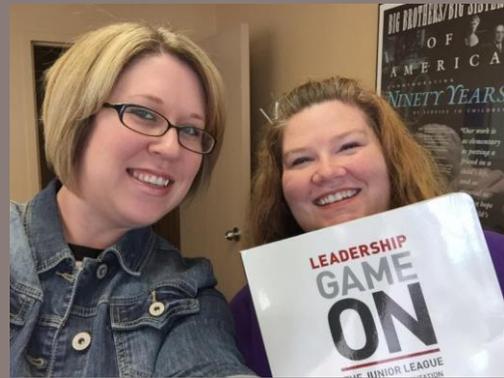
Sincerely,
Tracie Tomak
2015-16 President



Programming & Future Projects

By Mandy Cope, Co-VP Community Impact

In February, Kim and I had the pleasure of attending the Organizational Development Institute (ODI) in Texas. We weren't sure what to expect, but the "Achieving Community Impact: Creating Lasting Changes for Healthier Communities" concentration course blew us away. As we are both new(ish) members to League, we had read about the amazing history the impact our league has had in our community, but neither of us had been a part of it yet.



Kim and Mandy at ODI in February.

It was during ODI where we decided to partner and serve as Vice President's for Community Impact and to lead League in issue-based community impact. After all, Junior League is an organization of women committed to promoting volunteerism, developing the potential of women and improving communities through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteerism.

At our September General Membership Meeting (GMM), members were provided with a [handout](#), which provided an overview of how we propose working toward the topic of human trafficking and the issues of mental health and self-esteem in victims of trafficking. It is our hope, active and sustaining members will connect with this work and will share feedback with us. As a team, we hope to establish the short-term direction of League and for all members to be energized and engaged.

Overall, our project work will be more intentional and incorporate manageable programming. Our projects will still be meaningful as we work along other agencies serving our community and at the same time, begin to build programs in the Battle Creek community through empowering and mentoring girls and women.

We will continue to have our GMMs at a different non-profit each month so we can learn about the services provided to vulnerable populations in our community. In addition, our private Facebook group will feature more community meetings and training opportunities for our members to become

civic and community leaders. It is also a great way to share your involvement in League.

Finally, community impact is about more than two people. Please reach out to either [Kim](#) or myself ([Mandy](#)) to share your interest in working alongside us to solidify our upcoming three-year plan. We need your feedback and want to make this meaningful for all those involved. Doing so will enable us to grow as a league and have a greater impact in Battle Creek.



EMPOWERMENT training
LEADERSHIP Development
Connections Personal fulfillment
COMMUNITY IMPACT
Make New Friends ENGAGE your INTERESTS
BECOME a MEMBER
BE the DIFFERENCE
Social Awareness

Bouquets of Appreciation

Tiffany Blackman

Thank you for stepping up as President-Elect and for attending Fall Leadership Conference! Your passion ignites our future! Tracie

Kim Wickham and Mandy Cope

Crazy great ideas for Community Impact! Thanks for all of your work and dedication toward redefining our mission. We can't wait to see your final presentation! Tracie

Amanda Pignataro

Way to go, organizing our AJLI membership information! Looking forward to the new training ideas and "Social Medial Social"! We are so lucky to have you in this role! Tracie

DeAnn Auton and Amber Cunningham

Not in recent memory have we had both a Treasurer AND VP of Finance! Thank you both so much for tackling the least popular jobs! #numbersstink Tracie

Doris McDevitt, MaryEllen Jackson and Jean Godfrey

My Sustaining Advisor Dream Team! Your impact was immediate and so very much appreciated. Thank you for putting your time and effort back into the 'Actives'. We are so grateful to each one of you! Tracie

Kim Crane

Are you ready for this? Thank you for leaving your busy family to attend your first AJLI ODI Training! I can't wait to see all that you bring to JLBC. Tracie

Ashley Shedd

A Huge THANK YOU for hosting our Summer Family Social. Food, games, drinks and swimming at your home were a blast! My son still wants you to be his new mommy!! Tracie

DeAnn Auton, Alyssa Jones and Kelli Marske

THANK YOU all for everything you have done, and for staying active as we build on your successes! It is so comforting to see your faces in the meetings and to know you are there for us. We are here today because of each one of YOU! Tracie



Junior League Past Presidents

On Friday, October 2, Junior League Past Presidents assembled for the annual Past Presidents Luncheon held at the Battle Creek Country Club. In photo (seated left to right): Jill Miller, Virginia Clark, Marilyn Parks; (middle

row left to right): Chris Iavelli, Cindy Leach, Kathy Rizer, Julie Shouldice,
Shanon Legg, DeAnn Auton, Carolyn Harvey, Judy Gronewald
(back row left to right) Tracie Tomak, Kathy Baker, Deb Dingwall, Connie
McFee, Kristyn Dennison, Kelli Marske, Kris Cobeen

Reminder

If you have not paid your dues, please do so as soon as possible.

If you need to make payment arrangements, please email [DeAnn Auton](mailto:DeAnn.Auton@jloregon.org).



Tips, Tools & Tidbits

October is...

Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Click [here](#) for more information.

National Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Click [here](#) for more information.

National Dental Hygiene Month. Click [here](#) for more information.

Did you know: Betty Ford, Sandra Day O'Conner, Nancy Reagan and Elinor Roosevelt were all Junior League members.

[Waiting for the Light](#)

A video created by the Junior League of Portland, Oregon, exposing the scope and impact of sex trafficking and the commercial sexual exploitation of children.

Give Gab: Tracking Our Community Impact

By Kim Wickham, Co-VP Community Impact

In years past, the usual method for keeping track of our volunteer hours to show community impact has been through passing around a log sheet at the monthly meetings. This has been the bane of our existence, trying to pay attention to the meeting, whilst attempting to remember what we did the past month. By way of solution, this year, we are going to utilize an online tracking system called [GiveGab](#).



Click on image to sign up and log your hours!!

GiveGab is a fantastic new tool to help League promote our efforts out in the community. By signing up for a free account, volunteers can track their impact to motivate themselves, inspire their friends, and help promote the causes they care about most. They can also receive email reminders for upcoming volunteer opportunities and events, logging hours, and other important activities. You can compete with your friends and other volunteers on leaderboards, collect rewards and build a trophy collection by volunteering and logging your hours on GiveGab.

The benefit to League is administrators for the site can post upcoming volunteer opportunities, which gives the option of assigning specific tasks or volunteer shifts. When members log their hours, it is automatically reflected in the organizations hours and the value of those hours is displayed on our page. This is potentially a fantastic tool for grant writing data. We can all be competitive in knowing where we stand on the leaderboard with hours of service to the community.

Please sign up for a free account by going to www.givegab.com and become a member of Junior League of Battle Creek. If anyone needs help with this, I will be more than happy to help you sign up and get started. If there are several people interested in attending a GiveGab tutorial, I can facilitate a time and place for that as well.

2015-16 General Membership Meeting Dates



The General Membership Meetings for the 2015-16 League year is as follows:

October 20 at Safe Place

November 17 at Sexual Assault Services

December 15 at Charitable Union

January 19 at Women's Co-Op

February 16 at Women's Life Recovery - The Haven

March 15 at Legal Services

April 19 at Substance Abuse Council

May 7 at May Celebration, Battle Creek Country Club

All General Membership Meetings will have a 6:30 pm social and a 7 pm meeting.

eNewsletter Publication Schedule

The Battle Creek Junior League eNewsletter will be published during the following months:

October 2015

January 2016

April 2016

Leadership Development

By Tiffany Blackman, President-Elect

Just over 350 fellow Leaguers met in New Orleans for the Junior League Fall Leadership Conference, held during celebrations of the 10 year anniversary of Hurricane Katrina. What a resilient city! The impact of the catastrophic hurricane is almost unfathomable and there are many aspects of the city that are still in disrepair.

When Hurricane Katrina hit, more than 200,000 homes were destroyed and over 800,000 people were evacuated from their city. Thankfully, a legacy of leaders came quickly to the rescue!

More than 1,000 Junior League ladies were some of the first people on the scene to help a town so desperately in need of rebuilding.

Meeting the members from the Junior League of New Orleans was very humbling and the zeal of their league still shines as they continue to care for their community through a diaper bank, local shelter programs, empowerment workshops, babysitter clinics, and more. It is true proof

"Women working together can truly save a city."

Shannon McCloskey Able, NOJL President

During the conference, several key issues emerged: the need to connect; the need for research and information; and the need to diversify and change with the times.

Connect with your League mission and vision. All projects should be based in our mission and vision and be born out of community need.

Research and stay informed. All projects for League should be substantiated by research; community need and logic. A logic model helps us understand the resources we have and need in order to initiate and maintain a project. Measure and monitor progress, place members where they are needed, can grow, and can be best utilized.

"It's not the size that counts, but the impact."



Tiffany Blackman, President Elect

Susan Danish Executive Director of AJLI

Diversify & Change. Think outside of the box. In fundraising, aim to create an event, not just a party. Evaluate and refresh when necessary. Membership can be inclusive and diverse. Look at who and how we are recruiting. Be creative. Membership retention has a lot to do with right sizing Leagues. Consider longer terms and steady transitions.

"Do less, be more."

Carol Scott AJL Board of Directors

Fund Development: Putting the Fun in Fundraising!

By Tiffany Blackman, VP Fund Development

The fundraising committee is actively seeking to host a two fundraisers a year; potentially one in the fall and one in the spring.

Research is being conducted on how the fundraisers can work within our community and which types can be most profitable.

Tentatively, we are seeking to host Guess Who, a costume optional soft fundraiser/friend-raiser on November 7, 2015, and a fundraiser in the spring of 2016 with ideas of a woman's tea.

We're excited about the possibilities! Stay tuned.



Quick Links

[Junior League Battle Creek
Association of Junior Leagues
Facebook](#)

