

Lagniappe

Junior League of New Orleans

Summer 2019

95 Years of Empowerment: WE Fellowship Winner Lauren Meyerscough

Catching up
with Past WE
Award Winners

Women Leading
Philanthropy for a
Greater New Orleans

Meet the
Newest JLNO
Board of Directors





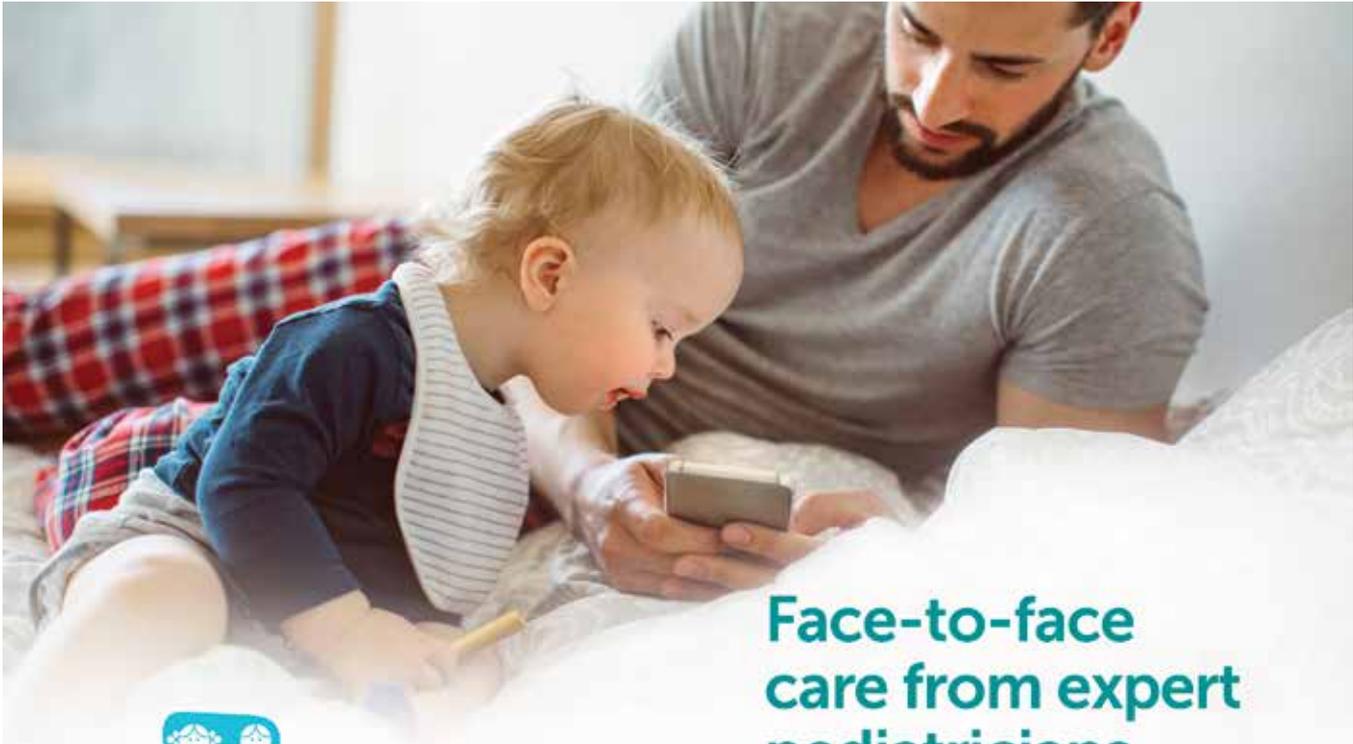
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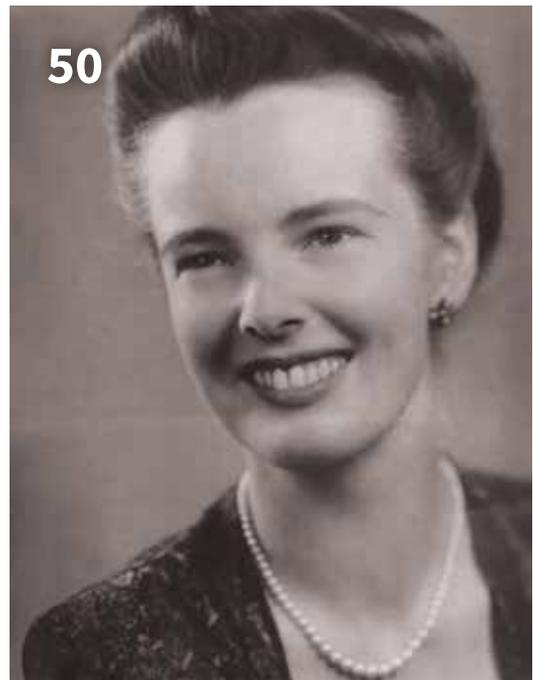


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On the Cover

Lauren Meyerscough, CEO of Cocktail & Sons, is the winner of this year's Woman Entrepreneur Fellowship. Her products are made with local ingredients and celebrate the quintessential flavors of New Orleans.

Spring 2019

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Letter from the Incoming President

I am excited and honored to transition into the role as JLNO president from Alice Glenn, someone I am humbled to call my mentor and friend. The Board of Directors and I look forward to the year ahead as we evaluate our past, present and future and use those roots to grow into a 100-year League.

As we embark on our 2019-2020 journey, we should consider all that came before us and the opportunity we have to lay traction for the future. We should be thinking about where we want the League to be at its 100th Anniversary and appreciate all the League has accomplished to date. We are excited to begin partnerships with YEP and Dress for Success to continue the impact we made with Bloomin' Deals.

We are excited to launch the Women's Leadership Summit as another channel to spread our mission throughout the community. We look to build on everyone's enthusiasm surrounding this new event hosted by women, for women. Our hope is to showcase the training that we provide you, our members, in a way that encourages participation from women throughout the New Orleans metro area.

Thank you to the 2018-2019 Board of Directors for their leadership this year and laying the foundation for the future. Serving with you has trained and prepared me for the year ahead. Thank you for your friendship, support and encouragement.

Lastly, thank you to the members of the Junior League of New Orleans for allowing me to serve you. I look forward to meeting many new friends and working with you as we prepare for the future of JLNO.

Regards,



Christine M Vinson
2019-2020 President



Photo by: Jessica Bachmann

Letter from the Outgoing President

What an honor it has been to serve as your president for this year, which has been one of significant transformation for JLNO. We saw the closure of Bloomin' Deals and the announcement of our forthcoming Bloomin' Deals Legacy Project, the roll-out of our new membership curriculum, our governance document revisions, and other changes — big and small. All of this encompasses the fundamental premise that we are directed in all we do by our mission. That mission can be summarized as training and impact by and for women.

Our task is to ensure that we are providing meaningful training and service opportunities to our members so that they can create impact in the community. While some of that impact is made during your active League years, much is realized once you “graduate” JLNO and commence service with other organizations where your JLNO training can be applied. To that end, the changes I am most excited to have helped implement are our League Values and Core Competencies.

This organization is comprised of 2,100 incredibly dynamic, innovative women leaders — past, present and future. I cannot wait to see where the incoming leaders, with my dear friend Christine Vinson as President and Kristin Moore as President-Elect, will lead JLNO.

As I transition to my next phase of membership as a Sustainer, I remain grateful for my incredible past League experience, the present placement I conclude, and my future, where I am hopeful my own League skills can positively impact our community. I am honored to be a Woman Leading for a Greater New Orleans.

Gratefully yours,



Alice Franz Glenn
2018-2019 President



Photo by: Jessica Bachmann

Letter from the Incoming Editor

Anyone who knows me can tell you Spanish is my chosen secondary language. Lessons since first grade, four years in high school and two years in college should provide a firm foundation to tackle any Spanish-speaking occasion life can afford. I relish the opportunity to translate a conversation I hear on the radio. I'm the first to interject, "Camarones means shrimp" when looking over a menu. I've even been known to opt for the Spanish option on an ATM machine just to ensure I can manage despite the slight discomfort of not being prompted by my native language.

However, when the chance comes to use my skills in one-on-one human conversation, I freeze. I worry if my speech isn't 100% accurate, I'll make a fool of myself and insult the person I'm trying to converse with. Getting out of our comfort zone can be a paralyzing experience. No matter how prepared we may be, our perceptions of ourselves can be our worst detriment. We never feel ready.

That thought struck me as I read through this issue of *Lagniappe*. The accomplishments of these outstanding women — our incoming Board; our WE Fellows; our philanthropic trailblazers; our scholarship recipients — would have never been possible if they froze. They had a spark inside pushing them to help others dream big, follow their passions and make a better world for those they love. Their actions call upon us to always be ready — to stand for what we believe in, do what is right and give back to the community that has given us so much.

I stand on the precipice of my year as Editor of *Lagniappe*. I have many decisions to make, and they may not all be in my comfort zone. In that spirit, although Spanish is the language I'm accustomed to, I choose to end my letter with a French phrase.

Je suis prêt!



Kristin W. Durand
2019-2020 Editor



Letter from the Outgoing Editor

As I approach the last issue of Lagniappe under my tenure as Editor, it is hard to believe this will be the final edition to organize, review, proof, edit, etc. Through only four magazines, the 2018-2019 editorial team has had the opportunity to not only shed light on the activities and accomplishments of the Junior League of New Orleans, but also some of the greatest struggles still facing our community.

As I write this letter I'm struck by the brevity of our tenure and limits of this medium: we only have one year, with only four editions, and only a handful of committee members. Yet, each of these "onlys" combine with the overall power of the League to create a stunning collective impact. The results and statistics from this League year are fully highlighted in this issue's "Year in Review," and I hope readers will join me in gratitude and appreciation for all the League has done.

I'll be honest: there have been many moments over this last year when I've wondered if my time in JLNO is worth it. I've spent hours away from my infant daughter editing Lagniappe, wrapping diapers and attending General Membership meetings. In addition to finding the time to honor these commitments, I've questioned how much impact I'm having individually.

I imagine most of us have had these same questions, but as the runners of the Crescent City Classic (page 13) will tell you, every journey starts with that first step. As I cross the finish line with the amazing editorial team of Lagniappe and leadership of JLNO, and review the pages herein, I know my time has been worth it. Together, we've made great strides this past year.

Cheers and thanks,



Lacy McManus
2018-2019 Editor



Photo by: Norris Gagnet Photography

Bulletin Board

Rev Your Engines for our Fall Fundraiser

JLNO's 8th Annual Touch a Truck will be held Saturday, November 2, 2019. Your business can be a part of this unique experience as a sponsor, exhibitor or vendor. Email touchatruck@jlno.org for more information.

Have Your Kids Outgrown Diapers?

JLNO's Diaper Bank accepts opened packages of diapers. Donate the diapers your baby has outgrown to a family in need. Bring them to any one of JLNO's diaper bank drop-off locations listed at www.jlnodiaperbank.org

Better Sitters Today. Better Parents Tomorrow.

Single Day SAFE SITTER® classes are available on Saturdays and Sundays during the summer. The fee is \$50 per child, ages 11 to 13, and classes are held at JLNO's Headquarters. Visit www.jlno.org/safesitter for dates and registration.

Get on Board Has Moved to the Fall

JLNO will host its award-winning nonprofit leadership training program this September. If you currently work or volunteer with a nonprofit or want to learn how to get more involved, learn best practices from experts in this one-day workshop. Visit www.jlno.org/getonboard for more information.

Women Leading for a Greater New Orleans

JLNO celebrates our members who are leading by example across Greater New Orleans. These change-makers contribute to a variety of industries, develop their potential through our infrastructure and implement our organization's impact. We are proud of these inspiring and diverse members who are empowering the next generation of women leaders. Learn more about our members by viewing videos on our YouTube channel or at www.jlno.org/womenleadinggno

Shop and Give Back

You can designate JLNO as the beneficiary of your Amazon Smile purchases. Visit www.jlno.org/AmazonSmile for information.

amazonsmile

Help End Period Poverty

One in four women struggled to purchase period products within the past year due to lack of income. JLNO accepts donations of period products at any of its Diaper Bank drop-off locations in accordance with these guidelines:

- New, unopened boxes of tampons or pads
- For opened boxes, supplies should still be in their original wrapping

A period supply drive is a great community service project for your school, business, civic group, neighborhood or faith-based organization. Every package of period products that you collect — and every dollar you raise — will impact individuals who struggle to access the supplies they need.



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Empowering Women through Philanthropy

The 2019 CAF and Scholarship Award Winners

by: Jen Hale | Photos by: Jessica Bachmann



TOP LEFT: JLNO CAF recipient Luke's House. **TOP RIGHT:** JLNO CAF recipient Mercy Endeavors. **BOTTOM LEFT:** Maria and David Huete presenting a Huete Scholar award to Tara Brown. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** JLNO CAF recipient Girl Scouts Louisiana East.

The Junior League of New Orleans' goal to advance the wellbeing of women is a mission that unfolds on many fronts, including the financial support of sister organizations directly impacting women and the education of individual corporate female leaders.

JLNO is honored to announce the annual recipients of academic scholarships and Community Assistance Fund (CAF) grants. This year, the competition was more impressive than ever. JLNO's CAF Committee faced the daunting task of evaluating 66 grant submissions.

"Quite a few noteworthy organizations receive funding to

help directly impact a range of women," says CAF Committee Co-Chair Amenah Falgoust. "The women who receive CAF funding stretch across all races, ethnicities and age groups — spreading the footprint of JLNO throughout the community."

After exhaustive reviews and site visits, the CAF committee whittled the list of 66 applicants down to eight recipients.

"We focused on three areas: economic opportunity, family assistance and physical/mental health," says CAF Committee Co-Chair Nicole Dawson. "We're confident the organizations receiving JLNO grant money will be powerful forces that improve women's lives."

CONGRATULATIONS TO THIS YEAR'S JLNO CAF RECIPIENTS!

Luke's House: \$12,500

Luke's House is a women's clinic that primarily serves Latina women in need of gynecologic care, breast health and prevention of mother-to-child HIV/AIDS transmission.

JLNO's CAF grant will pay for speculums, lab tests and supplies.

Mercy Endeavors: \$10,500

This Irish Channel senior center focuses on low income individuals with an 82% female population. JLNO funds will provide breakfast and weekend food packs, as well activities such as yoga, painting, dance and financial literacy classes.

Girl Scouts Louisiana East: \$7,110

JLNO's financial support is helping the Girl Scouts in two ways. Part of the CAF grant will expand the existing Girl Scouts Beyond Bars program, which helps re-establish the family bond between an incarcerated mother and her daughter. JLNO's funding will also allow the Girl Scouts to start a new troop at the New Orleans Women and Children's Shelter. This troop will serve daughters of homeless families by offering meetings, skills, badge work, etc.

Operation Spark: \$6,000

The high cost of childcare is a road block for many young mothers looking to educate themselves. JLNO is helping to alleviate this problem by providing childcare stipends to mothers accepted into Operation Spark's 3-month coding school via their Immersion program. Over 90% of the people who graduate from the Immersion program find jobs with an annual salary of \$60,000.

Odyssey House Louisiana: \$5,000

Almost 300 women a month seek substance abuse help at Odyssey House, many of them opioid abusers who are homeless or recently released from incarceration. JLNO's CAF grant will provide a welcome kit including toiletries and hygiene supplies to women in the Adult Residential Program.

Sexual Trauma Awareness: \$3,000

STAR supports both youth and adult survivors of sexual trauma. JLNO's financial support will provide rides for survivors in need of transportation to and from the hospital, STAR counseling services or other medical treatment.

Southern Rep Theater: \$2,770

JLNO is funding four scholarships for low-income women to participate in this leading performing arts organization's summer program, as well as two other scholarships to Southern Rep's fall workshop series. JLNO's logo will appear on the theater's 2019 brochures and programs.

Louisiana Books 2 Prisoners: \$620

CAF funding will provide books to help female prisoners expand their educational opportunities via GED preparation, job skill development and literacy improvement. Initially, the grant will provide books to 40 prisoners, but materials will eventually be shared with other inmates.

The three women chosen to receive this year's JLNO educational scholarships exemplify the definitions of dedication, perseverance and ambition. We can't wait to see how our recipients better not only their own lives, but also the welfare of those around them, creating a more dynamic New Orleans.

JLNO Scholar - Tyniski Evans \$5,000

Tyniski's story is one of triumph overcoming hopelessness. Diagnosed with a mental disability and facing homelessness, she moved into Covenant House for two years. Inspired by the kindness surrounding her, she started dreaming about what she could become. Now, pursuing a degree in Social Work at Southern University at New Orleans with a current GPA of 4.0, and thanks to JLNO's financial help, she is on track to complete her studies in 2021. She will be the first in her family to graduate from college and plans to work with children as a school counselor.

Huete Scholar - Tara Brown \$5,500

The Huete Scholarship is allowing Tara, a cancer survivor and single mother of two, to resume pursuing her goals of bettering herself and her family. "In 2015, I had to stop working a job that I loved to face stage 3 breast cancer at the age of 38," Tara says. "After approximately 13 surgeries, 10 rounds of chemotherapy and 25 rounds of radiation, I am ready to get back to a normal life. I want to show my kids to not take anything for granted. Take the time that you have and make something of yourself!" The Huete Scholarship will help Tara realize her dream of graduating from the Charity School of Nursing in 2020.

Huete Scholar - Gina Cousin \$4,500

Gina is a single mom of three and a New Orleans Police Officer with 29 years of experience. She successfully put her two oldest children through college, then enrolled in Dillard University to obtain an associate's degree in criminal justice. Gina dreams of earning her bachelor's degree, but she put her educational goals on hold last semester to pay for her third child's higher education. The Huete Scholarship means Gina can now return to the classroom and hopefully earn a degree that will allow her to advance up the ranks of the New Orleans Police Department (NOPD). "I have always felt this career would allow me to impact someone's life in a positive way, and it has," Gina says. "This scholarship will help me, as a female officer, to be a role model for other females that desire to advance within the NOPD." •

JLNO and community members can match the Huete family's generosity by contributing to JLNO Scholarship Funds. Please contact Paige Morrison at 504-891-5845 x108 or at paige@jln.org

Frances “Fran” Gable Villere

1944 - 2018

by: Meghan Brown | Photo submitted by: Mathilde Currence



Fran Villere’s daughter remembers her mother was determined to be wherever she was needed, whether that meant leading a budget meeting, planting in the garden or rolling up her sleeves to cook. It’s no surprise that this dedication led her to the Junior League. Fran spent many years deeply involved in the League, and when she passed away last November, she left it a generous endowment that ensures the organization she helped shape will continue to make an impact for years to come. For that alone, she deserves special mention, but it becomes obvious when hearing about Fran from her loved ones that she lived a rich life, a huge part of which was a commitment to volunteering and giving back to her community.

Fran grew up in Florida, but after graduating from Finch College in New York, she met and married a New Orleanian — her life-long husband George Gabriel Villere — and was quickly dedicated to helping New Orleans however she could. Fran’s daughter and fellow League member, Mathilde Currence, says her mother was a go-getter by nature but that finding the Junior League taught her how to channel that energy into real change. The League was her foundation — on how to run a meeting, how to balance a budget and how to turn dollars into diapers, support or comfort for those in need. And she was giving back as much as she was learning from the League. With a knack for cutting through the red tape and getting right to the substance, Fran quickly became a leader in the organization. Her friend and former League President, Janet Bean remembers her clear head in budget meetings. When things got tense or bogged down in the minutiae, Fran had a talent for snapping them back into focus. Peers admired her for her drive and for reminding them of their purpose: serving their community. Janet speaks of her respect and admiration for Fran, whose generous endowment inspired her to make a donation of her own in Fran’s memory. For Janet, it felt a most fitting way to express how she cherishes their friendship and how much Fran will be missed.

With the support of the League, Fran quickly became the force that she would be for many years — both in JLNO and on the boards of countless other charitable causes. Mathilde says even in her busiest years of fundraisers and board meetings, Fran never spread herself too thin; when an organization “got her,” they got all of her spirit and determination. But according to Mathilde, Fran began to miss more hands-on service and felt she was losing touch with the people she was trying to help, so Fran re-focused her energy and went where she was needed. One of those missions stands out in her memory as truly fulfilling her mother’s need for usefulness — volunteering at an organization called Lazarus. In the 1980s, Fran began working with the patients at Lazarus, a residential facility for terminally-ill AIDS patients at a time when the disease was at its peak. It was there that Fran — leader of boards and the general of meetings — would roll up her sleeves and plant in the garden or cook up a meal, whatever she could to make the patients more comfortable.

Even in spite of all of her talents and accomplishments, Fran considered herself a loving wife and mother first, and she bragged constantly about her children and grandchildren while downplaying her own incredible achievements. Her loving family will no doubt miss her dearly.

Fran’s story shows that service to one’s community comes in many forms and impacts, and that anyone can be a philanthropist if they are willing to go where they are needed and do what needs to be done, even if that means starting small. That is how the work gets done. •

If Fran’s legacy has inspired you to donate, JLNO offers a monthly recurring gift option, as well as one-time or less frequent gift opportunities:
<https://junior-league-of-new-orleans.snwbll.com/giving-portal>

JLNO also has a planned giving society, The 1924 Society, named for the year of JLNO’s founding and in honor of its 40 founding women:
<https://www.jlno.org/support/1924society/>

JLNO is also the delighted recipient of matching gifts by companies and foundations, so individuals may have the opportunity to give through one of those channels to maximize their impact. Reach out to her with more questions about giving at: paige@jlno.org.

Thanks to Mathilde Currence & Janet Bean for their input in this profile.

Wellbeing: Race Results

JLNO's first Crescent City Classic Partnership

26 runners for JLNO, which included 10 JLNO members and two spouses

Averaged \$635/runner

30 volunteers supported the April 20th race at both the starting and finish lines

310 donors gave in support of JLNO's #runningforJLNO team

\$16,000 from the participant's peer-to-peer fundraising campaigns supported JLNO's mission and volunteer efforts



TOP LEFT: JLNO ladies volunteering for the Crescent City Classic. *Photo submitted by: Carrie Moulder*
BOTTOM LEFT: JLNO volunteers at the Crescent City Classic post race party. *Photo submitted by: Melissa Broussard*
BOTTOM RIGHT: JLNO runners enjoying the post race party. *Photo submitted by: Melissa Broussard*
RIGHT: JLNO runners at mile 6. *Photo by: Christine Vinson*



WE FELLOWSHIP WINNER:

COCKTAIL &

As the Junior League of New Orleans (JLNO) celebrates its 95th year of service to the community, its commitment to women's leadership continues to evolve. Adhering to its recently adopted Issue Based Community Impact model, the League chose women in the economy as one of its main areas of interest several years ago, with a particular focus on female entrepreneurship. It is no secret that on the whole, women make less money than their male counterparts and do not advance as far — or as quickly — in the workplace.

To circumvent these inequities, many women have established their own businesses. As JLNO President Alice Glenn puts it, "If you can't get promoted into the C-Level suite, then you have to start the company!" Still, this is no easy feat. "Women have less access to capital than men,"

explains Alice, an entrepreneur herself. "They often do not enjoy the same kind of networks and insider institutional access that men do."

With these obstacles in mind, JLNO initiated the Woman Entrepreneur (WE) Fellowship Program in 2016 to support growing women-owned businesses in New Orleans. During the year-long fellowship, one woman-owned business receives access to JLNO members for mentorship and networking, as well as in-kind resources from partners like Fidelity Bank, Trepwise and LaPorte CPAs. In selecting the recipient of this prestigious award, members of the WE Fellowship Committee consider a variety of factors, including each company's mission statement, social impact, and capacity to benefit from the League's assistance. Aspiring entrepreneurs themselves, Committee co-chairs Paige



SONS

by Sonia Godfrey | Photos by: Jessica Bachmann

Farrell and Kristy Wypych agree that the 2019 cohort of finalists was especially diverse, including owners of an innovative nail salon, a company specializing in plant design and local crafts, a gym focusing on improving women's fitness while increasing their self-confidence and a marketing firm with mobile backpack advertising.

Ultimately, judges awarded the Fellowship to Lauren Meyerscough, the CEO of Cocktail & Sons, a line of all-natural, handcrafted syrups, cordials and concentrates for the home and commercial bar. A former business formation and compliance attorney, as well as a service industry veteran with a background in bar management and consulting services, Lauren co-founded the company with her husband, Max Messier, who is also an award-winning bartender and spirits consultant. With over 22 years of




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combined bartending experience, they proudly produce all of their syrups with Louisiana sugarcane, containing no additives, coloring agents or artificial additives. They offer their Core Four line year round, consisting of Spiced Demerara, Oleo Saccharum, Mint & Lemon Verbena and Honeysuckle & Peppercorns. There are two seasonal varieties: King Cake, offered from Epiphany to Mardi Gras, and Watermelon & Thai Basil, appearing on shelves in late summer. Their limited release flavor, Fassionala, coincides with the spring and fall strawberry harvests. They can even create custom syrups for large accounts seeking a taste of something quintessentially New Orleans.

Raised in a family of entrepreneurs, Lauren “grew up thinking that [running a company] was totally normal.” She was never shy about suggesting changes to managers when she was an employee; always taking note of how she could run her own company differently someday. Still, she acknowledges she did face challenges as a woman in business.

“Whether we like it or not,” Lauren says, “men are still seen as the leaders.” She often has to spend time explaining her role in the company before she can describe her actual business to potential customers.

Yet Lauren likes to keep the focus on the unique offerings of Cocktail & Sons. Drawing on the success of what she calls, “the Betty Crocker model,” she suggests most

ready-to-drink mixes are too simplistic. “They aren't able to be customized to any particular palate,” she says, “nor do they give you a particular sense of ownership over your cocktail.” Cocktail & Sons syrups, on the other hand, simultaneously demystify mixed drinks and allow the at-home cocktail crafter to get creative with their beverage. As a bartender in Shreveport once told Lauren, “I love these syrups because they make anyone a good bartender.”

It wasn't until late 2017, when Cocktail & Sons received the *Garden & Gun Magazine* Made in the South Award, that Lauren began to enjoy recognition in a wider market. Because these awards usually go to distilleries and breweries, Lauren and her husband were pleasantly surprised when Cocktail & Sons was chosen as a finalist and ultimately won the drink category. “After that,” she says, “we saw a significant boost to our sales that never quite died down.”

Currently, Cocktail & Sons collaborates on various consulting projects across the Gulf South. Although their hearts and ingredients are rooted in Louisiana, their ultimate goal is to branch out across the globe. “Long term, we're going international,” Lauren proclaims. “Our dream is to be able to send this slice of Louisiana all over the world, so that's what we're working toward.” She anticipates the WE Fellowship will help her achieve this goal. “I'm hoping that this partnership with the Junior League



2019 WE Pitch Competition Finalists Included:

Girls Gone Buff, winner of this year’s audience prize, promotes women’s health and wellness through strength and endurance training, as well as instruction in correct exercise techniques.

FAIT | NOLA is New Orleans’ first mobile plant store and design studio, making the natural world accessible and enjoyable for city residents.

Southern Swings Nail Bar and Spa provides a pedicure unlike any other, offering outdoor pedicures on porch swings instead of standard pedicure chairs.

Visionary Entertainment Media Group helps clients increase sales and brand awareness and sustain interest in their products through unique marketing campaigns based on in-person connections using backpack billboards.

can provide mentorship and insight from members in the New Orleans economy to continue to grow our business here and abroad,” says Lauren. In this way, JLNO not only supports women’s entrepreneurship in New Orleans, but also worldwide.

Lauren wants to give back to other up-and-coming female business leaders by sharing insights from her own experience. Lending words of wisdom, she encourages women to stick with it and not take no for an answer.

“If I would have given up the first, second or even hundredth time someone turned me down,” she says, “this company would still be a pipe dream.” She stressed the importance of persistence and truly knowing your customers to best serve their needs. She has been able to turn, “a lot of soft ‘maybes’ into a hard ‘yes’ by understanding the needs of our consumer and being able to pull those solutions out for them.”

Lauren will be able to share this advice on a continual basis through the League’s annual WE Fellowship Alumnae Networking Event, which is open to all women business owners. Although the Fellowship lasts only one year, it provides an enriching, life-long connection among WE Fellowship winners and other women entrepreneurs. •

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Where are WE Now?

Catching Up with Past WE Fellowship Winners

by: Dr. Christen Mayer | Photos by: Jessica Bachmann



2016 WE winners, Nicole Eiden and Marielle Dupré of Windowsill Pies.

While we celebrate the winners and participants of the 2019 WE Fellowship and pitch competition, it's always a pleasure to catch up with our distinguished alumnae who generously offered time from their busy schedules for an update since winning their time as WE Fellows.

Both the inaugural 2016 winners, Nicole Eiden and Marielle Dupré of Windowsill Pies, and 2017 winner Two Girls One Shuck, have particularly special memories of their last several years working with the JLNO.

Windowsill Pies

"First, we want say how special we feel to have been the inaugural winners of the WE Fellowship. 2016 was a big year for us. Soon after winning the Fellowship, we were approached by the Cooking Channel to be on a show called *Sugar Showdown*, a pie baking competition. We were apprehensive because we had never done anything like that before. Still, we jumped in with both feet and ended up winning, which was amazing! We were also featured as one of *New Orleans Magazine's* 2016 "People to Watch." Winning the Fellowship launched us on a media frenzy that grew our business and brand awareness.

After that, we grew steadily. This year, we won a

competition hosted by the Broadway musical *Waitress*. They hosted a pie baking competition when they were in New Orleans, named us "The Official Pie of Waitress New Orleans," and put the recipe for our winning Lazy Summer Strawberry and Cream Pie in the cookbook they were selling. Supplying French Truck Coffee Shop with hand pies has also kept us very busy!

At the end of last year, we were featured in a two-page *Food and Wine* magazine spread that described us as the New Orleans pie shop trying to do good things in the community through pie. Through that feature, we have been approached to publish a cookbook.

The two main goals we attained from the Fellowship structure were our trademark and our website. The pro bono hours allowed us to get the trademark that would have otherwise been difficult to navigate and afford. The trademark has been essential, as other businesses around the country have attempted to use our name. The technology grant helped us get our online shopping site up and running and provided us with a site that is both visually interesting and user-friendly enough to operate ourselves.

We're currently working on the proposal for our cookbook and finding a new shop location in Uptown. Both will help define us as business owners in the community, and



Windowsill Pies at the 95th Anniversary Celebration.

we want to fully capitalize on all the amazing media attention we have received.

Future Fellowship applicants should know it is so important to focus on the core product your business delivers and to let a good product speak for itself. Also, have fun with your pitch and really let your personality shine through.”

Two Girls One Shuck

“Two Girls One Shuck has had several exciting developments since my time as WE Fellow in 2017. We have increased our mighty army of lady shuckers to two dozen and growing. We moved our catering operations to The Old Ironworks in Bywater (across from Pizza Delicious) and started a new cold seafood product line that can be added to your oyster bar experience. Think chilled shrimp, ceviche, fish dip, crab claws and caviar, just to name a few!

Being a part of the WE Fellowship experience helped me better understand there was a real, viable market for my company’s services. We had so much support and interest in our work from the Junior League, and this gave us incredible exposure to people who may not have heard of us beforehand. I was given some incredible business mentorship from a few of my WE Fellow committee members. The grant component of my Fellowship, in both financial help and in-kind services, was a priceless addition to the already robust gift the Fellowship was in general.

The question I ask myself everyday is: What’s next for Two Girls One Shuck? We are dabbling in small group private shucking lessons, which are a blast! Think Paint and Sip-style experience, only with oysters — learning how to open them via oyster education and a whole

lot of laughs. We have a line of merchandise we hope to get off the ground this summer, as people seem to want items that have our logo. I am always looking to expand into nearby cities, but for now we are shuckin’ and jivin’ all over southern Louisiana as one of the premier traveling oyster bars in the South. We have great reasons to “shellebrate” everyday. (I had to sneak at least one oyster pun in there!)

I would tell future business owners to get three-to-four years deep into your product or concept before trying to pitch for the WE Fellowship. There is so much that changes in the infancy of a business. We really started to solidify our goals and direction in year three, and I was lucky enough to have the Fellowship fall in line with my trajectory. I would also recommend having specific goals to present to Junior League. The committee and the entire community can best serve you if you know exactly how and where you need help. Make a realistic growth plan, and lay out two or three significant goals for the year. Time goes faster than you think. The one year of my Fellowship flew by quickly, but I feel great about everything I was able to accomplish with JLNO. I feel like I still have continued support from the Junior League and can call on friendships and relationships that were built during my Fellowship. That’s a constant win for someone like me, who is a first-time business owner and riding this crazy journey like wildfire!”

JLNO is incredibly proud of and amazed by the shining successes of WE Fellowship participants. It is exciting to see who the next class of businesswomen will be and where WE will go next. •

JLNO's 95th Anniversary Event

Celebrating 1924

- **168 attendees** enjoyed a roaring 20's themed luncheon hosted and sponsored by Canal Place with catering from Ralph Brennan Catering and Events
- **25 JLNO Past Presidents** were in attendance
- Guests enjoyed a cocktail hour which featured a specialty Southside Fizz and hors d'oeuvres, followed by a seated lunch and a dessert buffet, all while being serenaded by a three-piece jazz band
- Programming included a **95th year celebration video** and the passing of the gavel
- Following the event, patrons received **special discounts and incentives** from the shops at Canal Place and were encouraged to continue the fun with a shopping day
- JLNO Active Jessica Davidson won the **\$2,500 David Yurman Shopping Spree Raffle** generously donated by Lee Michaels Fine Jewelry
- A **Member Mingle Getaway Giveaway** sponsored by The Scout Guide New Orleans
- Sustainer Jennifer Ansardi took home the **Windsor Court Gift Certificate prize**
- Elizabeth Tommaseo and Rebecca Martinez won the "Best Dressed" award and received **prizes from Kendra Scott and Pearl's Place**
- **WE Fellowship winner Windowsill Pies** treated event-goers to delicious pies
- **JLNO raised \$31,000**

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League Day at the Capitol Wrap Up

By: Candice Caccioppi
Photos submitted by: Michelle Payne

Roughly 70 women from Junior Leagues across Louisiana met in the Capitol Rotunda on April 25 for the 2019 League Day at the Capitol. This year, the main advocacy issue for LA League members was the exemption of diaper and period products from state sales tax. While the bill passed easily out of the Senate and House committees, it ultimately failed to pass.

Members distributed cookies with infographics on diaper needs to every senate and house representative.



Members were recognized on the floors of both the House and Senate and had the opportunity to choose from a list of committee meetings they could attend.



JLNO members sat in the Senate and House Labor and Industrial Relations Committee alongside First Lady Donna Edwards, where Equal Pay and Minimum Wage legislation were on the agenda. The federal minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour has not increased since 2009. Business leaders Warner Thomas with Ochsner Health System, Pres Kabacoff with HRI Properties and Bill Hammack with Link Restaurant Group all testified on behalf of SB 155, authored by Senator Troy Carter, in support of a constitutional amendment to establish a state minimum hourly wage of \$9.00, effective July 1, 2020.



Candice Caccioppi, First Lady Donna Edwards, Michelle Payne and Charmaine Caccioppi.

SB 136, authored by Senator JP Morrell, would address the gender wage gap by forbidding employers from requiring wage secrecy in the workplace. Louisiana continues to have the highest gender wage gap in the nation, and equal pay was the highest ranked advocacy issue of interest identified by JLNO members in a recent poll. According to research from United Way of Southeast Louisiana and the Institute for Women's Policy Research, "Louisiana's working women will not reach equal pay until the year 2115. Women in Louisiana earn an average of 69 cents for every dollar a man makes. That discrepancy worsens for Black and Latina women who make only 48 and 52 cents on the dollar, respectively, when compared to White men."

Members had lunch at Capitol Park Welcome Center, where a number of statewide legislators stopped by to speak to the group.



Junior League day at the Capitol.



Charmaine Caccioppi, a Tulane student, and First Lady Donna Edwards.

Lagniappe

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Women Leading *Philanthropy* for a Greater New Orleans

As the Junior League of New Orleans inspires the next generation of women leaders, “Women Leading for a Greater New Orleans” has been adopted as the new slogan for JLNO. To illustrate this ongoing tradition of empowering women leaders, *Lagniappe* looks forward to highlighting female changemakers making an impact across industries, throughout Greater New Orleans. As we celebrate our 95th Anniversary, the following testimonies from women educators within the JLNO network provide powerful insights into the strength of our League leaders, as well as the ripple effect these women have in our community.



Jessie Schott Haynes, Esq.

Managing Director, The Helis Foundation

How have you gotten to where you are today?

My career path has certainly been unusual in some ways, and I am always happy to share my journey, which I maintain is still ongoing! I am always quick to offer my experience with others as they navigate the stress and all-encompassing nature of career changes. I don't think it is as much about reinvention as it is the culmination of varying skill sets ultimately coalescing. I truly believe that you always come back to your original passions, particularly in ways you least expect. Making the pivot from the private sector to the non-profit sector and then back to the private sector has been a wild ride, and I wouldn't change any of it, despite the stress associated with those changes over the years.

I graduated from Tulane with Art History and English degrees and decided to go to law school at Loyola University College of Law, after unfortunately deciding not to stick with my most favorite job, which was an ongoing paid internship at NOMA. After law school, I clerked for Judge Madeleine Landrieu in Civil District Court and began practicing at Galloway, Johnson, Tompkins, Burr and Smith, APLC. I truly enjoyed my law firm colleagues but realized I wanted to gain non-profit management experience and either work back in the arts or use my law degree in the public policy field. I was delighted to become the Program Director at Louisiana Appleseed, working on impactful pro bono policy projects with fellow Junior League Sustainer, Christy Kane. Here, I was exposed to an entire world of non-profit and volunteer management, board governance, and development and grant-making.

I remained heavily invested in the arts community as a patron and volunteer. When the opportunity to serve as the first Managing Director of The Helis Foundation became available, I was excited for the new challenges ahead. My position at The Helis Foundation has provided me with a multitude of new experiences and constant challenges. I am honored to blend my professional aptitude and volunteer skills — so many gained from my Junior League time — in this endlessly enriching position. I am always learning and continually grateful for the time I am spending with the Foundation. It is exciting to combine all my acquired skills into my work each day, while hopefully making an impact in the New Orleans community.

What is your best advice for other women looking to succeed in their own industries?

I suggest exercising deep thought, evaluation and patience. I honestly believe patience and stamina are things we collectively overlook in our current climate of immediacy and quick gratification. I wouldn't be in my current position with The Helis Foundation if I had not stuck with practicing law at one firm, giving it my loyalty, and then thoughtfully moving to the non-profit sector (by design) and remaining in those roles for many years. It is tempting to chase the bright shiny things with fast and easy returns, but real value, I think, is created in demonstrating loyalty, tenacity and the ability to walk away from a position with a real body of work and authentic relationships intact. I really believe in putting your head down, working hard and staying the course. People notice that loyalty, reliability and strength of relationships, and that means something now more than ever!

How has Junior League benefited you in your success?

I am not the first person to say that Junior League has given me so much more than I could ever give it in return. I learned how to be a contributing board member and organizational leader in my professional life due to my experiences in my active League years. Not a day goes by when I don't reference something I learned from Junior League — from communications strategies, to governance, to strategic planning, to grant making. I hope I can repay the gifts the Junior League has bestowed upon me. Oh, and did I mention I was completely unprepared for the embarrassment of riches in friends and business contacts, all made 100% because of the Junior League? It sounds trite, but it's true. I even gained a goddaughter because of the Junior League.

Maria Pardo Huete

Director of Institutional Advancement, Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans

How have you gotten to where you are today?

There are three things that have been drivers for me: forward momentum, curiosity and responsibility. The motto of my family was always, “Move forward, not backward.” Each generation improves upon the previous one in terms of education and opportunities. Much to my mother’s chagrin, I have always been overly curious about everything. I would take apart radios, sewing machines, etc. to see how they functioned. Curiosity can become opportunity, and I was taught to never squander an opportunity to learn something new. The only thing that should affect learning is lack of willingness. I want to be 88 and still be able to say, “Square dancing? Show me how!” Being the first child of immigrant parents forced me to be the interpreter, administrator and community liaison between my family and the world at a very early age. There were times that were very uncomfortable for me as a child, but I felt I had to get through to ensure no one in my family would suffer. A particularly contentious discussion with a BellSouth representative when I was nine or 10 sticks out in my mind. This last bit I think is what prepared me for Junior League President best.

What is your best advice for other women looking to succeed in their own industries?

My best advice for women is to know yourself. Nurture your strengths and use them, acknowledge your weaknesses and mitigate them, know what drives you and dangle your own carrots. Judge yourself not against anyone else, but only against what you see as the best version of yourself. Burn no bridges, but don’t be anyone’s fool.

How has Junior League benefited you in your success?

The Junior League gave my curiosity and desire to learn free rein. I am a self-acknowledged JL nerd and soaked it all up. I was fascinated with the premise that even as fully developed adults, we could engage in civic training on how to meet the needs of our community. I was excited to be exposed to different experiences and learning opportunities throughout my active years in the League. Even the bad times I experienced taught me something about the pitfalls of leadership and how to correct it for success.



Photo by: Jessica Bachmann

Shon Cowan Baker, PhD

Vice President, Major and Planned Gifts, Department of Philanthropy, Ochsner Health System

How have you gotten to where you are today?

I am thankful to have been raised by a community of women who told me I could be anything I wanted and that my possibilities were endless — and I believed them! I was taught to see possibilities, to never give up and to practice gratitude. In seeing possibilities, I am constantly creating visions for the future. I have never accepted there is anyone or anything that can stand in my way, and I believe breakthroughs and expansion happen when you choose to break the mold and try new things. Gratitude has been perhaps the most important attribute to my success. There’s a sound stability that exists when you can appreciate the importance of things in your life.

I feel so fortunate to work for an organization like Ochsner that so closely aligns with my own beliefs. Ochsner is relentless in its pursuit of bettering the lives of our neighbors. It is an organization that maintains a strong vision for the future of healthcare in our region and across the nation. I’m grateful I can join them in this journey. It is an amazing organization and one that I am tremendously proud of.

What is your best advice for other women looking to succeed in their own industries?

Decide what you want for yourself. Be specific and be focused. Be a student of your business — understand it from all angles. Strive to learn more about the position than just what your job requires. Make your aspirations known. Ask for feedback, be open to feedback, and do something with that feedback. And above all: nevertheless, persist.

How has Junior League benefited you in your success?

I joined the Junior League 10 years ago hoping to meet other women who cared about New Orleans just as much as I did, and I hoped I would make friends by joining. My expectations have been vastly exceeded as I have gained so much more from being a member than I could have ever imagined! I’ve participated in transformative opportunities to serve the community, and I’ve built lifelong friendships. I’ve gained role models who challenged me to grow and mentors who continue to help guide my journey. As I prepare to become a Sustainer, I reflect on how truly grateful I am to have had the opportunity to serve this League and to make my mark on its future!



Photo by: Jessica Bachmann

JLNO Welcomes its 2019–2020 Board of Directors

Board Member Profiles by: Carrie Moulder | Photos by: Jessica Bachmann

For women to truly empower women, we must lead by example. Within JLNO, each League year provides an opportunity for individual members to enhance their leadership potential in fellowship with one another and in service to the Greater New Orleans community. Our 2019–2020 Board of Directors continues to inspire and evolve JLNO in this spirit: the cadre of

women stepping into board positions is both diverse and innovative. These women are professionals, mothers, daughters, sisters and friends. Through their Board tenure, they are also positioned to be change agents, goal setters and risk takers. Though their time on the board is limited, each role serves as a building block for the next 95 years of civic impact.



Christine Vinson

President

As the organization's President, Christine Vinson leads the 2019-2020 League year for the Junior League of New Orleans. She provides responsible effective guidance for the Board of Directors and JLNO staff. She will preside over meetings of the Board, Joint Council and General Membership while also serving as the organization's official spokesperson. Dedicated to assisting the Board in establishing goals for the upcoming year, Christine is excited about the League's future. She hopes to continue the diligence of the women who came before her, honor the foundation they have laid and keep the membership on that track.

Christine has spent the past nine years primarily volunteering with the JLNO's premier fundraising endeavors. She has served on several committees including Kitchen Tour, Bloomin' Deals, Bridal Boutique and Touch a Truck. She was JLNO's Ways and Means Council Director from 2016-2017. Before becoming President-Elect, she chaired JLNO's Covenant House partnership, which provides at-risk youth with meaningful experiences, making them feel valued and hopeful. Christine initially joined to volunteer and give back to the community in which she lives. She's learned patience and how to be a more thoughtful leader. She appreciates seeing the Junior League evolve, assisting women to become better community leaders and making a significant impact on the Greater New Orleans area.

Christine is President and third-generation owner of Vinson Guard Service, Inc., one of the largest privately-owned security companies in the Southeast United States. VINSON has earned the Women's Business Enterprise National Council certification, the gold standard



“Don't dull your sparkle.”

- Melissa Eversmeyer

of women-owned businesses. With branch offices located in six states, Christine believes success comes by providing employees with both benefits and training to ensure they provide exceptional service. Understanding that crime is a significant challenge for Metropolitan New Orleans, Christine has volunteered her time as board member for Crimestoppers and is serving as their 2019 Chair. She received their James J. Coleman, Sr. Corporate Partner Award in 2017, which honors recipients who embrace the Crimestoppers program, demonstrating countless examples of philanthropic work in our community. In 2015, she was also named one of *Gambit's* 40 Under 40, and she was honored as one of the Top Female Achievers of 2019 by *New Orleans Magazine*.

Christine's favorite aspect of living in New Orleans is the people, food, festivals and sense of community.

Christine resides in the Maple Ridge Park neighborhood in Metairie and is a proud LSU graduate. She enjoys traveling, attending the area's numerous festivals and spending time with family and her fur babies, Winnie and Mungo. Her travels once took her to California, where she swam across the San Francisco Bay from Alcatraz. She's even visited 42 countries! She is most inspired by the women of Junior League. In her words, “To see so many women come together and work productively toward common goals is inspiring, and women coming together with a common voice is empowering.”





Board Member Profile

Kristin Van Hook Moore

President-Elect

Kristin Van Hook Moore begins a two-year period on the Board as the President-Elect. During her first year (2019-2020), she will assist the President in her duties as Chief Executive Officer of the Junior League of New Orleans and will assume those responsibilities if the President is unable to serve during her term. Kristin will become JLNO's President for the 2020-2021 League year beginning June 1, 2020. At its core, JLNO is a training organization, and this two-year term is an opportunity for Kristin to thoughtfully prepare for the years ahead, ensuring that her tenure maximizes community impact. During the President-elect year, she will study JLNO's governance documents, policies, procedures and best practices and then take up the mantle of previous leaders to ensure a sustainable and impactful future. She hopes to learn enough to fill the shoes of the amazing women who have served as president before her.

Having first joined the Junior League in Pensacola after completing her medical fellowship, Kristin wanted to become involved in her community and meet people outside of work. She transferred from Florida in 2011 and has spent her eight years in JLNO serving in a variety of leadership roles, including Business Council Director, Nominating Committee Chair and most recently as Co-Chair of the Community Affairs Committee to increase advocacy education. She truly enjoys collaborating with other women and working to improve the community while having fun. Through the organization, Kristin has learned about fields such as development and communications, which she would not have been exposed to in her career as a physician. Most importantly, she learned how to be an effective board member, and she has been able to use those skills to serve other organizations.

Kristin received her MD and MPH degrees from LSU Health Science Center and currently serves as a Staff Pediatric Pulmonologist at Ochsner Medical Center. She completed her pediatrics training at Vanderbilt University Medical Center and her fellowship in

Pediatric Pulmonology at Texas Children's Hospital. She received a Chest Foundation Young Investigator Award in 2005 for translational research. Prior to coming to Ochsner, she worked at Nemours Children's Clinic in Pensacola serving as Chair of Pediatric Pulmonology and as Cystic Fibrosis Center Director from 2006-2011. She also served as Children's Medical Assessment Team Medical Director for Region One in the state of Florida. Kristin's other current board positions include Chairperson of Ursuline Academy Board of Trustees, Board Member of Daughters of Charity Services of New Orleans and House Corporation Board President of Rho Chapter of Chi Omega Fraternity.

As a resident of Uptown, Kristin loves the sense of place that people who live in New Orleans have and how much the people here enjoy living life. She and her husband, Dr. Brian Moore, are parents to eight-year-old twin boys, Finnegan and Liam. When asked who inspires her, Kristin tells the story of a mother of one of her patients from when she worked in Florida. She was a single mother of five, lived in a rural area and had health problems of her own. She provided the best possible care for her kids and went to great lengths to do what she felt was best for them. One year, she lost her home to a fire right before Christmas and still managed to remain positive. Whenever Kristin starts to feel overwhelmed, she thinks of her and realizes she can certainly keep going.



“What we have done for ourselves alone dies with us; what we have done for others and the world remains and is immortal.”

- Albert Pike

Tomoro Wilson

Membership Council Director



Tomoro Wilson is ensuring meaningful volunteer experiences for 2,100 women as the Membership Council Director for the Junior League of New Orleans Board of Directors. This role enables Tomoro to utilize her cultivated relationship building and communications skills to develop members to their greatest potential. In addition to supporting membership morale and recognition, she oversees the committees that design leadership and training opportunities, which often entails providing a forum for discussion and brainstorming of initiatives and policies related to member satisfaction. She relays information and makes strategic planning suggestions to the Board in the areas of Provisional education, Active placement, Sustainer engagement, volunteer opportunities, retention, standards and training. Tomoro plans to focus on the core competencies while creating and implementing a goal-driven atmosphere where inclusion lives and breathes. Her hope is for every woman within JLNO to be confident knowing the organization has a place for everyone and that each member can have a fulfilling, life-changing experience.

Since joining JLNO in 2011, Tomoro has primarily held leadership positions on the Membership Council as Provisional Chair, Diversity



& Inclusion Chair and Esprit Vice-Chair. She was drawn to the Junior League to help others. After living away from New Orleans for seven years, she would often come home and wonder where the heart of the city's people was. She decided if she ever moved back, she would want to affiliate herself with an organization that focused on helping the community. Thankfully, a good friend of hers who was already in JLNO encouraged her to join. Tomoro appreciates how the League continues to promote voluntarism while developing empowered leaders and simultaneously evolving with the needs of the community. Through that initiative and JLNO's numerous training opportunities, she's learned how to mobilize a group of women to accomplish a task.

Having studied at Southern University at New Orleans (SUNO) and University of Houston, Tomoro has combined her degrees in public administration and paralegal studies to be a Specialist/Senior Paralegal. She started in the legal field because of her love of legal research. That journey led her to opportunities that enabled her to reach out to others through voluntarism and working with local nonprofit agencies. She now helps others full-time by conducting extensive case work reviews to determine citizenship, entitlement and identity. Her volunteer activities are just as much of a vocation for her. Outside Junior League, Tomoro has served as the President of SUNO's Phi Beta Lambda Professional Business Association, Pro-Bono/Marketing Chair of New Orleans Paralegal Association and Vice President of Public Administration Organization. She is also involved in such committees as Audubon Institute, The Pro Bono Project, American Cancer Society, Legal Aid Bureau and Fulfilling the Gospel Ministries International. She is a member of the American Society for Public Administration and was a 2008 March of Dimes "Spotlight on Success" honoree.

The culture of New Orleans is what Tomoro enjoys most about her city. As a resident of the Westbank, she loves finding time to engage in the art, music and festival scene, and she appreciates the southern hospitality the city is known for across the world. Tomoro immerses herself in this culture by being an active member in two Carnival krewes — the Krewe of Nyx and the Krewe of Nefertiti. She's also a proud member of the Who Dat Nation as a season ticket holder for the New Orleans Saints. She even bears the esteemed title of "Saints Woman" and is one of the super fans found at all home games, donning her light-up sound activated eyelashes and signature cape.

Tomoro appreciates the strong sense of family New Orleans embodies. She is the proud mother of 20 year old, Treysur "Trey" Christian Stevens, who is currently majoring in Behavioral Psychology and minoring in Culinary Arts. She's also inspired by the women in her family. Her sister has proven she is able to excel exponentially in her male-dominated career industry. Even under this challenge, she manages to stay humble and in tune with those around her. She always finds opportunities to help others and pull the best out of them. Her mother taught Tomoro to see the best in others and work for their best outcome. She has always believed in justice, fairness and making continuous sacrifices so others can accomplish their goals.

"Faith is not the belief that God will do what you want. It is the belief that God will do what is right."

- Max Lucado



Board Member Profile

Jennifer “Jen” Bernard-Allen

Treasurer

In her second consecutive year on the Board of Directors for the Junior League of New Orleans, Jennifer “Jen” Bernard-Allen has now stepped into the role of Treasurer. Her expertise in the financial processes allows her to make recommendations to the Board on fiscal planning, accounting policies and sound governance, and then to assist in their implementation. She hopes to build a financial strategic initiative that makes JLNO’s 100th anniversary the most impactful year in JLNO history.

Since 2012, Jen’s JLNO positions have included Provisional Advisor, Council Treasurer, and Kitchen Tour Planning & Assessment Chair. She has most recently chaired JLNO’s Woman Entrepreneur Fellowship program, which promotes professional success and improving economic opportunities for women by providing in-kind services, mentoring and a financial grant to a local woman-owned business (see page 14). Jen joined the Junior League because she believes a group of women coming together with the common goal to build a better community for all women is incredibly empowering. She appreciates being part of an organization that has served as an incubator for some of New Orleans most treasured resources. The fact that JLNO has birthed the Preservation Resource Center, The Parenting Center, Rebuilding Together and many others proves the League has both a rich history and a promising future. From her service in the Junior League, she has learned one of the greatest feelings in the world is sitting around a table with strong, capable women determined to create change.

Jen graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in accounting and finance from Loyola University New Orleans and a Master of Science in accounting from University of New Orleans.

She is also a graduate of the New Orleans Regional Leadership Institute. Jen is employed as the Tax Director and co-leader of the Real Estate Industry Group for LaPorte CPAs and Business Advisors. Her clients have included corporations, S corporations, partnerships, LLCs and high wealth individuals, among others. She has also filled leadership roles as the Commercial Real Estate Women’s Network Co-Programming Chair and Delta Gamma Sorority Member Education Advisor.

Jen is a native New Orleanian and believes it is essential to who she is. New Orleans has a connectivity that isn’t duplicated in other places, and that sense of connectivity is the foundation for the JLNO’s work to lead for a greater New Orleans. Residing in Uptown, Jennifer and her husband Mark are parents to two children — Jane (7) and Charlie (4). Her family inspires her; her husband demonstrates every day what it means to be someone’s partner; her daughter’s empathy has no bounds, and her son is the living embodiment of love.



**“We make a living by what we get,
but we make a life by what we give.”**

- Winston Churchill

Jaimee Landry Boyd

Assistant Treasurer

Metairie native, Jaimee Landry Boyd, is serving as the Assistant Treasurer for the Junior League of New Orleans. Her Board of Directors term will run for two years as she will oversee the financial affairs of the organization, including reviewing and approving the League's operating budget and authorizing purchases. Insight and expertise gained through Jaimee's accounting career enable her to make recommendations on the organization's policies, strategic goals and governance documents as they relate to financial matters. She hopes to automate and create efficiencies in the organization's financial reporting process, so the data can be used both as a resource and a tool for leadership.

Since 2010, Jaimee has served on JLNO's Finance Council, as well as on the Planning and Development Council. She's held the Treasurer position for two different Councils and has been a committee member for Strategic Planning and Business Evaluation. She joined the Junior League to have a resource where she could participate in high-need volunteer activities across the community. Through JLNO, she's developed a clearer understanding of and respect for the community, and she appreciates the personal growth that comes from being a volunteer. Her understanding of JLNO and what she can offer the organization has changed since she first joined. It's her belief that if it were only a two to three-year experience, she would have missed out on her greatest years as a member.



Jaimee graduated with Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degrees in accounting from Wake Forest University and has a Juris Doctorate Degree from Sturm College of Law, University of Denver. Jaimee has been a licensed CPA since 2000 and a licensed attorney since 2007, imparting her with a unique blend of legal, financial and compliance experience. Jaimee previously served as the Vice President of Finance for an owner-operator of skilled nursing homes, navigated the entity through a period of noncompliance with its debt covenants and led its \$63 million debt restructuring. She joined Foley & Judell in January 2014 and has served as bond counsel on many government healthcare, conduit healthcare and education financings. She has been a conference speaker for the National Association of Bond Lawyers, the Society of Louisiana Certified Public Accountants (LCPA) Medical & Healthcare Services, Postlethwaite & Netterville and Ochsner Health System. Her volunteer service includes being the Treasurer of the MAAS Gala, as well as membership in Women in Public Finance and service on LCPA Medical & Healthcare Services and Nonprofit Committees.

Jaimee and her husband Kenneth are parents to two children, Evelyn (10) and Grant (7). Children provide a great deal of joy to her as she has previously been a Team Leader for elementary students participating in the STEAM program Destination Imagination. She is inspired by a fellow Junior League member, Maria Huete, for her work ethic and commitment to service.



“Love cannot remain by itself – it has no meaning. Love has to be put into action, and that action is service.”

- Mother Teresa

Board Member Profile



Sarah Chase

Secretary

Sarah Chase serves as the Secretary to the Board of Directors of the Junior League of New Orleans. In this position, she manages the official record of the League year, including meeting agendas and minutes, functions as Parliamentarian at Board, Joint Council and General Membership meetings, and provides guidance on and ensures adherence to the organization's governance documents which include Bylaws, Standing Rules, Policies and Procedures. She works with JLNO members and staff to maintain membership information and address member requirements. Sarah hopes to help the rest of the Board, as well as the entire organization, continue executing the change from the past League year. She believes the Board is united in offering more refinement to these changes as membership continues to acclimate to them.

During her seven years in JLNO, Sarah has served as a leader on the Communications Council and as JLNO's Corresponding Secretary. Sarah's attention to detail, strong organizational skills, patience and objectivity give her the capacity to be the Chair of the Standards Committee. She joined JLNO because she wanted to be involved with an organization that made a huge impact on the city she loves while also meeting new people and making new friends. She appreciates how JLNO embodies the New Orleans spirit, embracing its history and upholding traditions while remaining open to change with the needs of membership and the community. The evolution of the Bloomin' Deals Legacy Project is a perfect example of honoring an important part of JLNO's history while remaining relevant and

evolving in a smart way. She is excited to see where this will go in the upcoming year. Sarah has learned more than she expected through her JLNO membership. Not having children, diaper need is something she never really thought about — how simply having an adequate supply of diapers can make a huge impact to a woman and her family. She's still in awe of how quickly and effectively the Diaper Bank was put into action and how it continues to grow.

Sarah is the Director of Design and Development at Tasc Performance, where she has worked since 2009 and is responsible for the entire apparel creation process. Previously, she lived in Baltimore, MD and worked in International On-Field Product Development for Under Armour. She received a Bachelor of Science in fashion merchandising from University of Delaware and studied at the Philadelphia College of Textiles and Sciences. While she wasn't born here, Sarah loves everything about New Orleans and believes there is no place like it on earth. She enjoys the music, food, festivals and parades, as well as the unique people and lifestyle. As part of her commitment to the city, she volunteers at Audubon Zoo on Sunday mornings in the Louisiana Swamp and Jaguar Jungle sections assisting the keepers. She has previously volunteered for LA-SPCA, Julia Jump committees and the Preservation Resource Center Holiday Home Tour.

As residents of Uptown, Sarah and her husband, Nicholas Cope, share their home with a Bullmastiff named Linus and a Frenchie Pug named Stella. She also plays the piano and violin.



“The future is no place to place your better days.”

- Dave Matthews

Evelyn “Evie” Poitevent Sanders

Business Council Director



In her role as Business Council Director for the Junior League of New Orleans, Evelyn “Evie” Poitevent Sanders will oversee management and maintenance of JLNO’s physical assets. She will be responsible for revenue generating projects — like the newly developed Women’s Leadership Summit and Consignment Partnerships — along with Get on Board, the long-standing nonprofit board training program. Evie’s business knowledge, diligence and persistence allows her to address all of the complex aspects of maximizing JLNO assets and revenue streams. She has a thorough understanding of capital, employee and risk management that will aid in handling JLNO’s properties, staff and insurance. She hopes to increase organizational revenues in all areas but is particularly energized to lead the successful planning and execution of JLNO’s first Women’s Leadership Summit. She will work with leadership to ensure this event not only exceeds expectations, but also sets the stage for a well-respected and ever-growing conference — one that women from all over the region look forward to attending each year.

Over the past nine years, Evie has served various JLNO Councils, having been a member of the Nominating Committee and chairing both the Member Outreach and Planning & Development Committees. She originally joined JLNO to hold herself accountable to performing community volunteer work, but she stayed with the organization for the impressive women’s leadership and training opportunities. Evie did not realize how much of a positive impact JLNO would have on her personally and professionally. She had so many opportunities to showcase her family’s small business, Feet First, to League membership effectively gaining new customers. Evie was elated with the boundless opportunities to serve on numerous committees and councils, eventually taking on leadership roles. She loves meeting so many interesting and impressive women from wide-ranging backgrounds. Evie believes the ability to expand one’s personal and professional

network is one of the greatest resources JLNO offers its members. As a result, she has learned more about her work ethic and leadership styles and how to interface those with a wide variety of personality types. She also appreciates learning about the issues facing women across the community.

As a native New Orleanian, Evie returned to New Orleans after completing a double major in English and French from the University of Virginia. She currently serves as the Human Capital Manager at Greater New Orleans, Inc. where she provides orientation “concierge services” for new companies and relocating executives. She assists local and new, incoming talent with career-related resources and connections and supports regional companies with connections to local talent. Additionally, Evie facilitates relationship building with and amongst regional higher education institutions, the nonprofit community and regional business partners through outreach and support efforts.

Evie and her husband Lem reside in Lakeview and are expecting their first child in Fall 2019. She loves the funkiness, diversity, uniqueness and culture of New Orleans. She loves the city’s great food, music and festivals, but she’s most grateful to live in a place with such a tight-knit community and sense of family.



“I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

- Maya Angelou



Board Member Profile

Virginia “Ginger” Spencer LaCour

Community Council Director

Since joining the Junior League of New Orleans in 2006, Virginia “Ginger” Spencer LaCour has cultivated an understanding of organizational opportunities that make her well-suited for JLNO’s Community Council Director. She will coordinate, develop and maintain JLNO programs that further the mission to improve the community, as well as the focus area of Advancing the Wellbeing of Women. She hopes to bring a structured and sustainable approach with a strategic plan to JLNO’s Community Council, which has over 50 women in leadership positions and oversees approximately 200 dedicated committee members. Delivery through others is not a new concept for Ginger. She looks forward to empowering JLNO’s leadership team to take on new challenges and implement a path forward for the years ahead.

Ginger has fond memories of her mother volunteering with the Junior League of Houston. Ginger’s mother was very creative and normally on a committee that involved performing arts. She would pick Ginger and her siblings up from school and take them to the children’s hospital, where she and other Junior League members would put on puppet shows for patients and their families. Like her mother, Ginger joined JLNO looking for an outlet for her creative side. She loves working with children and enjoyed teaching Safe Sitter for five years. In more recent years, she has stayed with the organization not only for the personal growth opportunities, but also for the opportunity to truly give

back and make a lasting contribution for a greater New Orleans. She believes the Junior League is an ideal way to volunteer on an individual’s own terms. Whether a woman’s motivations are to network with other women, employ skills that are otherwise not utilized on a daily basis or apply a specific skill set, the Junior League has an opportunity to fit everyone.

As a Senior Wells Engineer with Shell Oil Company, Ginger is currently the Completions Project Lead over the Auger Tension Leg Platform. She has over 10 years experience working as a Deepwater Completion Engineer in the Gulf of Mexico. Her responsibility is to take an existing well, design the most effective way to produce it and develop a plan on how to get it ready to start producing. As a volunteer, she has served on a number of committees related to the arts, such as the New Orleans Museum of Art’s LOVE in the Garden party, and she also actively volunteers through Shell.

This fourth generation New Orleanian, who happened to have been born in Houston, received her Bachelor of Arts in mechanical engineering from Tulane University’s School of Engineering. She has lived in different places, but believes New Orleans is a microcosm of American history and culture — a true melting pot of diverse humanity where one can still feel like a part of a special fabric of community. Ginger and her husband Mark live in Lake Vista with their three children, Charlotte (7) and Caroline (5), who attend Academy of the Sacred Heart, and Mark Jr. (2) who is affectionately called “Bam-Bam.”

Ginger’s father is an inspiration to her. Since she was a child, he always told her that as long as she worked hard to be the best she could possibly be, she could do anything. Her father has been a strong role model in helping her become who she is today, and he has supported her in more ways than he could possibly know.



“Nothing in this world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not: nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not: unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not: the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent.”

- Calvin Coolidge

Board Member Profile

Kathryn “Katie” Hiatt Baxter

Planning and Development Council Director



Kathryn “Katie” Hiatt Baxter is serving as the Planning and Development Director for the Junior League of New Orleans Board of Directors. In this position, she utilizes her forward-thinking capability to advise the board on long-range planning and integrate the Strategic Plan into everyday planning and operations. She cultivates funding sources and leads the volunteer team that formulates JLNO’s partnerships, community projects, strategic plan and fundraisers. She looks forward to elevating the work of the Council’s leaders by giving them the foundation, support and confidence they need to successfully lead. The Junior League is full of passionate women, so she is excited to amplify their enthusiasm and empower them to do great things for JLNO.

Since joining JLNO in 2010, Katie has served on multiple councils, making her well-suited to lead Planning and Development. She has chaired both the Donor Relations and Strategic Planning committees and held positions as Senior Outreach committee member, Kitchen Tour committee member and Provisional Advisor. Raised in Kansas, she came to New Orleans as a college student but stayed after Hurricane Katrina. She found herself drawn to the city beyond the Tulane University campus. She believed to truly become a New Orleanian, she needed to help in any way she could. Early in her JLNO career, Katie found that connection through Senior Outreach and listening what other members were doing. When Katie heard about a JLNO project which put meals in student backpacks so they would have something to eat when they got home, her perspective on what poverty and hunger look like changed. She remembers feeling grateful for organizations like JLNO who were looking out for those children. As a result, Katie has learned not to take the most basic needs for granted. It humbles her to hear stories of struggling mothers, including those who must miss work because they can’t send their children to daycare for lack of clean diapers. Katie tries to instill this knowledge in her children.

Every time she leaves the house for a Junior League function, she pauses to talk to her son about what JLNO is doing. She wants him to understand what volunteerism looks like and, more importantly, that it’s something she chooses to do.

Katie is Vice President of Operations for Firmidable, which is a legal-niche focused marketing and advertising agency. She worked her way up from Account Executive, working as both brand manager and liaison for client accounts, to her current role overseeing the day-to-day operations of the agency, ensuring its decisions, products and services support their growth and vision. What excited Katie most, though, is managing her amazing team. Empowering others and helping them live up to their full potential is something she truly enjoys.

Having earned a Bachelor of Science in management from Tulane University’s A.B. Freeman School of Business, Katie currently resides in Broadmoor with her husband Billy and two children, William (5) and Maggie (2). She loves how New Orleans feels like the biggest small town in America — how there’s always something going on or something to do without it taking a half hour to get everywhere. She appreciates giving her children the opportunity to experience different cultures whether it be through food, music or a festival. Family features prominently in Katie’s life. Her mother and sister inspire her with their ability to work outside the home, raise a family and donate their time to causes meaningful to them. She’s also constantly amazed at how many JLNO members work outside the home while raising a family, serving on multiple boards or volunteering with other organizations. That pushes Katie to be a better version of herself.



“Life moves pretty fast. If you don’t stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it..”

- “Ferris Buller’s Day Off”



Board Member Profile

Shannon Brice

Ways and Means Council Director

Fundraising is a critical aspect of any nonprofit organization, and special events provide the means for volunteers to learn event planning and logistics while showcasing its mission to the public. As Ways and Means Council Director for the Junior League of New Orleans Board of Directors, Shannon Brice coordinates, develops and maintains JLNO's fundraising activities including Touch a Truck, Run-Walk-Give, passing the gavel celebration and other special events and partnerships. She is responsible for increasing awareness of JLNO's mission and financial needs, especially how JLNO puts 100% of its fundraiser proceeds back into the community. Through management, organization and team-building, she helps volunteers harness their fundraising development skills to generate funds that support JLNO's community projects. She reports to the Board on fundraising effectiveness and recommends policy and procedure changes that can further improve these events. Shannon hopes that through its fundraising efforts, JLNO can provide a broader base of people with knowledge of the organization and how it serves the community.

Shannon joined JLNO in 2012 and has chaired both JLNO's Touch a Truck and Freret 5K fundraising events. She came to the Junior League to partner with women who wanted to develop a stronger community. That volunteer commitment is what she likes most about JLNO, and she appreciates how all its members work together to learn from each other. This collaboration creates thoughtful initiatives and robust goals. Through her JLNO service, Shannon has learned despite coming from diverse backgrounds, women

share the same end goals to be happy, reside in safe communities and make New Orleans a wonderful place to live and work.

As the Chief Financial Officer for Richard's Disposal Inc., Shannon is responsible for managing the financial risk of the corporation as well as financial planning and market data analysis. Prior to joining Richard's Disposal, Shannon was Supervisor, Program and Commodities at Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E). In that position, she was responsible for E-commerce, staff augmentation, travel and credit card program teams across the company. Prior to joining PG&E, she held several different positions at Entergy Corporation, including Supplier Diversity Specialist and Lead Analyst in Supply Chain and Financial Analyst in Treasury/Cash Management. Some of her key responsibilities included administering statewide diversity initiatives for Louisiana and Mississippi, coordinating diverse suppliers within the Entergy organization, analyzing value creation data on contracts and maintaining domestic bank relations and cash forecasts. Shannon is also the Chief Executive Officer of Brice Consulting, LLC.

Shannon received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Dillard University and her MBA from Tulane University's A.B. Freeman School of Business. Her volunteer involvement includes serving as President of the Louisiana Diversity Council (LADC) New Orleans Chapter as well as board appointments with Tulane Alumni Business Association, Dress for Success and Friends of City Park. Shannon has been awarded *Diversity MBA* magazine's Top 100 Under 50 Emerging and Executive Leaders as well as the LADC Leader Award.

Residing in the Warehouse District, Shannon loves the energy of the city and looks forward to the inspiration and education she'll receive as a Junior League Board member.



“The only person you are destined to become is the person you decide to be.”

– Ralph Waldo Emerson

Susana Bobadilla Ruddock

Communications Council Director



Susana Bobadilla Ruddock coordinates and disseminates information about the Junior League of New Orleans as the Board of Directors Communications Council Director. Susana combines her strong management and communication skills with her professional experience to oversee promotion of JLNO's events, businesses and community projects via traditional advertising, social media, press releases, the *Lagniappe* publication and the organization's website. Working closely with the President, Board members, committee chairs and staff, Susana reviews all print and digital materials while providing guidance on additional opportunities to extend JLNO's influence. During her year as Communications Council Director, she hopes to learn more about her ability to lead and how to build lasting relationships with those she works with on the Board and on her Council. She also wants to increase momentum for JLNO's Women Leading for a Greater New Orleans branding campaign while cultivating diversity and inclusion within JLNO's membership.

When Susana joined JLNO in 2013, she was looking to develop her leadership skills, find opportunities to volunteer in her community, and meet like-minded women. Since then, she has led committees for both the Communications and Membership Councils. She appreciates how JLNO brings together diverse individuals with similar hopes and goals to have a positive community impact. Last year, she had the opportunity to have dinner with fellow Junior League members from around the country. They had never met before, but they felt as though they'd known each other for years. They all had a passion for volunteering and a desire to learn about leadership. Over the course of a few hours, they created strong bonds over shared commitments. Susana believes so many wonderful opportunities exist in JLNO, both educational and social. She especially enjoys performing direct service and getting to know the members while volunteering. Everyone is so different, but they all care about the community and the impact the organization is having on important issues.

Susana is the Development Director for Southern Eye Bank, a nonprofit organization providing eye tissue for transplant, research and education in Louisiana, the United States and throughout the world. As Development Director, she wears many hats. A few of her tasks include educating the staff at hospitals, coroners and funeral homes about their integral role in organ, eye and tissue donation. She works with local corneal surgeons, as well as donor families and corneal transplant recipients creating events and promoting the donor registry. She is a volunteer member of Sweet Swine O' Mine, the only all-women's team for Hogs for the Cause, and she is in the 610 Splits, the female security guards for the 610 Stompers all-male dance group. Her favorite aspect of New Orleans is the vibrant music scene, as she's always been passionate about live music. Susana loves getting lost in the sounds of the city, be it the clang of the streetcar rolling down St. Charles Avenue or one of the many outdoor concerts the city provides. She adores living in a city flourishing with musicians and where opportunities abound to experience the music. She feels lucky to be raising her daughter in a city whose culture is deeply rooted in music.

Growing up between Spain and Virginia, Susana graduated from University of Mary Washington with a Bachelor of Arts in international affairs. She now lives in Uptown New Orleans with her husband Theodore "Davis" and their 15-month-old daughter Julia Jane. She says she is blessed to have many strong women in her life that provide inspiration and keep her motivated when she feels like she needs wind in her sails. A few of these role models include her mom Pamela, her aunt Carmina and her best friend, Carol. Of course, there are many other women she will never know personally but who have also served as inspiration to her, such as Diane Von Furstenberg, Maya Angelou and Madeline Albright.



"If you think you are too small to make a difference, try sleeping with a mosquito."

– Dalai Lama



Board Member Profile

Yvonne "Sibby" Gwin Charbonnet

Nominating Committee Chair

Yvonne "Sibby" Gwin Charbonnet is serving as the Nominating Committee Chair. In accordance with JLNO's Bylaws and Standing Rules, the Nominating Committee matches organizational needs and individual strengths to produce a leadership team which will most effectively forward the organization's mission, goals and strategic plan. Sibby's capacity for teambuilding, forward-thinking and social awareness enables her to guide the Nominating Committee in selecting an outstanding group of women who will collaborate to lead JLNO in the 2020-2021 year. Outside of her duties for the Nominating Committee, she seeks to support the Board by creating a definitive member satisfaction plan to ensure the membership is getting out what they are putting in. She is also excited about supporting the Board's goal to solidify a plan to celebrate JLNO's 100th anniversary that will honor our members and projects, both past and present.

Sibby joined JLNO in 2008 and has primarily served on the Membership and Community Councils, overseeing Placement and Provisionals. She also served as a Safe Sitter committee member and Secretary of the Community Council. Like many, the desire to serve the community brought Sibby to the Junior League. She appreciates the diverse group of women with whom she volunteers. These women, of all ages and professions with varying experiences from all over the city, help her grow her leadership skills. They have taught her how to lead with understanding, kindness and efficiency to get the job done.

As a native New Orleanian, Sibby is a graduate of the Academy of the Sacred Heart (ASH), the University of Mississippi (Ole Miss) and the University of New Orleans (UNO). She has a

Bachelor of Fine Arts in painting from Ole Miss and a Masters in elementary education, curriculum, and instruction from UNO. She taught at Sacred Heart from 2006 to 2016, and she currently serves as President-Elect of their alumnae board.

Sibby and her husband Hunter reside in Uptown with their three children, Elizabeth "Emme" (7), Sarah (4), and Lillie (2). All three girls go to ASH, and they constantly inspire Sibby. Instilling in them the importance of patience, looking for the good in others, being honest, believing in yourself and seeing the joy in everyday life is what her job as a mom is all about. She hopes her children learn not to take life too seriously and, above all, to have fun. This is something she learned from her mother, Yvonne Gwin, who is a Sustaining member of JLNO.



"Be yourself."



Katherine “Katie” Andry Crosby

Sustaining Advisor to the Board

The Junior League of New Orleans Sustaining Advisor to the Board of Directors is Katherine “Katie” Andry Crosby. This position encompasses a historical perspective and provides practical guidance from a Sustaining member and Past President. Katie calls upon her volunteer and leadership experience to advise Board members and assist in making decisions on membership, fund development, community projects, administration and strategic planning. She also encourages other Sustaining members to continue their involvement with the League.

Recently named the 63rd Sustainer of the Year, this is Katie’s seventh time on JLNO’s Board of Directors. She was President from 2000 to 2001. Highlights of her presidency include welcoming the first Provisional class of over 100, creating the Kids’ Cafe and Teach for America community projects and hosting seminars for the seven Louisiana Leagues and the community. Inspired by her mother’s volunteer commitment as a Sustaining member, Katie joined JLNO in 1988. While she’s seen the League evolve over time, one constant is the training members receive. Katie learned how to interact with various personalities in order to reach a consensus and gained the most when she was volunteering in capacities that were outside of her comfort zone. She has continued to serve the Junior League because she appreciates the confidence she gained as a young member, enjoys meeting like-minded women and wants to stay apprised of JLNO activities.

The Metairie Park Country Day School alumna earned her degree in business administration from Vanderbilt University. She attended graduate school a few years after her JLNO presidency and received an MBA from Tulane University’s A. B. Freeman School of Business in 2007. Katie then channeled her energy and education into Fidelity Bank, becoming Chairman of the Board in 2010, a position she still holds today. She is the first female director in Fidelity’s history and is the great-granddaughter of Allain C. Andry, Sr., one of the original founders of Fidelity Bank. She possesses broad knowledge in various aspects of the banking industry, particularly financial institution management, and has been honored for her professional and volunteer service. *New Orleans CityBusiness* named Katie one of their Women of the Year in both 2006 and 2013 and presented her with their Business Money Makers award in 2011. That same year, *New Orleans Magazine* recognized Katie as a Top Female Achievers, and the Young Leadership Council recognized her with their Role Model award. She has held multiple leadership positions in the Greater New Orleans community: Board Member of New Orleans Area Habitat for Humanity, Board Member of Children’s Hospital New Orleans, Board Vice Chair for LCMC Health, Board Vice Chair of Poydras Home and Board Chair of WYES-TV. She credits the lessons she learned from her JLNO service with helping her tackle these and other challenges in life.

She and her husband, Howell, enjoy spending time with their three children, their spouses and four grandchildren.



“We shall never know
all the good that a
simple smile can do.”

- Mother Teresa

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JUNIOR LEAGUE OF NEW ORLEANS

YEAR IN REVIEW 2018-2019



Junior League of
New Orleans
Women Building a Greater New Orleans



Women *LEADING* for a Greater New Orleans

One civic-minded woman can start a movement. When she observes a need within a community, she can envision a way to address it and find others with which to collaborate. The 10 original members of the Junior League of New Orleans established this organization over 95 years ago by combining their compassionate natures with creativity and diligence to help those that needed it most.

Today, JLNO remains a proud, thriving organization where any woman can realize her commitment to voluntarism in a way that is impactful and relevant to her and the community she serves. Our members are change-makers that contribute to a variety of industries, develop their potential through our infrastructure and implement our organization's impact. These inspiring and diverse individuals are empowering the next generation of women leaders.

JLNO's values of leadership, diversity, empowerment, training and impact further guide our platform of voluntarism that goes beyond teaching safety skills to a child or providing diapers for families. Our experiential training increases the effectiveness of our community impact.

Because of what our members learn from the Junior League, New Orleans has:

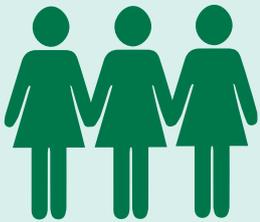
- more women founding organizations and starting businesses
- more leaders serving on boards
- more volunteers giving their time and effort
- more donors valuing these causes through their financial support

Thousands of Greater New Orleans area residents have benefited from the work of Junior League volunteers, and helping others has immeasurably enriched those volunteers' lives. As its legacy, JLNO founded several well-known organizations, including the Preservation Resource Center and the Parenting Center at Children's Hospital. JLNO has also supported many of the city's major cultural institutions including the New Orleans Museum of Art, the Louisiana State Museum at the Cabildo and the Louisiana Children's Museum.

The infrastructure our members build and maintain ensures we help someone not just in the present but far into the future as well. JLNO is excited to discover what the next 95 years holds for our volunteers and celebrate the positive impact they will make on our community.



JLNO BY THE NUMBERS



2,100
Members



35,000
Hours in
Volunteer Service



**190 Unique
Volunteer
Opportunities**



**80 Nonprofit
Partners**



**55 Training
Opportunities**



71
Business
Partners



95,000
Members of the
Community Served

Programming



Distributed **750,000** diapers to **22** distribution partners through its DIAPER BANK to help alleviate diaper need for families



Distributed **77,000** pads, liners and tampons to **12** distribution partners through its PERIOD PRODUCTS program to help address period poverty for women



Gave meaningful experiences to **175** at-risk young adults and children at COVENANT HOUSE to make their residents feel valued and hopeful



Administered **12** sessions preparing **240** young people through the SAFE SITTER program for the profound responsibilities of nurturing and protecting children



Educated **600** girls and **100** women on FINANCIAL LITERACY topics of budgeting, saving and investing



Awarded **3** non-traditional female students with **\$15,000** in SCHOLARSHIP funding



Trained **50** people in nonprofit board and staff leadership skills through its award-winning GET ON BOARD program



Awarded a **\$7,500** grant, member-delivered in-kind services and mentoring to grow the business of its fourth WOMAN ENTREPRENEUR FELLOW

In its seventh year, JLNO's Touch a Truck continues to grow. Two days in the Pontchartrain Center provided a fun, interactive and educational opportunity for families throughout the region.

- 37 vehicles highlighting various transportation methods across numerous professional sectors participated
- 3,100 people of all ages attended
- 625 students from partner schools visited for free as a part of JLNO's Field Trip Friday
- \$50,000 from the event's ticket sales, business sponsorships and donations support JLNO's mission and volunteer efforts



For the first time, JLNO participated as an Official Charity Partner with the Allstate Sugar Bowl Crescent City Classic.

- 26 people participated in the race on JLNO's behalf
- 30 volunteers supported the April 20th race at both the starting and finish lines
- 310 donors gave in support of JLNO's #runningforJLNO team
- \$16,000 from the participant's peer-to-peer fundraising campaigns supported JLNO's mission and volunteer efforts



JLNO's Members

JLNO's members range from 26 to 101 years old, with an average age of **43**

92% of JLNO's Active membership works outside of the home

64% of JLNO's members are parents

61% of JLNO's members have previously served or are currently serving on boards of another nonprofit organization

96% of JLNO's members received a post-secondary degree, with over half having received a postgraduate degree of a Masters, PhD, M.D. or J.D.

76% of JLNO's members are married

75% of JLNO's members are volunteering with other nonprofit organizations outside their Junior League service

"Being a part of Junior League has made me more confident. Working collaboratively with successful women raised my awareness of what I can bring to the table. It's also empowering to be surrounded by an army of like-minded women working to improve our community."

- Sarah Peltier, JLNO Active Member

"The Junior League has reaffirmed my belief that when women come together, great things happen, and the possibilities are endless! It has allowed me to further develop my leadership skills, as well as have a more active voice in the community."

- Kisha Gaudin Laurent, JLNO Active Member

"I really do consider what I learned at Junior League to be as formative as going to law school was."

- Melanee Usdin, JLNO Sustaining Member

THE COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE FUND GRANTED OVER \$52,000 TO LOCAL NONPROFITS

Started over 30 years ago, the Community Assistance Fund provides JLNO with a flexible means to grant money to nonprofit organizations that effectively demonstrate they have a dire need for funding. These agencies seek to advance the wellbeing of women in the areas of economic opportunity, physical and mental health and family assistance. The CAF Committee thoroughly examines requests for funding before submitting them to JLNO's Community Council and Board of Directors for final approval.

\$12,500 to Luke's House: A Clinic for Healing and Hope for services to women, particularly Latina women, who are in need of primary gynecologic health care

\$10,500 to Mercy Endeavors to enhance the current programs it offers and add more meaningful programs concentrating on the Physical and Mental Health of its members

\$7,110 to Girl Scouts Louisiana East for Girl Scouts Beyond Bars, an existing program, and the launch of a Girl Scouting program in partnership with the New Orleans Women and Children's Shelter

\$6,000 to Operation Spark to expand the Immersion program to increase its student numbers, with special emphasis on removing barriers that can make participation prohibitive for single mothers entering into its programs

\$5,000 to Odyssey House Louisiana, Inc. to provide at least 250 women in its Adult Residential Program with soap and shampoo, feminine hygiene products and other supplies that support physical and mental health

\$3,000 to Sexual Trauma Awareness and Response for its Survivor Assistance Fund

\$2,770 to Southern Rep for its "School to Stage Pipeline" arts education programs

\$620 to Louisiana Books 2 Prisoners for the purchase of GED/HiSet study guides, dictionaries and composition books, as well as books regarding job skills, trade instruction, financial planning and small business entrepreneurship

2017-2018 FINANCIALS*

Support & Revenue

Membership Dues	\$327,607
Thrift Shop Sales.....	\$459,923
Thrift Shop Donated Goods	\$451,438
Contributions & Support	\$155,043
Special Events.....	\$86,182
Investment Income	\$192,366
Other	\$91,817
Change in Value of Beneficial Interest In Charitable Remainder Trust	(\$3,537)

Total Support & Revenue
\$1,760,839

Expenses

Programming & Mission-Related	\$1,303,181
Supporting Services	
Management & General	\$196,735
Fundraising.....	\$106,704

Total Expenses
\$1,606,620

Allocation of Expenses



FOR EVERY \$1.00 SPENT:



Change in Net Assets
\$154,219

*Figures tie back to audit for fiscal year 2017-2018

Mission

The Junior League of New Orleans is an organization of women committed to promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women and improving communities through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. Its purpose is exclusively educational and charitable.

Focus Area

The Junior League of New Orleans believes every woman in Metropolitan New Orleans should have the opportunity to live a healthy, happy and successful life.

We are committed to **advancing the wellbeing of local women** through the use of trained volunteers that provide direct service, educate the community and advocate for issues that affect women.

JLNO specifically works to tackle three strategic goals:

- ➔ Improving economic opportunities for women and supporting women's potential to seize those opportunities
- ➔ Providing needed family support to alleviate the burdens on women caregivers
- ➔ Promoting information and resources for women's health, allowing them to live healthy and happy lives

Héritage:

Once Upon a Time: Remembering Toria

By: Jill Holland



Just another "American" family: Mother and Dick with Vickie and me.

The Whitten family poses for a photo: Andreas, Toria, Dick and Vickie. *Photo by: Ann & Gene Preaus - Memoirs of HH Prince Andreas of Saxe-Coburg.*

Once upon a time, there was a countess who became a princess who became the Junior League of New Orleans Bloomin' Deals Thrift Shop Manager. The story of Toria Whitten is one she good-humoredly calls a tale of "Riches to Rags."

Countess Viktoria-Luise of Solms-Baruth, former Princess Friedrich Josias of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, was born on March 13, 1921 in a little village about fifty miles south of Berlin, Germany. In her memoirs*, she recounts her lineage. It is quite impressive — princes and princesses abound, and one of her godmothers was the last empress of Germany, Auguste-Viktoria.

She spent a happy childhood in Germany. Her parents and family endeavored to and succeeded in creating a nurturing environment and lifestyle for their children, who were growing up in a defeated country where national morale was low post-WWI. As time went on and the Nazi party came into power and began recruiting youth at an earlier and earlier age, Toria's parents sought to shield her from the burgeoning fanaticism.

With their love and guidance, she grew into adulthood having never been conscripted into any Nazi organization.

Though she grew up in a home with servants, Toria's parents — her father in particular — insisted she learn housework. At one point, she oversaw cooking four- and five-course meals for her family and meals for the servants. In addition, she was required to learn how to do the laundry and clean their large house.

"I once asked my Father why I was made to do all these things when I was going to have servants to do them for me later on. He said, 'If you are lucky enough to have servants, they will not be able to tell you what can or cannot be done. You will be able to show them how YOU want things to be done! Furthermore, you might not be able to have servants and then you can do everything yourself.'"

Toria was also an avid seamstress and, from a very early age, enjoyed making her own clothes. This, as well as learning housework, was something that would come in handy as her life unfolded.



My mother and Dick in their later years.



Countess Viktoria-Luise of Solms-Baruth, Mrs. Richard C. B. Whitten

LEFT: Dick and Toria Whitten enjoy a Christmas evening at the home of Ann & Gene Preaus. Photo by: Ann & Gene Preaus - *Memoirs of HH Prince Andreas of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.*

RIGHT: Mrs. Whitten, Toria, looks every bit the Countess in this portrait taken here in America in her "new" life. Photo by: Ann & Gene Preaus - *Memoirs of HH Prince Andreas of Saxe-Coburg.*

Toria married her cousin, Prince Friedrich Josias of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, in January of 1942, and they had a son, Andreas. Following the second World War, it was apparent that the marriage was not meant to last, and they divorced in 1946. During this time, Toria was living with her parents in Steinwaendt, Austria. In Andreas' memoirs**, he says, "Steinwaendt was our home and sanctuary of peace." Toria's own accounts of living there are happy ones, and it is here that this countess and former princess took the first step towards New Orleans.

At a party in Salzburg in February 1947, Toria's brother Pety caught a ride with an American serviceman to a neighboring area. That serviceman's name was Captain Dick Whitten of New Orleans. JLNO Sustainer Ann Preaus recalls that Dick was quite taken with Toria from the start and liked to tell about the day he met her. "A gorgeous, statuesque woman," he said. Toria said in her memoirs, "I found him quite charming and very attractive when I met him!" Andreas said about their romance, "It was meteoric love at first sight."

Ten months after they first met, in November of 1947, Toria and Dick were married. And in 1948, they welcomed a daughter, Vickie, into the world. Shortly after this, Dick received his orders to return to the United States. On Christmas Eve, just after midnight, the Whittens — Toria, Dick, Andreas and Vickie — arrived in New Orleans on the L&N Railroad. Dick's mother was there to greet them and whisk them off to her home, 1528 Eighth Street. So began Toria's new life in America.

In her memoirs, Toria said she "often thought about that conversation [about the housework] and have been ever so thankful to my parents for what they did for me in this respect...when I married Dick and came with him to the United States with two small children, I had to do all my own cooking and housework, which would have been a disaster without that training."

Over the years, Dick's military career moved their family around the country and Europe. Ultimately, Louisiana was home, though, and they settled in Covington in the late 1960s.

By the 1970s, with her children grown and out of the house, Toria began looking for "something to do." How lucky for the Junior League that this something was to become the Manager of Bloomin' Deals Thrift Shop.

"She was charming, smart, patient and fantastic with customers," said Sustainer Ella Montgomery Flower (JLNO President 1984-85) in an interview for *Lagniappe*, Spring 2013.

Andreas wrote in his memoirs, "Mother raised us to believe that every human being, in spite of different racial, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds, was worthy of success and deserved our respect." This was evident in the way Toria ran the Thrift Shop.

"She not only got to know the Thrift Shop's regular customers, but also showed concern for their problems, and their love of her was evident. She was equally as compassionate in her treatment of the Provisionals who were in her charge," wrote Gene Preaus in a commemorative article he wrote about Toria upon her passing in 2003.

Toria was a favorite with the Provisionals. Each year, she and Dick invited the Provisionals completing their thrift shop shifts for a celebratory dinner. Those dinners have been remembered fondly by several sustainers who were just starting their Junior League journey back then. "She had a lot of energy and the kind of personality that just took everybody in," said Sustainer Patsy Hardin.

"She was proud of her heritage," said Gene. "But she was not pretentious. Quite the contrary."

Ann agrees, "She was an elegant person but funny and humble. She was so accepting of life without all the trimmings."

Toria's story, like all good fairy tales, had a happy ending. She and Dick were married just shy of 54 years when Dick passed away in 2001, and Toria followed him in 2003. They were happily married and devoted to one another. Their children and grandchildren are thriving in both Louisiana and Europe. Toria left a legacy in her wake — a do-anything, be-anything mentality that in and of itself is noble, with and without royal titles. ●

A special thanks to Sustainer Ann Preaus and her husband Gene for sharing the following works for this article:

*From *Tyranny to Freedom... Memoirs of My Life* by Countess Viktoria-Luise of Solms-Baruth (Mrs. Richard C.B. Whitten)

** *I did it my way...The Memoirs of HH Prince Andreas of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha* with Arturo E. Beeche

League Faces



JLNO hosted a delegation from the Czech Republic. The purpose of their visit was to talk with various nonprofits around the city to learn best practices. *Photo by: Carrie Moulder*



Elizabeth Spears, Megan Spears and Sherry Green bring out their spring hats during JLNO's Derby Day Party. *Photo by: Michelle Sens*



Judith Becker Andry with her daughter Katie Crosby, JLNO's Sustainer of the Year. *Photo by: Jessica Bachmann*



Nadine Robertson, CEO of Visionary Media Entertainment Group, at her WE Fellowship Pitch during New Orleans Entrepreneur Week. *Photo by: Jessica Bachmann*



JLNO's WE Fellowship panel of judges at the New Orleans Entrepreneur Week event on March 25th. *Photo by: Jessica Bachmann*



Paige Farrell WE Fellowship Chair, Ashley Robinson, Jessica Derenbecker WE Fellowship Vice-Chair, Amber Barlow, Chelsey Tharp, owner of Girls Gone Buff who received the audience award, Nancy Kirkeby WE Fellowship Vice-Chair and Kristyn Tramel. *Photo by: Jessica Bachmann*



Lauren Myerscough, co-founder, and CEO of Cocktail & Sons and winner of JLNO's 2019 WE Fellowship. *Photo by: Jessica Bachmann*



Chelsey Tharp, owner of Girls Gone Buff, received the audience award at the WE Fellowship event. *Photo by: Jessica Bachmann*



Supporters of Girls Gone Buff attended the WE event to support Chelsey Tharp. *Photo by: Jessica Bachmann*



WE Fellowship Pitch during New Orleans Entrepreneur Week. Alice Glenn, Liz Broekman, Lauren Meyerscough and her daughter, Christine Vinson and Kevin Wilkins. *Photo by: Jessica Bachmann*



Brandi Lynn Pierce owner of Southern Swings Nail Bar & Spa during her WE Fellowship pitch. *Photo by: Jessica Bachmann*



Laura Stirling Joffrion owner of FAIT NOLA during her WE Fellowship pitch. *Photo by: Jessica Bachmann*



Fun was had by all at JLNO's Derby Day Party. *Photo by: Michelle Sens*



Melanee Usdin, Melissa Eversmeyer, President-Elect Christine Vinson, President Alice Franz-Glenn, Elizabeth Schafer and Elizabeth Janke at the Sustainer Luncheon in May. *Photo by: Jessica Bachmann*



Lynn Spearman and Kim LeBaron enjoyed the great weather at JLNO's Derby Day Party. *Photo by: Michelle Sens*



JLNO President Alice Franz-Glenn and the 2019 Sustainer of The Year Katie Crosby. *Photo by: Jessica Bachmann*



JLNO Sustainers Judith Becker Andry, Sustainer of The Year Katie Crosby, Sybil Favrot, Ruthie Frierson and Susan Gundlach at the Sustainer of The Year luncheon. *Photo by: Jessica Bachmann*



Junior League of
New Orleans
Women Building a Greater New Orleans



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Celebrating 145 Years:

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Sincerely,

Patrick M. Schoen

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