

Connections

A Battle Creek Junior League Publication

Winter 2016

Junior League of Battle Creek

From the President

By Tracie Tomak, 2015-16 President

Looking at all of the red, pink and white hearts that surround us during Valentine "season" I can't help but reflect on everything in my life that I love. My husband, son, family, co-workers, career ... and Junior League.

My love for Junior League Battle Creek (JLBC) has deepened each year and blossomed into more than I could have hoped for. Together, and collaboratively, we have created a fundraiser that is doing more than raising money - it has started discussions among women. We have also created a community impact vision - personal care - that has inspired all facets of our community. We have finally, as a group, unburdened ourselves from what wasn't working and identified real niches that are truly impactful. We should be flying high and bursting with pride!

But when I speak to our members individually, these amazing women who are inspirational in every sense, I hear self-doubt, self-criticism, and apologies. Not a single woman has told me she believes she is doing a great job. Instead, I am hearing universally what we believe we do wrong: missed deadlines; missed



Tracie Tomak, 2015-16
President

meetings; failed phone calls; and overall disappointment in ourselves. I am not immune to this.

The questions then become: Why are we so hard on ourselves? Why aren't we more confident in what we do right? Why is every missed step a massive failure?

We will be addressing these questions and more during our 1st Annual Women's Summit and Brunch. This new fundraiser is more than raising money. We are raising each other up! Let's celebrate what we do and minimize what we don't. We all have a lot of hats to wear and a lot that is expected of us. We have people who depend on us and we depend on ourselves!

JLBC has a mission: Promoting Volunteerism, Developing the potential of women, and Improving our Community. Let us never forget the power of women. I challenge each of us to end every day with a positive note to ourselves. Tell yourself one positive thing you accomplished each day. It sounds easy enough, but will you be able to drown out the voice telling you everything you didn't do? Try....let's all try. And let's tell each other on a regular basis how wonderful we are.

I hope you will be able to join us at the Summit and Brunch on March 19, 2016. We have arranged for four positive and accomplished women to lead a panel discussion that will be uplifting and inspirational. Donate a basket for our fundraising portion, bring a friend, and enjoy other wonderful women in our community. As women we do so much right. Let's *celebrate* that and be good to ourselves, so that we can be good for everyone we love and for our community.

Valentine's and hearts to all of you!

Tracie Tomak
2015-16 President

J
KEEP
CALM
AND
VOLUNTEER

An Update from the Fundraising Committee

By Tiffany Blackman, 2016-17
President Elect & 2015-16 Fundraising
Chair



Members of JLBC at the November Friend-Raiser.

Fall Friend-Raiser

If you did not have the chance to attend our friend-raiser "Girls Night Out" in November, we missed you, but had a great success!

The goal was to raise community awareness about Junior League Battle Creek (JLBC) and invite women to become friends and ultimately members of JLBC. We were excited to host 14 friends, raise \$150 from our door prize drawing, and pack a total of 61 emergency hygiene kits with toiletries for women/teens at S.A.F.E Place, Sexual Assault Services, and Calhoun Community High School!

Since the friend-raiser, we have had several small information meetings for women interested in JLBC, called Sip-N-See's. To date, these collaborative committee efforts have garnered three new members! And more potential members are being reached all the time.

Spring Fundraiser

We are all in for such a treat! The fundraising committee has been hard at work and gearing up for the second fundraising event this League year! Our spring fundraiser, Women's Summit and Brunch, will be held Saturday, March 19,

2016, at the beautiful, newly renovated, Kellogg Community College Binda Theater! Funds for the state of the art renovation came from a voter-approved \$20 million capital millage renewed in 2012 for 15 years.

Our 1st Annual Women's Summit and Brunch is an opportunity to celebrate Women's History Month, bring awareness to JLBC and the good work we do in the community, and bring women together in a networking fashion to enjoy a panel discussion on this year's theme, "Confidence - Believing in Yourself."

There will be four special guests speaking during the panel discussion including the Honorable Sarah S. Lincoln, Kathy Grosso, Teresa Momenee and Meredith Stravers. In addition, an auction onsite to raise even more funds to help propel JLBC's mission and vision. You do not want to miss out on this very unique event!

Tickets are on sale now and are just \$20. You can connect with any JLBC member to get your ticket today! If you are interested in supporting this event in a heavier capacity, please think about becoming a sponsor. As an individual or business, you can sponsor by donating items for our auction. We are looking for themed baskets, gift certificates, and the like. As a sustainer, please consider a \$50 sponsorship; this includes a \$20 ticket and \$30 towards an auction item or decorations. Any way you can help is appreciated.

We look forward to seeing everyone on March 19, 2016 for our 1st Annual Women's Summit & Brunch!



JUNIOR LEAGUE OF
BATTLE CREEK
Women building better communities

JUNIOR LEAGUE OF BATTLE CREEK PRESENTS:

1ST ANNUAL
WOMEN'S SUMMIT & BRUNCH

Confidence

Believe in Yourself



Hon. Sarah S. Lincoln
Calhoun County's
1st Female Judge
in 42 Years



Kathy Grosso, PCC
Community
Coach & Trainer



Teresa Momenee
Executive Director
Women's Co-op



Meredith Stravers
Director Of Admissions
Kellogg Community College

sponsored by
KCC Foundation

JOIN US FOR
BRUNCH & AN AMAZING
PANEL DISCUSSION
TO CELEBRATE
WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

3.19.2016

LOCATION: KCC BINDA THEATER
• 450 NORTH AVE. BC MI
TIME: 10:30 AM-12:30 PM
BRUNCH • 11:00 SHARP

TICKET PRICE: \$20
*WOMEN AGE 12+
PURCHASE FROM ANY
JLBC MEMBER

CALL 269-224-1660
*ALSO SUPPORT BY
ENJOYING AN AUCTION
& PRIZE DRAWING ONSITE

THIS IS A FUNDRAISER TO SUPPORT THE JUNIOR LEAGUE OF BATTLE CREEK

Community Impact: Personal Care Kits

By Mandy Cope

and Kim Wickham,

Co-Vice Presidents of Community Impact

As many of you may know, our three-year strategic plan is focusing on women and children, more specifically delving into the issue of self-esteem. One tactic to alleviate the issue of low self-esteem was our Fall project where we collected feminine hygiene products and packed kits that we distributed to Calhoun County Community High School and Safe Place.

After polling the active and sustaining members, the decision was made to continue pursuing the self-esteem and hygiene link. After a meeting with the Community Impact Committee, we have broken the process down into three steps:

1. Identify where the need is greatest
2. Collected donations
3. Distribute

We have also adopted new terminology: "personal care products". We believe this may lessen the stigma associated with the word "hygiene". The idea is to distribute items such as shampoo, conditioner, soap, body wash, deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes, pads, tampons, laundry soap and dish soap. While still deciding how to distribute these personal care kits, the intended impact is targeted to children and teens who struggle in school because of the lack of access to these products.

We are still working within steps 1 and 2 of the process. Donations are welcome, as are ideas on how to distribute these personal care kits to children in need.

Please send your ideas to Mandy at aa.cope@outlook.com or Kim at kimberly@topolaw.com.

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

Bouquets of Appreciation

Tracie Tomak

Your leadership is solid! Thank you! DeAnn Auton

Fundraising Committee

To my sisters in funds...where would we be had we not had each other?! You help me envision, cultivate, create opportunities, stay realistic, and divide and conquer! I absolutely love every moment we spend together and am glad to call you my JL sisters! What friendships we have created together. And we are not done yet! Thank you so much for the continued support and hard work you put in to making JLBC stand out, raise funds and friends, and rise to the top in our mission. Love you ladies! Tiffany Blackman

To all active members and Sustaining Advisors

No "thanks" is great enough for what we are accomplishing together this year. My forever gratitude to each and every one of you! We should all be very proud of ourselves! (heart) Tracie Tomak

Special thanks to **MaryEllen Jackson** for starting the hard conversations that lead to real improvement. Your love for JLBC is inspiring! I hope you are feeling 100% very soon! Tracie Tomak

Welcome to our new members: **Jennifer, Amy and Brittney!** We are so happy to have three amazing women join us in our continuing journey to make our community a better place!

Tiffany, DeAnn, Ashley, Kim, Mandy & Amanda

You are a dream executive board to work with. Each one of you brings such diverse talents and gifts to JLBC. I know you all have moments of feeling that

you aren't doing enough, but together, we are doing it all !!! Thank you for never giving up! Tracie Tomak

Thanks to **Amber Cunningham**, our amazing Treasurer! Your guidance is so appreciated! Tracie Tomak

Roses and Thank You's to my Sustaining Advisors: **Doris McDevitt, Jean Godfrey and MaryEllen Jackson**. I knew you would be great, and even I underestimated. You are all beyond wonderful and I thank you from the bottom of my heart! Tracie Tomak

Rumor Mill

Tina Yost is very pleased to announce she is seeking election to the 37th Circuit Court family court position being vacated by the Honorable Stephen B. Miller. This is an open seat for a 6-year term beginning January 1, 2017.

Commitment to children and families has been the hallmark of Tina's career. Her education, work experience, volunteer efforts, family values and personal integrity will combine to have voters reach the clear conclusion that she is the best person to become Calhoun County's next family court judge.

Along with her husband, Gerald Johnson, their two young daughters, Arianna and Elayna, and eldest daughter Chantilly, Tina is very excited to further commit herself to continued public service by improving the lives of our residents in this important role.

Ashley Shedd has given birth to a beautiful baby boy - Devin Wrey Shedd!
Congrats!



Membership Update

By Amanda Pignataro, VP Membership

Junior League of Battle Creek extends a heartfelt welcome to our newest members Brittney Gaskell, Jennifer Hicks and Amy Raad.

Brittney Gaskell graduated from St. Philip Catholic Central High School and attended Aquinas College in Grand Rapids, Michigan, where she played volleyball. Today she plays softball and coaches/plays volleyball and works as an Independent Distributor for It Works Global, a health & wellness company. She has two daughters, Carlee (8) & Alivia (5). She enjoys spending time with family, being outdoors and has a love for animals, meeting new people and helping others and the community.



Brittney with her two daughters
Alivia and Carlee.

Jennifer Hicks grew up in Jackson, Michigan and graduated with a degree in Finance and Entrepreneurship from Indiana Wesleyan University. In December of 2014 she married her high-school sweetheart, Alex Hicks. They recently moved back to Battle Creek and she is now working as a Financial Advisor. She loves coaching and playing tennis, cooking, football, and hiking.



Jennifer with her husband Alex.

Amy Raad is from a small farming community outside of Peoria, Illinois. She was sick of cornfields and moved to the mountains, where she went to undergrad at the University of Colorado. She decided to move to Michigan to be closer to her sister and to attend the University of Michigan for grad school where she received her master's degree in social work. She met her husband Matt while at

the University of Michigan when they were assigned as each other's practice therapists in school! They have been married 2 1/2 years. Amy is in private practice as a clinical social worker and loves her work. She is very close with her family and when not working or traveling she can be found curled up with a good book next to her husband and their pets.



Amy and her husband Matt.

Sustainer of the Year Nominations & Mark Your Calendar

It's time for Sustainer of the Year nominations! This award recognizes the valuable contributions our Sustainers continue to make in our community and the excellent examples they set for us.

The award is given to a Sustainer who has demonstrated, through current efforts, the spirit of volunteerism, the value of specialized training, the effectiveness of advocacy and the qualities of organization, responsibility, community concern and caring for others.

Your nominations should consider the following criteria:

1. Name of sustainer
2. The spirit of volunteerism
3. The value of specialized training
4. The effectiveness of advocacy

5. The qualities of organization, responsibility, community concern, and caring for others.

Please include the reason(s) for nomination, keeping in mind the above criteria and substantiate the qualifications in your nomination. Emphasis should be on contributions made since achieving Sustainer status.

Please email your nomination(s) to Ashley Shedd by April 19, 2016. Ashley's email is a_davis2001@yahoo.com.

In addition, to submitting your sustainer of the year nominations, not the following activities for sustainers (and actives alike).

On February 29, from 5 pm to 7 pm, Leap Day for Leaguers will be held at the Griffin Pub & Grill in downtown Battle Creek. If you plan on attending, please RSVP to Doris at 269- 317-2881 by February 26. Reservations will need to be made in advance for the appropriate number of tables and your RSVP is greatly appreciated.

On March 19, the Junior League Battle Creek Summit and Brunch will take place at the Kellogg Community College Binda Theatre from 10:30 am - 12:30 pm. See additional details above.

On April 12 a Sustainer Done in a Day project will be held from 5 pm - 7 pm. The project will focus on providing assistance to Persona Care project. A list of items needed and location will be determined soon. Contact Jean at jmgodfrey625@gmail.com with any questions.

Save the Date - May Celebration is May 7



Reminder: Have You Tracked Your Give Gab Hours

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

If you have not already signed up for a free account at www.givegab.com, please do so soon!

We're using this social network to track our volunteer hours (and so much more)!

2015-16 General Membership Meeting Dates



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

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 last Battle Creek Junior League eNewsletter for the 2015-16 League year will be published in April.

Quick Links

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