

WINTER 2024



# FOCUS

The Official Newsletter of the Junior League of Lansing



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Stephanie Collier, 2023-2025 President



Welcome to 2024! Somehow the League year is more than halfway through, and I have to say that I am so proud of what we have accomplished so far. We just recently held our Annual Meeting to recap the work of the fall and welcomed in our next round of slated leaders. Congratulations, ladies!

The 2023-2024 year kicked off with our combined Board and Management

Team Retreat, which was graciously hosted by Secretary Anita Nystrom at her beautiful home on Rainbow Lake just north of town. We spent some time getting to know one another better and how to best leverage our strengths and support each other. We launched the review of our strategic plan while also digging into our newly updated mission statement and how we as a League can best live out our mission for our members and our local community. Don't worry, we left some time for fun and wrapped up the day with a relaxing boat cruise enjoying a beautiful day on the lake.

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## President's Message, continued from page 1

Over the course of the fall, the Board has thoughtfully reviewed each strategic priority of the prior plan to determine how well we feel we have performed and what we feel our potential is. We also completed a SWOT analysis and began our discussion around values and vision. We re-deployed our Member and Strategic Plan Survey to ensure that all members have an opportunity to be heard throughout this process and will be benchmarking that to the prior survey to gauge our progress. Thank you for your feedback!

In January, the Board switched from its review process to coordinating with a strategic planning facilitator to solidify updates and create the next strategic plan. We believe there is ample opportunity on the horizon to continue to advance our impact with our members and community, and we look forward to continuing to grow as an organization and together as leaders.

Working in tandem with the strategic plan review has also been the work of our Community Area Resource Examination (CARE) Task Force, chaired by Community Vice President Lisa Biering. The task force has spent time collaborating with community partners and reviewing where JLL can best live out our mission in alignment with our community's needs.

Time certainly is a funny thing and while our new mission statement doesn't feel so "new" anymore, when something that significant changes for the first time since 1931, I believe there is value in leaning into it.

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

Using our mission as a framework, here are some highlights within each area (more details are throughout the rest of this issue):

**Volunteer Action:** I always love that volunteering is a way for us to serve and learn about the needs of our community while connecting with each other in the process. Find the Good Day was launched by AJLI this past fall and I'm proud to say that our members felt the best way to celebrate was to give back. We had a great day "finding the good" by supporting the Greater Lansing Food Bank's Weekend Kits (formerly Weekend Survival Kits).

**Collaboration:** I could probably write a full page on all the amazing collaborations that JLL fosters so I'll rein it in with some highlights. The most significant collaboration (I believe) is all of you, our members. Each year, our member volunteers step into new roles within the League and learn, grow, and support one another as we collectively work to support our community. Additionally, we've already had ample community collaboration this fall through our Community Fund Grant, CARE Task Force, donation from the MSU Destination Auction, and corporate sponsorship

commitments for our raffle to name a few.

**Training:** While I believe that the experiences that JLL fosters for our members in the first two categories create an invaluable way for our members to learn and grow as civic leaders, we certainly didn't stop there. This past fall, we sponsored four JLL members to attend the Small Leagues, Big Impact (SLBI) Conference where they were able to collaborate with other small League members on topics including community impact, fund development, marketing and communications, and membership models. Additionally on a local level, we provided a thoughtful GMM education series, and coordinated the Bridges out of Poverty event scheduled for this spring.

You may now be thinking, wow! What an amazing start to the year (I know I am), what more could JLL possibly need? How can I help? My ask of all of you is simple — please tell our story. Tell it to your family, friends, coworkers, neighbors, everyone. JLL has so much good happening through our 52 Active members, and I would be remiss if I didn't thank the numerous Sustainers who support our League through their membership, raised hands to fill slated positions, hosting of events, selling of raffle tickets, and of course their expertise. What we need the most is to continue to grow our membership and share all the good that JLL embodies and that we all have so much conviction for. To connect a potential new member (or two) to JLL, please have them reach out to [newmember@jllansing.org](mailto:newmember@jllansing.org).

Our future is as bright as we choose to make it, and I am certainly excited for the trajectory we are on. We have the right women in the right seats to ensure that JLL continues to be a beacon in our community and a blessing for our members. Thank you for allowing me the honor of serving as President. At any time, please reach out with questions, concerns, ideas... and did I mention new member referrals? I can be reached at [president@jllansing.org](mailto:president@jllansing.org).

'Til next time,



## UPCOMING GMMs

March 2024  
Tuesday  
12

April 2023  
Tuesday  
09

May 2023  
Tuesday  
14



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**President**  
Stephanie Collier [2023-2025]

**Treasurer**  
Lisa Whiting Dobson (2023-2025)

**Secretary**  
Anita Nystrom (2022-2024)

**Executive Vice President**  
Stacy Bogard (2022-2024)

**Nominating Chair**  
Andi Earl (2023-2024)

**Sustaining Member At-Large**  
Janine Medler (2023-2025)

## MANAGEMENT TEAM

**Executive Vice President**  
Stacy Bogard (2022-2024)

**Communications Vice President**  
Brittany Risk (2023-2025)

**Community Vice President**  
Lisa Biering (2022-2024)

**Education Vice President**  
Leia Cooper-Rigg (2022-2024)

**Fund Development Vice President**  
Ana Whitman (2022-2024)

**Membership Vice President**  
Resa Tran-TenBrink (2023-2025)

**Sustaining Management Advisor**  
Lori Noyer (2023-2024)

## MISSION STATEMENT

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



SEPTEMBER  
14, 2023

International Find the Good Day — created by the Associations of Junior Leagues International — is dedicated to finding the good in yourself, your community, and the world around you. On Sept. 14, 2023, Junior Leagues across the organization hosted events, served their community, and raised awareness for finding the good.

Junior League of Lansing served our community by volunteering at the Greater Lansing Food Bank. Members packed 212 backpacks (just under 3,000 lbs. of food), as part of the Weekend Kits program for students in seven Michigan counties.



# COMMUNITY

The Community Council is made up of the Volunteer and Advocacy Communities. Both work to seek opportunities for our members to become more deeply connected and serve our community.

## Volunteer

In the first half of the year, we offered three unique volunteer opportunities for our Junior League. The first was with the Greater Lansing Food Bank, sorting food in their warehouse to later be distributed to local food pantries. The second opportunity was with Child and Family Charities in December where volunteers moved gifts and loaded them in and out of the facility. In January, on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, volunteers gathered at the Allen Neighborhood Center to complete various chores and tasks needed by the center as they serve the community.

We have also promoted existing volunteer opportunities throughout the year, including a weekly opportunity with the Cristo Rey Community Center where volunteers can help prepare and serve breakfast and lunch to those in the community.

Excitingly, our members have logged 105 hours of volunteer service during this League year alone. The committee will continue to arrange new volunteer opportunities for our members throughout 2024.

## Community Fund Grant

In the fall, Active members and Sustainers in slated positions nominated and voted to select one nonprofit to receive our Community Fund Grant. In 2023, we were proud to present the Helping Hands Food Pantry of Eaton County with a grant of \$4,703. In the spring, the Junior League of Lansing will open its Community Response Grants to area nonprofits working in our focus areas of food, shelter, and access to food and shelter.

## Advocacy

The Advocacy Committee brought Junior League of Lansing members various offerings for our Advocacy Week in November. The flagship event at the end of the week was to be Bridges Out of Poverty, an immersive educational experience where trained facilitators would lead participants through activities that would sensitize them to the realities of living with economic hardship. For a successful event, we are looking for 60 participants and will open the registration to members and the community. We look forward to hosting the rescheduled event in the spring. Additional details and registration will be available soon.



JLL members wrapping toys for the Christmas Kiddies event at the Charlotte Fire Department.



2023 Community Impact Grant Recipients: RISE Recovery



The School of Hospitality Business: MSU Destination Auction Donation



# EDUCATION

**Leadership Training:** Each year, the Board and Management Team hold a retreat to kickoff to the new League year that begins on July 1. We were fortunate this year that Secretary Anita Nystrom hosted us at her home on Rainbow Lake near Perrinton. It was a beautiful setting for a day of learning and team-building activities.

President Stephanie Collier first walked everyone through a mission and values activity. We reviewed the draft of the 2023-2024 Annual Plan created by the Management Team and the corresponding budget lines were developed. The Annual Plan is based on fulfilling the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan. We are in the last year of our current Strategic Plan and have been gathering information and surveying members to develop the next one. The Annual Plan review allowed Board members to ask questions and/or provide feedback before voting to approve it at the August 2023 Board meeting.

All Board and Management Team members took the Culture Index evaluation before the meeting. Stephanie, trained in the tool through her business, walked us through the traits and behaviors and how to leverage our strengths to support one another better. We wrapped up by posting the next steps for using what we learned that day.

For our annual leadership training, members from the Board, Management Team, and Committee Chairs gathered on Aug. 8. Lisa Fisher facilitated an impactful training session on “Creating a Culture of Engagement.”

JLL Active members Tricia Brentar, Heidi Hansen, Carlee Knott, and Ana Whitman participated in the Small Leagues, Big Impact Annual Conference in San Antonio, Texas, Aug. 10 - 12. The day-and-a-half conference offered four courses: Marketing, Membership, Community, and Fund Development; each JLL member took a different course. More than 200 Junior League members from across the U.S. were in attendance. It was a fantastic opportunity to be surrounded by many bold and fearless women leaders who care deeply for Junior League and its mission. Junior Leagues face nearly all the same challenges, so it was a great environment to learn from other Leagues and bring back new strategies and inspiration.

**Member Events:** This fall, we held our first social of the year at Ele’s Place, where newer members were able to learn about its strong ties with JLL. The social with a purpose also included a tour and opportunity to make donations to Ele’s Place. Our next member event was Walk and Shuffle, supporting the Strides Against Breast Cancer walk followed by lunch at Lansing Shuffle. Sustainer Shelley Davis Boyd hosted our annual Cookie Exchange in December. We were charmed by her festive decor and had

a wonderful turnout of Actives and Sustainers to celebrate the season. Heidi Hansen and Tricia Brentar hosted a new event, Bubbles and Bows, where we learned to make beautiful bows and filled Heidi’s vehicle full with gifts for the Siren Shelter in Eaton County.

**GMMs/Training:** GMMs continue to be held at Small Talk Children’s Advocacy Center; we are so grateful for this relationship! We kicked off training with a bang — Jennifer Dunn, Ph.D. from Broad College of Business at MSU sharpened our negotiation skills. The following month, we provided training on Member Essentials as well as learning more about the open slated leadership positions. Jaimie Hutchison, JLL Sustainer and Director of the MSU WorkLife office, provided a fabulous training heading into the holiday season on finding more balance in our lives. The new year kicked off with discussion on being a JLL ambassador and defining our “why” alongside our mission and values. We are looking forward to hosting the February social at Toscana!



Membership Social at Ele’s Place



JLL Leadership Retreat

# SPECIAL THANKS

## Legacy Society Members

Anonymous  
Ken and Ginny Brooks  
John and Sandy Grettenberger  
Sue Mills  
Mary Beth Pirich

This year marks the 39th anniversary of the Junior League of Lansing Endowment Fund. The Endowment supports the mission of JLL in perpetuity and we are grateful to our founding members for the foresight to establish this endowment fund to benefit the women of this community.

As of Jan. 24, 2024, the current fund balance is \$732,760. As our Endowment Fund balance grows, its financial impact on our League will continue to grow.

Our members generously support our League every year through donations, tribute gifts in memory or honor of a loved one, and dues round-up. Thank you for remembering the Endowment Fund throughout the year, whether it's a year-end donation, birthday or Mother's Day gift, or simply to make a gift to let someone know you are in their thoughts, your gift matters.

We invite you to join the Legacy Society. Please consider making a gift of \$5,000 or more by pledge or an estate gift. For more information or to make a gift today, please visit [jllansing.org/endowment-fund](http://jllansing.org/endowment-fund). Thank you to our existing members who have made this commitment.

We would like to recognize our donors who made contributions during the 2023-2024 fiscal year:

Susan Allis  
Deb Atkinson  
Kathryn Ault  
Bridget Balesky  
Candace Barnes  
Cheryl Bartholic  
Joan Bauer  
Justine Bell  
Stacy Bogard  
Carolyn Boger  
Susan Brewster  
Christine Brogan  
Geraldine Brown  
Barbara Clark  
Barbara Cleland  
Stephanie Collier  
Georgia Condon  
Jenny Corr  
De De Coy  
Patricia Croom  
Marilyn DesJardins  
Kathie Drolett  
Barbara Duda  
Carolyn Dudley  
Darrell Duffield  
Lynn Dwight  
Andrea Earl  
Carri Lynn Engel  
Wendy Faulhaber  
Barbara Fishell  
Gretchen Forsyth  
Tricia Foster  
Lori Fuller  
Barbara Galloway

Donna Gardner  
Pamela Gillespie  
Susan Gisholt  
Marcia Gresens  
Linda Grua  
Jody Haddad  
Barbara Hamilton  
Phyllis Harden  
Debby Harrison  
Annie Hayes  
Charley Hays  
Diane Hollister  
Katharine Hude  
Tracy Jelneck  
Jan Kahl  
Elizabeth King  
Marian Korroch  
Suzanne Kregel  
Cathy Lazar  
Mary Liechty  
Barbara Ruth Lindquist  
Pat Linnell  
Sandy Little  
Maggie Louks  
Alexis Lupo  
Susan Lutz  
Katie Lynwood  
Karen McCloskey  
Ellen McKay  
Janine Medler  
Suzanne Mills  
Dianne Mohnke  
Nanci Mooney  
Betty Moore

Alexis Murray  
Lori Noyer  
Marilyn Nugent  
Beverly Oetzel  
Mary Lind Olson  
Jennifer Pace  
Maggie Papesh  
Candy Parker  
Mary Beth Pirich  
Jennifer Pope  
Kate Powers  
Kristen Pricco  
Janice Reed  
Pamela Ruth  
Lisa Sack  
Nicki Sanford  
Catherine Schwartz  
Patricia Scott  
Nancy Shepard  
Linda Smith  
Marcia Spencer  
Dorothy Spousta  
Katie Strong  
Betsy Svanda  
Mary Debra Van Wieren  
Angela Vlahakis-Bigelow  
Pamela Wakeland  
Mary West  
Lisa Whiting Dobson  
Ana Whitman  
Alex Wiesner  
Barbara Wirtz

# FUND DEVELOPMENT

Our fundraising efforts kicked off in November with the Annual Raffle. Leading up to November, the Annual Fundraiser Committee — Ally Caldwell (chair), De'Shondria Bedenfield and Sarah Hoppie — were busy creating and securing prize packages. We are grateful for the continued support of the Graduate Hotel, Playmakers and Wharton Center, all of which donated prizes last year and again this year. Fabulous prizes from Bare Bliss, Firefly Hot Yoga Barre, Impression 5, Lansing Lugnuts, and Massage Bliss & Beauty round out the rest of the 2024 raffle prizes.

The annual fundraiser concludes Feb, 13, 2024 with the raffle drawing.

## Annual Raffle Winners

### Grand Prize: De De Coy

\$1,500 cash

### 2nd Prize: Barbara Cleland

Health & Wellness Package valued at \$835

Bare Bliss – Gift Certificate – Free 60-Minute Facial & Eyebrow Wax

Massage Bliss & Beauty – Foot Treatment & Massage

\$50 Playmakers Gift Card

Firefly Hot Yoga Barre (4) 1-month unlimited classes

### 3rd Prize: Rebecca Sabin

Night Out Package valued at \$550

Graduate Hotels East Lansing – one-night stay

Wharton Center – (2) tickets

\$50 Restaurant Gift Card

### 4th Prize: Ian Tolleson

On the Town Package valued at \$378

(4) Lansing Lugnuts Baseball Tickets

Impression 5 To Go Gift Basket

Impression 5 (4) Free Admission Passes

Lansing Symphony Orchestra Tickets (2023-2024 season, select performances)

### 5th Prize: Meghann Smith

\$250 Costco Gift Card

Congratulations to all of our winners and members who sold winning tickets!

We sold 1,206 tickets for this year's raffle. Thank you to our active and sustaining members who sold raffle tickets this year. Your efforts and time are greatly appreciated.

Our top 10 ticket sellers were:

Sue Mills: 209

Ana Whitman: 138

Susan Lutz: 100

Laura Stoken: 54

Lori Noyer: 53

Alexis Murray: 40

Ally Caldwell: 32

Stacy Bogard: 30

Jennifer Pope: 30

Carlee Knott: 28

Thank you to all for going above and beyond and making this year a huge success!



Then, we're on to our Fundraising Event — the bRUNch and Walk with League 5K. The committee — Jennifer Pope (co-chair), Alexis Scovel (co-chair), Emily Ballard, Laura Henry, Chrissy LaFountain, Carlie Richards, Lisa Sack, and Ashley Smith are making preparations for our second holding of this event on June 2, 2024. Finalized details will be shared via future e-newsletters.

Thanks to our membership's fundraising efforts, we can support our mission and the following Junior League initiatives: community grants and sponsorships, scholarships, and member development through trainings and conferences.



# MEMBERSHIP

## Membership Support Update

For the 2023-2024 Junior League year, the Membership Support Committee is made up of six committed Junior League members who serve as advisors to and are charged with connecting to their assigned members throughout the year in various mediums — emails, birthday cards, and get-togethers. Shoutout to these fantastic advisors, Stacy Bogard, Alexis Murray, Allison Purtell, and Katie Waskiewicz, who have not only served our communities, but are also doing double duty to act as a resource for our members. As a reminder and word of encouragement to all members — connect with your advisors! You never have to wait for them to check-in with you. They are there to support you in your Junior League career.

## New Member Update

We continue with rolling recruitment for new members joining throughout the year. The New Member Committee has continued to host social events for those interested in the Junior League of Lansing such as the Fall Fun Happy Hour at Horrocks Beer Garden and Game Night at the Lansing Shuffle. Walking into the spring, the New Member Committee will draw on its previous events and continue planning socials as well as expanding on its recruitment strategy. If you know someone who may be interested in joining or attending an informational social, please email [newmember@jllansing.org](mailto:newmember@jllansing.org) or have them visit [jllansing.org/join](http://jllansing.org/join).



Bubbles and Bows

## Membership Updates

If you see the name of someone who may have recently passed away or is no longer a member, we would appreciate you alerting JLL by sending an email to [membership@jllansing.org](mailto:membership@jllansing.org). JLL makes contributions to the Endowment Fund on behalf of Sustainers and Past Presidents who have passed away, and this helps us keep our records up to date if we haven't been notified by family members. Thank you!

# ANNOUNCING THE 2024-2025 JLL LEADERSHIP SLATE

### President-Elect

Lisa Biering (2024-2025)

### Secretary

Allison Purtell (2024-2026)

### Executive Vice President

Alexis Murray (2024-2026)

### Education Vice President

Tricia Brentar (2024-2026)

### Nominating Chair

Leia Cooper-Rigg (2024-2025)

### Nominating Committee

Stacy Bogard (2024-2025)

Andi Earl (2024-2025)

Maggie Louks (2024-2025)



As you read this, we are in the throes of Michigan winter, and I for one am looking forward to spring. In the meantime, I'll report on a few activities that kept us engaged this fall and winter as well as inform you on some upcoming spring events.

On Oct. 30, 38 members attended the Fall Sustainer Luncheon at the Kellogg Center. It's always a nice opportunity to meet new friends and catch up with long-time friends. Plus, the dessert is always decadent. Thanks to the planning committee members — Janine Medler, Becca Kosta, Maggie Louks and Anita Nystrom — for bringing the Sustainers together.

The Chicago Bus Trip was brought back this year after a short hiatus. On Dec. 2, the weather cooperated and we shopped until we dropped. This was my first time participating, but the expertise of the Actives and Sustainers who have gone in the past made this an enjoyable experience. Thanks to the planning committee of Maggie Louks, Janine Medler, Stacy Bogard, Becca Kosta, Susan Lutz, Carrie Waggoner, Cat Schwartz, Chrissy Carr and Marcia Gresens.



The Cookie Exchange/Holiday Open House was another fun event this winter. On Dec. 20, Sustainer Shelley Davis Boyd hosted about 25 Actives and Sustainers in her home. It was a great opportunity to catch up and celebrate some holiday cheer. Thanks to planners Stacy Bogard, Emily Stevens, Lori Noyer and helper Janine Medler for helping make this a “sweet” event.

You may have noticed a theme regarding these events— we had both Actives and Sustainers in attendance — Sustainers are invited to participate in all events/activities.

There are several ways to get involved:

- Participate in volunteer opportunities (formerly DIAD); the need for volunteers is even greater today and this is how JLL is Building Better Communities. Check out the JLL Weekly Email Update for details.
- Share your expertise at a GMM; remember, the JLL mission is to advance women's leadership. Training opportunities are needed.
- Consider taking on an advisor role; this is another way to use your experience to give back.
- Self-nominate for a leadership position; is there a position that you loved when you were Active or always wanted to do? Sustainers can hold these positions.
- Attend new member recruitment events; who better to promote JLL than those with the longest history with JLL? Share the impact JLL had on your career and life and what drives you to renew your membership.
- Attend social events; these are a fun and easy way to connect/reconnect. Invite another Sustainer to join you!
  - Spring Events Being Planned:
    - Spring Sustainer/Past Presidents Luncheon
    - 2nd Annual bRUNch and Walk 5K
    - May Celebration

If you are interested in any of these options, don't hesitate to reach out to me at [SustainingAdvisor@jllansing.org](mailto:SustainingAdvisor@jllansing.org) or 517-803-1130. I'm here to serve as the Sustaining Advisor to the Management Team, which means that I'm also here to serve you.