



JUNIOR LEAGUE OF DULUTH

Women building better communities®

ANNUAL REPORT

2019–2020





Mission:

The Junior League of Duluth 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.

Our Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion

The Junior League welcomes all women who value our Mission. We are committed to inclusive environments of diverse individuals, organizations and communities.

Vision:

The Junior League: Women Around the World as Catalysts for Lasting Community Change

Junior League of Duluth, Inc.

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President's Letter

Dear Junior League of Duluth Members,

In this time of isolation, uncertainty, and heightened concern, it would be reasonable to assume that the Junior League of Duluth has faded into the background, quietly waiting for our world to reopen. After all, we are a volunteer-powered organization and each of us has so much more to focus on right now. But, let me tell you, nothing could be further from the truth. Throughout this organization's history, we have stood strong through world conflicts, contagions, and crises precisely because our members are women of commitment who take appropriate action in times of adversity. This year was no different.



As you will learn in the pages that follow, we have continued to move our mission forward throughout this 99th year of the Junior League of Duluth. Because we believe in the unique power of women's leadership, we invested in our future and the future of our members with training opportunities through The Association of Junior Leagues International, Leadership Duluth, and our General Membership Meetings. Our members were encouraged to reexamine their JLD roles for a thorough update of the JLD Yearbook. Take a Minute Mondays were an opportunity for all of us to learn more about a variety of leadership topics and the ladies throughout history who - despite the many limitations, barriers, biases, and restrictions of their time - got stuff done. Because we don't merely believe in change, we believe **WE ARE THE CHANGE**; our commitment to creating a food secure community was demonstrated through a robust package of community funding grants. We contributed to the ongoing financial stewardship of our League by hosting a wildly successful Festival of Trees Fundraiser. In the midst of this pandemic, we carefully assessed our financial situation and repurposed \$11,000 of no longer useable budget funding into food for our community. Because we believe that a strong sense of fellowship is essential to our well-being as an organization, more social opportunities were added to our calendar - a fun way to expand our circles while building a strong foundation of inclusion. Our members also worked hard to set the stage for a wonderful and unprecedented celebration: the JLD centennial. After all, what are a hundred years without a party?!!!

Looking back on this past year as President of the Junior League of Duluth, I experience a flood of emotions: pride about the efforts of our organization's many accomplishments, admiration about our new leaders who will see us into our new century, and optimism about what JLD's future will hold. But the most overwhelming emotion I feel is gratitude. I am so very grateful for the privilege of leading this organization through the last year of our first century and to have had the honor of working alongside this year's Board of Directors, Leads, Sustainer Representatives, and all members who have dedicated themselves to the mission of JLD. You all took on the challenges, found solutions, and advocated for change. You truly hold the key.

All my best,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lisa B. Plachta".

Lisa B Plachta

LEADERSHIP

President: Lisa Plachta*

President-Elect: Jenn Reed Moses *

President Elect-Elect: Melissa La Tour

Recording Secretary/Arrangements: Kate Patronas*

Treasurer: Ann Chouinard

Sustainer Reps: Linda Basara* and Nicole Widdes*



Community Council

Director: Liz Hanson*

Community Lead: Paula Gudmundson

Community Funding Lead: Natalie Burger

Communications Council

Director: Kathy Jensen*

Internal Communications Lead: Ashley Lindsey

External Communications Lead: Anna Nelson

Web Lead: Jeanine Schroer

Finance Council

Director: Anne Whitworth*

Endowment Chair: Julie Johnson

FOT Lead: Julie Molina

FOT Vendor Lead: Georgina Apodaca

FOT Assistant Lead: Julie Sevick and
Amanda Sutton

Membership Council

Director: Patricia Norman*

Nominating/Placement Lead: Angela Engblom

Nominating/Placement Lead Elect: Liz
Villeneuve

Nominating/Placement Advisors: Julie Sarkela,
Michelle Hargrave and Meagan Avery

Member Development Lead: Madisson Simmons

Training/Ed Lead: Lynnea Emerson

The Sustainer Advisors (formerly Shadow Board)

Board of Directors: Linda Basara* and Nicole Widdes*

Community Council: Kay Gower

Finance Council: Leslie Brunfelt

Membership Council: Angela Dougherty

Planning Council: Sue Murphy

Strategic Planning: Suzanne Rauvola and Laura Weintraub



*** denotes Board of Directors Member**

SUSTAINERS

Sustainer Annual Report

Nicole Widdes and Linda Basara, Sustainer Advisors to the JLD Board

The sustainer representatives to the JLD Board were Nicole Widdes and Linda Basara. The Sustainer Advisory Board included: Kay Gower, Community Council; Sue Murphy, Planning Council; Angela Dougherty, Membership Council; Leslie Brunfelt, Finance Council; Suzanne Rauvola and Laura Weintraub, Strategic Planning Committee. Sustainers also serve on the Centennial Committee.



The Fall Sustainer Gathering was held in the late afternoon on November 6, 2019, at the home of Nicole Widdes. Thirty-five members attended and brought items to be included in the “Kitchen Basket” to be raffled at Festival of Trees. Those in attendance enjoyed lively conversation and updates from the Centennial Committee and President Lisa Plachta.

Sustainers broke and bagged the famous JLD Toffee under the watchful eye and strong leadership of Katie Kuettel on November 14, 2019. Members made quick work of the task at hand, while enjoying festive conversation. Numerous sustainers also volunteered at Festival of Trees the weekend of November 16–17, 2019.



Sustainers attended the Holiday Social on December 17, 2019. Sustainers also attended the monthly “First Wednesdays” lunch at Blackwoods restaurant, and even had a record of 11 attendees one month!

The Spring Sustainer event was not held in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



Sustainers enjoying First Wednesday in February.

Starting in center, clockwise pictured Nicole Widdes, Julie Johnson, Dawn Kregness, Katie Kuettel, Phyllis Young, Linda Basara, Mary Olin, Bobbi Vose, Mary Evans, Mickey Ferguson and Ruth Ann Eaton.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Community Funding

Natalie Burger, Funding Lead, was hard at work this year helping to ensure a smooth Community Funding process. New to the role, she jumped right in to learn her responsibilities and did a wonderful job coordinating Community Funding efforts! The Junior League of Duluth was able to donate \$41,605 to the following organizations and one cause:

Boys & Girls Club of the Northland
CASDA
CHUM
Community Action Duluth
Damiano
Duluth Community Garden Program
Duluth Community School Collaborative
Duluth Farmers Market

Family Forum, Inc.
Great Lakes Aquarium
Lake Superior Community Health Center
Life House
Leadership Duluth (Duluth Opiod)
North Country Ride
PAVSA

JLD responds to COVID-19 pandemic!

We also were proud to announce that an additional \$11,000 was donated to local organizations to help feed the community during the COVID-19 pandemic. Recipients included AICHO, Boys & Girls Club of the Northland, Chum, Damiano, Life House, Ruby's Pantry and Second Harvest Northern Lakes Food Bank.

Community Projects

During the 2018–2019 league year, membership voted on several projects to pursue. The first was to host a Twin Ports Collaborative Gathering and the second was to construct a rooftop garden for Life House. For the first opportunity, we discovered that there were already several similar collaborative gatherings within the Duluth area including the The Food Justice Summit as well as Bridging Health Duluth. The council also considered creating a guidebook to showcase organizations working on food insecurity issues and we were going to ask membership to help craft such a list. Through learning and research, we discovered these lists were already available and our work would have been duplicative. Needless to say, we did support the Food Justice Summit and attended the Bridging Health Duluth community dialogue.



The Junior League of Duluth sponsored the Food Justice Summit

that was held at the DECC on November 4–6, 2019, as a Bronze sponsor with the contribution of \$1,000.

The Junior League of Duluth attended Bridging Health Duluth: Shaping a Healthy Community Event, at Clyde Iron Works on October 23, 2019, to learn more about food insecurity initiatives and to understand more about the community needs assessment.



COMMUNITY COUNCIL

For the second opportunity, Community Council met with Life House to discuss building a roof top garden. We agreed to fund and help them build a food garden on the perimeter of their outdoor space rather than on the roof top. Life House received \$3,360 from the Junior League of Duluth to fund their planters, soil and seed.



Community Council has been working with Community Action Duluth (CAD) and the City of Duluth to finish some of the work at the deep winter greenhouse space. This included assisting CAD with selection of outdoor furniture for the classroom space, finalizing the commemorative brick order along with additional signage, and working with the City of Duluth to gain approval for the brick placement and additional signs. These efforts will complete our work at the deep winter greenhouse.



Community Council coordinated several Done in a Meeting events during fall 2019. We organized a can opener drive for CHUM, collected candy for Northern Expressions Arts Cooperative, and assembled diaper and wipe kits while onsite at Life House for the October GMM.



Paula Gudmundson was busy this year helping to coordinate both Done in a Meeting/Done in a Day opportunities for League. JLD members volunteered at WDIO for the Trees of Hope phone bank and helped students at Lincoln Park Middle school prepare healthy snacks.

Thank you to the 2019–2020 Community Council for a great year!!

Community Council took the opportunity to meet and connect each month during the league year to weigh in on Community Council business. Members included Liz Hanson, Director; Natalie Burger, Funding Lead; and members Addie Smith, Allison Garver, Correne Jensen and Susan Johnson. Sustainer Representative, Kay Gower, joined mid-year to help with community funding decisions and other council business. Thanks to Addie Smith for coordinating meetings each month.

This was a great group of women to connect with each month. We talked about Community Council business, but we also connected personally, shared meals and had some fun too! Community Council took great advantage of the JLD office space as it is shaping up to be a great meeting space. Community Council stayed close to the strategic planning efforts and did a nice job driving community projects and community funding. We had fun with our "Family Fun" basket that was raffled off at Festival of Tress this last year.



MEMBERSHIP COUNCIL

New Member Development

This year, the Membership Council decided to hold three New Member Socials and one New Member Class to focus on member recruitment in the Twin Ports. The New Member Socials were promoted through social media, website, and via print and electronic newsletters. Trish Norman, Director of Membership, and Madisson Simmons, Membership Lead, led the training classes for new members.

Fall New Member Social: The Fall New Member social was held in October at Barkers Island Inn in Superior, Wisconsin. About 15 were in attendance, with a mix of current members and potential members.

Spring New Member Social: The Spring New Member socials were held in January and February at Lyric Kitchen Bar in Duluth, Minnesota. About 20 were in attendance in February, with a mix of current members and potential members as a winter storm was bearing down on us. The Spring New Member class was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Training and Education

Training and Education Lead, Lynnea Emerson, was primarily responsible for coordinating training and education speakers and opportunities.

September: Jenn Moses – Strategic Planning Bootcamp; reviewed mission, vision and values of new committee focused on strategic planning. Membership broke out into placement groups for discussion on the following:

- 1) What topics or matters do you hope we can address during the strategic planning process?
- 2) What do you consider to be our strengths?
- 3) What do you consider areas in which we need to improve?
- 4) What should we do differently or change in order to remain a relevant and effective organization?
- 5) How do you envision the League in 3-5 years? How would we be different from where we are now?

October: Maude Dornfeld – Life House overview

January: Ann Harrington – Compassionate Collaborative Communication

April: Community Grant recipient information exchange

March: canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic



MEMBERSHIP COUNCIL

Nominating and Placement

The Junior League of Duluth sent Melissa La Tour (President Elect-Elect) and Elizabeth Hanson (Director of Community) to Organizational Development Institute in Grapevine Texas, in October 2019, and Madisson Simmons to Organizational Development Institute in Orlando, Florida, in February 2020. The Junior League of Duluth also sponsored Melissa La Tour for 2019–2020 Leadership Duluth class.

The Nominating and Placement Team developed a Membership Concern Form to allow members to express concerns or suggestions to the Nominating Placement Lead and Lead Elect anonymously. Nominating and Placement also developed templates for the following documents placed on the member website: JLD Position Nomination Form (combined the self-nomination and other nomination form into one form), JLD Board and Nominating Placement Voting Ballot, JLD Placement, JLD Advisor/Advisee Placement, and JLD Exit Interview.

Membership Awards

During the year, we recognize the accomplishment of members with different awards. The Volunteer of the Month award is given to members who have gone above and beyond in their contributions either to JLD or to the community. The Busy Bee award is presented to members who have been instrumental in accomplishing their council's goals.

Volunteers of the Month

September: Melissa La Tour

October: Anna Nelson and Kelly Ohman

November: Gina Apodaca, Julie Molina, and Amanda Sutton

January: Natalie Burger

Busy Bee Awards

February: Natalie Burger, Paula Gudmundson, Addie Smith, Allison Garver, Correne Jensen and Susan Johnson

March: Angela Engblom, Liz Villeneuve, Julie Sarkela and Michelle Hargrave

April: Jeanine Schroer, Anna Nelson and Ashley Lindsey



PLANNING COUNCIL

Strategic Plan

At the March Board meeting, a new strategic plan was adopted. This plan incorporated feedback from several months of input, and identified 5 values:

1. **Inclusion** – We welcome all women and are committed to creating an inclusive environment for all members. We value each member's efforts to maintain balance in her life and value friendships as we support one another.
2. **Education** – We value education for our members and the community, including education about community issues, leadership, and League.
3. **Legacy** – We celebrate the 100 years Junior League of Duluth has served our community, and work to create a lasting legacy for the next 100 years. We value the spirit of volunteerism and leadership in ourselves and each other.
4. **Community** – We embrace a sense of community, both internal and external, to build relationships and improve our service to others.
5. **Accountability** – We value our organization. We commit to accountability in our actions and strive to be transparent with our financial resources, and to measure and communicate our impact on the community.

Based on these values, as well as the Mission and Vision of JLD, the following Strategic Framework was adopted:

The Junior League of Duluth will create stability and growth. JLD will work to create a league that continues our legacy while adapting to the needs of women today. This includes proactively identifying member needs, providing leadership training and opportunities, and strengthening existing opportunities.

The Junior League of Duluth will benefit the Twin Ports community. Working with community partners and AJLI, JLD will strive to create lasting community change and provide meaningful volunteer opportunities for our members.

The Junior League of Duluth will ensure organizational excellence. JLD is committed to accountability, financial strength, and good governance. We will track and measure outcomes, increase brand awareness, and seek to learn and adopt additional organizational best practices.

Training

2020 AJLI Winter Leadership Conference was held in Phoenix, Arizona, and attended by President Elect Jenn Moses and Community Director Elizabeth Hanson.

2020 Annual Conference was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The AJLI Annual Business Meeting was held virtually on Saturday, May 16.



PLANNING COUNCIL

Office Space

In 2019, JLD moved into new office space at 2711 W Superior Street. Over the course of 2019–20, additions to the office space included new office furniture and Junior League artwork. Every Council Director has a set of keys and the ability to schedule office meetings in our new space!

Yearbook

A comprehensive review of the Yearbook led to changes throughout all sections, and the entire Yearbook was reprinted for all members in fall 2019.

Planning Council Events

- Summer Leadership Training, June 25, 2019
- Holiday Social, Pier B, December 17, 2019

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Community Gifting Ceremony was held during a virtual April GMM on April 21, 2020, while the Annual Dinner, scheduled for May 19, 2020, was cancelled.



COMMUNICATIONS COUNCIL

For 2019–2020, the Communications Council focused on several aspects of the strategic plan:

- **Enhance Organizational Outreach**

- Partnered with Lake Superior Area Realtors to host the Duluth Chamber's Finally Fridays event held on August 2, 2019
- Co-sponsored Food Justice Summit, November 4–6, 2019, and House of Hearts bonspiel event, March 19, 2020 (latter event postponed until 2021)
- Arranged for and promoted JLD membership attendance at Duluth Chamber's Holiday Party at Greysolon Ballroom, December 3, 2019
- Incorporated Instagram into social media platform



- **Increase Member Engagement**

- Sponsored JLD members' participation in AJLI's Digital Advertising Bootcamp
- Used Facebook and E-lights to communicate information on AJLI resources available to members including training opportunities, Webinar Wednesdays and COVID-19 crisis webinars
- Completed AJLI's Every Member Counts demographic survey campaign
- Promoted new member socials on multiple platforms included web, social media (FB impressions, 1.3K), online newspaper, hard copy newspaper, Chamber electronic newsletters (4K recipients), and also to membership via website and social media

In addition to the strategic plan goals, the Communications Council also completed:

**League
Lights**

- E-Lights, emailed monthly to all members, September–May
- League Lights, published in winter, and mailed to all members
- “Take a Minute Monday” messages from the President emailed to all members
- Reformatted yearbook to save resources and arranged printing the full yearbook for all members
- Press releases announcing 2018–19 award winners, 2019–2020 board, and 2019–20 community funding grant awards
- Festival of Trees: promoted event on social media through FOT event page (reach, 41.8K; responses, 3.4K) and “12 Days of FOT” campaign (engagements, 1.1K); promoted sponsors; assisted FOT committee with television appearance, signs and flyers; set up FOT volunteer shifts on website in addition to managing vendor applications, and sponsorship acknowledgment
- Additional promotions included DIADs, DIAMs, New Member Socials, New Member Classes, and various AJLI social media campaigns
- Ongoing internal/external website content updates included League Lights, E-lights, Annual Report, JLD award winners, 2019–20 placements, community funding applications, directory/member status changes, Holiday Social RSVPs, dues collection processes and council page revisions
- COVID-19 communication including AJLI's COVID-19 Communications Package, cancellation of JLD events including GMM, New Member Training Class and all in-person Council, Committee, and social meetings on multiple platforms including email, website, social media, and news media cancellation list; drafted “The Junior League of Duluth Statement on COVID-19” and posted to the external website and social media pages



ENDOWMENT

The Dale Heimbach Wheeler Memorial Fund was established in 1983 in memory of Dale, who died while an active member of the Junior League of Duluth (JLD). Management of the Dale Heimbach Wheeler Memorial Fund is the responsibility of the Endowment Fund Committee.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE DALE HEIMBACH WHEELER MEMORIAL FUND (Received 3/31/19 to 3/31/20)

Beth Ahrens in memory of Sherry DeWulf
Katie Kuettel
Tracy Morton in memory of Andrea Theisen

Jennifer Webb
Cathy Wolff

The JLD Endowment fund was initially funded by a devise of the estate of Margaret Mitchell, a sustainer of the JLD, and was established shortly thereafter in 1992.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE JLD ENDOWMENT FUND (Received 3/31/19 to 3/31/20)

Meagan Avery
Lail Beste-Mickelson
Delia Bujold
Ann Chouinard
Angela Dougherty
Denise Bussa in honor of Lynnea Emerson
Ann Donovan in memory of Charlotte Moyer
Lynnea Emerson in honor of Lisa Plachta
Angela Engblom in honor of Marianne Patton
Kay Gower in honor of Julie Johnson
Betsy Harmon in memory of Judy Salyards
Peggy Hayes in memory of Charlotte Moyer
Julie Johnson in memory of Judy Salyards
JLD Sustainers in honor of Jennifer Berry, Tracy Morton
& Kelly Pavlovich

Mickey Ferguson
Michelle Hargrave
Kathleen Jensen
Correne Jenson
Katie Kuettel

Jenn Moses
Lisa Plachta
Suzanne Rauvola
Jeanine Schroer
Brenda Sprout

Carolyn Sundquist
Debbie Swenson
Jennifer Webb
Nicole Widdes
Cathy Wolff

Dawn Kregness in memory of Judy Salyards
Lisa Mandelin in memory of Rhona L. Wetherille
JoAnn Mattson in honor of JLD sisters
Rita Rosenberger in honor of Patty Salo Downs
Barbara Sheedy in memory of Michael Sienko
Debbie Swenson in honor of Julie Johnson
Gail Tate in memory of Lois Schipper
Cary Thompson Gilbert in honor of Mickey Ferguson

The Junior League of Duluth Endowment Fund Committee is proud to have awarded a total of \$3,921 from the Dale Heimbach Wheeler Memorial Fund to the Lake Superior Community Health Center, Leadership Duluth/Opioid Project, and North Country RIDE. An amount of \$13,684 from the Endowment Fund was gifted to the Boys & Girls Club of the Northland, CHUM, Community Action Duluth, Duluth Community Garden Program, Duluth Farmers' Market, Great Lakes Aquarium, and the Lake Superior Community Health Center.

King's Daughters Bequest Society was established in 1999 by the Endowment Fund Committee to honor those who have made a significant commitment to the future of JLD by remembering us in their will, trust, life insurance policy or other estate plan. The society's membership includes Sherry DeWulf, Angela Dougherty, Kay Gower, Katie Kuettel, Margaret Mitchell, Mary Olin and Mollie Thibodeau.



Many thanks to the 2019–2020 JLD Endowment Committee for sharing their knowledge and wisdom over the past year. The committee consisted of Mickey Ferguson, Ann Chouinard, Lynnea Emerson, Correne Jenson, Julie Johnson, Katie Kuettel, Lisa Plachta, Debbie Swenson and Anne Whitworth!

FINANCE COUNCIL

Fiscal Year 2019–2020

	Actual	Annual Budget
<u>Year-to-Date Income*</u>		
Contributions - Let It Grow	—	—
Arrangements	\$1,320	\$3,250
Interest and Dividend Revenue	\$33	—
Membership Dues	\$10,950	\$11,595
Festival of Trees	\$87,297	\$68,000
Other Fundraising Revenue	\$15	—
Total Income	\$99,615	\$82,845
<u>Year-to-Date Expenses*</u>		
Operations	\$20,853	\$28,015
Planning Council Expenses	\$4,431	\$11,550
Community Council Expenses	\$25,093	\$25,150
Finance Council Expenses	\$7,456	\$15,870
Membership Council Expenses	\$5,199	\$13,050
Communications Council Expenses	\$5,222	\$6,770
Total Expenses	\$68,254	\$100,405
Change in Net Assets	\$31,361	\$(17,560)

*through March 31, 2020

	April-2020	April-2019
<u>Current Assets</u> (as of 3/31/20)		
Republic Bank Checking – General Fund	\$98,341	\$50,634
Republic Bank Savings – Let It Grow	\$11,673	\$11,687
U.S. Bank – Money Market /Mutual Funds	\$79,266	\$78,241
U.S. Bank Trust – Endowment/DHW	\$295,953	\$326,311
	\$485,233	\$466,873



	2019	2018
<u>Income</u>		
Sponsorship Revenue	\$3,000	\$1,750
Toffee Revenue	\$10,330	\$11,333
Trees Revenue	\$895	\$2,352
Raffle Revenue	\$2,204	\$1,964
Gate Revenue	\$28,765	\$26,658
Vendor Revenue	\$64,588	\$60,107
Miscellaneous/Other Revenue	\$11	\$1,005
Total Income	\$109,793	\$105,169
<u>Expenses</u>		
Toffee Expenses	\$6,697	\$6,628
Trees Expense	\$1,008	\$1,628
Vendor Expense		
FOT Admin Expense	\$13,892	\$13,259
Promotion Expense	\$887	\$1,907
Miscellaneous FOT Expense	\$12	\$351
Total Expenses	\$22,496	\$23,773
Net Income	\$87,297	\$81,396



