



# ANNUAL REPORT

2024 / 2025



Empowering  
**Women**  
To Lead

# ANNUAL REPORT CONTRIBUTORS

*Kristine Shoemaker & Ela Hernández, Co-Editors*

*Ava Habif & Vanessa Blanco-Baños, Contributors*

*Photography by Haidy Lu Jensen Photography & SmashPixel Studios*



## THE ASSOCIATION OF JUNIOR LEAGUES INTERNATIONAL

The Junior League of Miami, Inc. is one of 296 Leagues in The Association of Junior Leagues International, Inc. Founded in 1901 by New Yorker and social activism pioneer Mary Harriman, the Junior Leagues are charitable nonprofit organizations of women, developed as civic leaders, making a demonstrable impact on their communities. To this day, AJLI Leagues and members work at the forefront of social reform, tackling the toughest and most critical issues of the day for the purpose of enhancing the social, cultural, and political fabric of civil society.

For more information, please visit: [www.thejuniorleagueinternational.org](http://www.thejuniorleagueinternational.org).

# A message from the President and Executive Vice President



Dear Members, Donors, and Partners,

As we reflect on the past year, we are filled with immense pride and gratitude for the incredible achievements of the Junior League of Miami. Our collective efforts have made a profound impact on our community, and we are honored to share some of the highlights from this remarkable year.

This year, we hosted a wide array of events that brought our members together, strengthened our ties with the community, and developed our members into leaders. Each event showcased the spirit of collaboration and generosity that defines Junior League of Miami.

This year saw the third year of a successful grants program and new creative partnerships with other nonprofit organizations. We also exercised good governance, completing an audit and writing a new strategic plan. This year we also began several new projects, like our new nonprofit governance training program, and a new educational grant for women living in Inn Transition housing to resume studies.

As we end this first century of Junior League of Miami, our commitment to our mission of advancing women's leadership through meaningful volunteer work, community collaboration, and training has never been stronger. We extend our deepest gratitude to our members, donors, and partners for your unwavering support. Your contributions have been instrumental in driving our mission forward and enabling us to expand our reach.

As we celebrate these accomplishments, we are also looking forward to an exciting future. Our Centennial celebrations are just around the corner, and we are poised to continue our legacy of service and leadership. We are deeply grateful to you for your unwavering commitment to our mission. Together, we are making a difference in the lives of countless individuals and families in Miami.

Thank you for your dedication, passion, and belief in the power of community. Here's to another year of impact, growth, and transformation.

Yours in Service,

*Ava Habif*

*Vanessa Blanco-Baños*

**Ava Habif**  
*President, 2024-2025*

**Vanessa Blanco-Baños**  
*Executive Vice-President, 2024-2025*

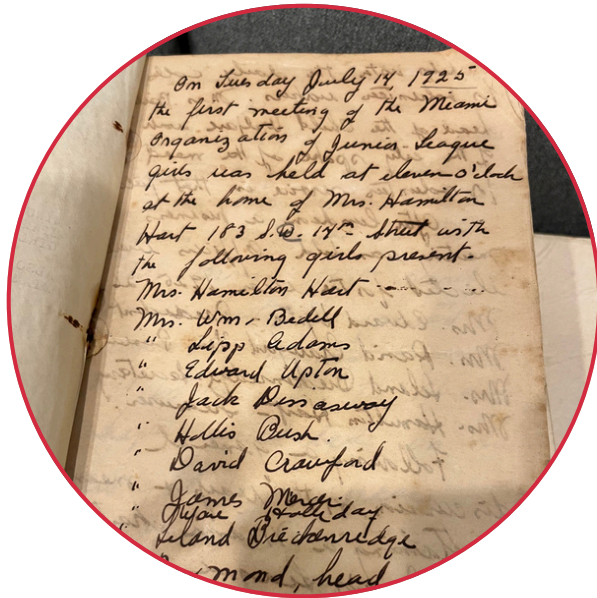


**Our vision**  
is to empower Miami's women, children and families to conquer tomorrow's challenges and to build a united community.

Throughout our 99-year history, the women of Junior League of Miami have planted the seeds for many programs that are still part of our community today, including the Children's Home Society, The Frost Museum of Science, and Inn Transition.



**Our mission**  
is to advance women's leadership for meaningful community impact through volunteer action, collaboration, and training.  
Our purpose is exclusively educational and charitable.



**1926**  
 Founded Junior League of Miami, with a focus area of supporting women and children at risk

**1931**  
 Established Junior League Children's Home (now Children's Home Society of Florida)

**1932**  
 Opened Junior League Thrift Shop (eventually Encore Shop)

**1949**  
 Established Junior Museum of Miami (now Phillip and Patricia Frost Museum of Science)

**1973**  
 Launched involvement with Court Watch

**1980**  
 Established Guardian Ad Litem program

**1985**  
 Started JLM Scholarship for M-DCPS High School Seniors

**1990**  
 Opened Inn Transition North

**1995**  
 Purchased landmark Coral Gables building to serve as headquarters

**2002**  
 Opened Inn Transition South

**2004**  
 Established Junior League of Miami Foundation

**2008**  
 Launched Paws to Read, a therapy dog program

**2020**  
 Established Diversity Equity & Inclusion Task Force

**2021**  
 Established new focus area to reduce food insecurity

**2022**  
 Established Grants Program

**2024**  
 Launched Centennial Futures Scholarship for women at Inn Transition

**2026**  
 Celebrate Junior League of Miami's Centennial

# GOVERNANCE

The Board of Directors is the governing body of the Junior League of Miami. It sets the strategic vision, practices governance and fiduciary oversight, and sets the policies of the organization. This year, the Board released the 2025-2029 strategic plan, focusing on:

**Palpable Community Impact | Enhanced Membership Engagement | Deeper Learning | Uplifted Visibility | Operational Stability**

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

<b>President</b> <i>Ava Habif</i>	<b>Executive Vice President</b> <i>Vanessa Blanco-Baños</i>	<b>Bylaws/Parliamentarian</b> <i>Rhosean Scott-Hancock</i>
<b>President Elect</b> <i>Michelle Vidal</i>	<b>Executive Vice President Elect</b> <i>Kayla Cartwright Miranda</i>	<b>Chief of Staff</b> <i>Ela Hernández</i>
<b>Recording Secretary</b> <i>Taylor Bailey</i>	<b>Director-at-Large</b> <i>Felicia Serano-Shtivelman</i>	<b>Past-President Advisor</b> <i>Ceci Slesnick</i>
<b>Treasurer</b> <i>Christina Ludovici</i>	<b>Nominating Chair</b> <i>Meg DeMilia</i>	

The Executive Management Team communicates the Board of Directors' strategic vision and executes on it, overseeing day-to-day operations and our volunteer committees. This year, we increased new membership, retention, launched a new training program, and prepared for our centennial events.

## EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM

<b>Executive Vice President</b> <i>Vanessa Blanco-Baños</i>	<b>Vice President, Financial Stewardship</b> <i>Faequa Khan</i>	<b>Vice President, Marketing</b> <i>Kristine Shoemaker</i>
<b>Executive Vice President-Elect</b> <i>Kayla Cartwright Miranda</i>	<b>Vice President, Fund Development</b> <i>Maddie Guillard</i>	<b>Vice President, Membership Engagement</b> <i>Catherine Manfra</i>
<b>Vice President, Community Engagement</b> <i>Anna Luthra</i>	<b>Vice President, Leadership Development</b> <i>Kayla Cartwright Miranda</i>	<b>Advisor</b> <i>Laura Van Gorden</i>



# COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD

The Community Advisory Board advises the President on best practices, community needs, and makes recommendations to the Junior League of Miami.

**Sarah Nesbitt Artecona**

*Chair of Girl Scouts of Tropical Florida; Junior League of Miami Sustaining Member*

**Andria Dickinson**

*Junior League of Miami Past-President*

**David Lawrence Jr.**

*Chair of The Children's Movement of Florida; Retired Publisher of the Miami Herald*

**Patrick Morris**

*Director of Civic & Philanthropic Partnerships, Office of the Mayor of Miami-Dade County*

**Tammy Reed**

*District Director, Communications, MDCPS; Junior League of Miami Sustaining Member*

**Vanessa Tinsley**

*Executive Director and Founder, Bridge to Hope*

**Cynthia Thiry**

*Assistant Vice President, Health Equity Baptist Health South Florida*

**Natalia Zea**

*Chief Public Policy and Community Engagement Officer, The Children's Trust*

**Member Emeritus: Mark Trowbridge**

# JUNIOR LEAGUE OF MIAMI FOUNDATION

*Celebrating 20 years of Impact*

The Junior League of Miami Foundation was established 20 years ago as a separate non-profit to ensure the financial future of the Junior League of Miami. From an initial endowment of \$345,000 to more than \$8 million in assets under management today, the Foundation has distributed over \$454,000 to the Junior League of Miami.

## **JLM FOUNDATION, INC. BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

### **OFFICERS**

#### **President**

*Maria Figueroa Byrd*

#### **Vice President**

*Catherine Grieve*

#### **Secretary**

*Marianne Devine*

#### **Treasurer**

*Ann Goldman*

#### **Assistant Treasurer**

*Marcia Koo*

#### **JLMF Immediate Past- President**

*Katie Lane Arriola*

### **DIRECTORS**

*Michele Battle*

*Shannon Egan*

*Ava Habif*

*Susan Lerner*

*Betty Lopez-Castro*

*Christina Ludovici*

*Amber Seidle-Lazo*

*JoEllen Strump*

*Laura Van Gorden*

*Michelle Vidal*

*Bonita Whytehead*



Among the Foundation's 660 donors, 155  
have contributed over  
\$1,926 to join the 1926 Society.

Eleven Hope Society donors have also  
made testamentary gifts to the  
Foundation.

# HEADQUARTERS

The Junior League of Miami Headquarters is a City of Coral Gables Landmark Building designed by George Fink in 1923. It was built by George Merrick's Coral Gables Construction and Supply Company in 1925, and was the first commercial building constructed in Coral Gables.

It had been used as a haberdashery, a liquor store, a restaurant, and a hotel before the Junior League of Miami purchased the property from the Sons of the American Revolution in 1995. Junior League members lovingly renovated and restored it to use as our headquarters, and today we proudly use it to host leadership trainings, volunteer events, socials, and meetings.

## **JUNIOR LEAGUE OF MIAMI HEADQUARTERS, INC. BOARD**

### **President**

*Courtney Guzman*

### **Secretary**

*Kristy Quiros*

### **Treasurer**

*Natacha Metayer*

# YEAR IN REVIEW

25,000  
volunteer hours logged



Provided over  
30,000  
diapers in collaboration for  
Hurricane Relief efforts

99 years  
serving  
Miami



98  
mothers  
and children  
served at  
Inn Transition



\$104,700  
awarded in  
Community  
Grants





more than  
**70** training  
opportunities  
offered to  
members

over  
**\$200,000**  
raised for  
Programming



**45** Community  
Shifts  
completed

over  
**6,000**  
individuals served  
through our  
community  
partnerships and  
Done In A Day  
projects

Connected with  
**50+**  
local  
organizations



# SIGNATURE PROJECTS

*Fully managed by Junior League of Miami volunteers.*

## **Inn Transition**

Volunteers offer life skills training, job fairs, social community events, and diaper deliveries, empowering families to build independent, violence-free futures.

**120 volunteers | 98 mothers and children served | 9 events**

*Inn Transition is a gated community for survivors of domestic violence to live with their minor children for up to two years. Inn Transition has been our flagship project since 1990, with this location opening in 2002.*

## **Done in a Day**

This year, volunteers: made and distributed kits and baskets, planted gardens, facilitated author's corners, mentorship days, restocked comfort closets, prepared and served food, and loaded diapers.

**143 volunteers | 1,800 served | 16 events**

*Done in a Day assists local organizations with short-term events within the League's focus areas: food insecurity, homelessness, family violence, children and women's health, early childhood education, and foster care.*

# COMMUNITY PARTNERS

*Local nonprofits partner with the Junior League of Miami for up to three years.*

## **Uplift Literacy**

Volunteers run literacy fairs and activities, engage with children and families, and provide educational materials and snacks.

**31 volunteers | 177 families served | 277 children served | 5 events**

*Uplift Literacy's mission is to maximize lifelong success for children by improving their reading proficiency.*

## **Food Rescue US**

Volunteers transfer excess fresh food from grocers, restaurants, and other sources to various locations around the County, distributing it to individuals who are food insecure through free farmers markets.

**131 volunteers | 4,430 individuals served | 9 events**

*Food Rescue US engages volunteers and food donors to directly transfer nutritious excess food to social service agencies and through free farmers markets, serving people experiencing food insecurity.*

# COMMUNITY GRANTS



**2025-2026 community grants awarded to:**

Children's Bereavement Center  
**\$25,000**

EatWell Exchange  
**\$25,000**

Chapman Partnership  
**\$15,000**

Voices for Children  
**\$15,000**

Kristi House  
**\$10,000**

Branches  
**\$14,700**



# Our community grants program has supported over 21 organizations since 2023 with over \$320,000 of funding

## **Feeding South Florida's School Pantry Program**

\$25,000 granted in 2024-2025 to start a high school pantry program, to be run by students, provide stable pantry items and fresh vegetables, fruits at a public high school in Miami, enabling after school access to food, in an accessible and dignified way.

## **Uplift Literacy Reading Pals and Literacy programs**

\$18,000 granted in 2024-2025 to support family literacy events that include take-home books, educational supplies, and literacy tips for parents; and literacy tutoring by trained volunteers and background checks for those volunteers.

## **Miami Diaper Bank Procurement and Distribution**

\$18,000 granted in 2024-2025 to help purchase and distribute diapers to food banks, community health centers, homeless shelters, youth and family service agencies, and to pop-up and mobile diaper distributions.

## **Belafonte Tacolcy Center Gardening Program**

\$15,700 granted in 2024-2025 to build sustainable community gardens, enhance gardening skills within our community through lessons for sixty children, and ensure long-term success with professional upkeep.

## **Zoo Miami Foundation Girls' STEM Camp**

\$10,000 granted in 2024-2025 to create a one of a kind summer program, "Eco Explorers," for middle school girls interested in STEM to explore Zoo Miami. Students participated in hands-on team activities like water data collection, slough slogs, dip netting, species data collection and invasive fish dissection. Students connected with specialists and experts, and presented their own research on a topic of their choosing. This camp was designed to encourage women in STEM and to create female leaders who are passionate about education and the environment.

## Centennial Futures Educational Grant

This new program is for adult residents of Inn Transition, a transitional housing program for survivors of domestic violence and homelessness supported by our member volunteers. Only residents of Inn Transition are eligible to apply, and funds are distributed directly to the institution they are enrolled at.

This new program will allow residents of Inn Transition to pursue a college degree, vocational training, or a certificate program. This grant will provide women with the resources needed to resume education, and help them achieve self-sufficiency and economic independence. This grant is intended to support students who demonstrate perseverance, excellence, and commitment while pursuing their education,

*“My experiences have deepened my empathy. This grant will make a difference in my life by allowing me to pursue professional goals and provide a better life for my children. “*

The 2024-2025 awardee of this program is a 28-year-old, single mother of three children who survived domestic violence and lives at Inn Transition. She works part-time and is full-time student. She is pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Nursing.

# SCHOLARSHIPS

## Uppaluri Family Foundation Scholarship

The Uppaluri Family Scholarship is a four-year scholarship established in 2015 by Rao and Anita Uppaluri to support deserving high school students in their pursuit of higher education.



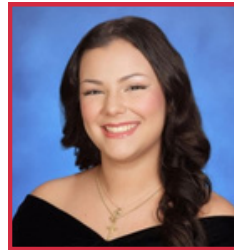
**Isabella Garcia**, Miami Arts Studio @ Zelda Glazer 6-12

## Kathryn Menke Miller Scholarship

The scholarship was established in 1985 in memory of Kathryn Menke Miller, a Junior League member who was the “epitome of a hardworking, caring, and loving volunteer” whose greatest accomplishments were assisting our community’s children and her dedication to our public education system.



**Cecilia Ise**, School for  
Advanced Studies-Wolfson



**Annabelle Gonzalez**, Miami  
Southridge Senior High School

## Mary Bradley Shafey Nursing Scholarship

This scholarship was established in 2020 by Mary Bradley Shafey, a Registered Nurse and Past-President of the Junior League of Miami Foundation, to recognize a deserving young woman in our community who shares the same perspective of nursing as both an art and a science and who intends to enroll in an undergraduate nursing program.



**Dejaya Hardy**, Miami Norland Senior High School

# Our 24th annual Women Who Make a Difference Luncheon grossed \$158K+ in revenue

Presented by:

**ELEMIS**  
LONDON



Our 2025 honorees were four outstanding women who carry out the Junior League of Miami mission: promoting volunteerism, developing the potential of women, and improving communities.



**Amanda G. Altman,**  
CEO,  
Kristi House  
Past President,  
Junior League  
of Miami



**Mayor Daniella  
Levine Cava,**  
Mayor,  
Miami-Dade  
County



**Tracy Wilson  
Mourning,**  
Founder,  
Honey Shine  
Inc.



**Karen  
Throckmorton,**  
Sustainer,,  
Junior League  
of Miami

# TRAINING & ADVOCACY

Junior League of Miami led two signature training programs this year: Speaker's Bureau, focused on public speaking about food insecurity, and a new program, Advancing Nonprofit Governance Certification. Members also enjoyed trainings held by other organizations, including the AJLI Training Collaborative.

Our Advocacy Committee works with Leagues across Florida to educate our members and advocate for legislation. This year we completed a Done-In-A-Meeting writing letters to representatives after a panel about our advocacy actions.

8 new speakers certified | 13 members certified in governance |  
70+ trainings



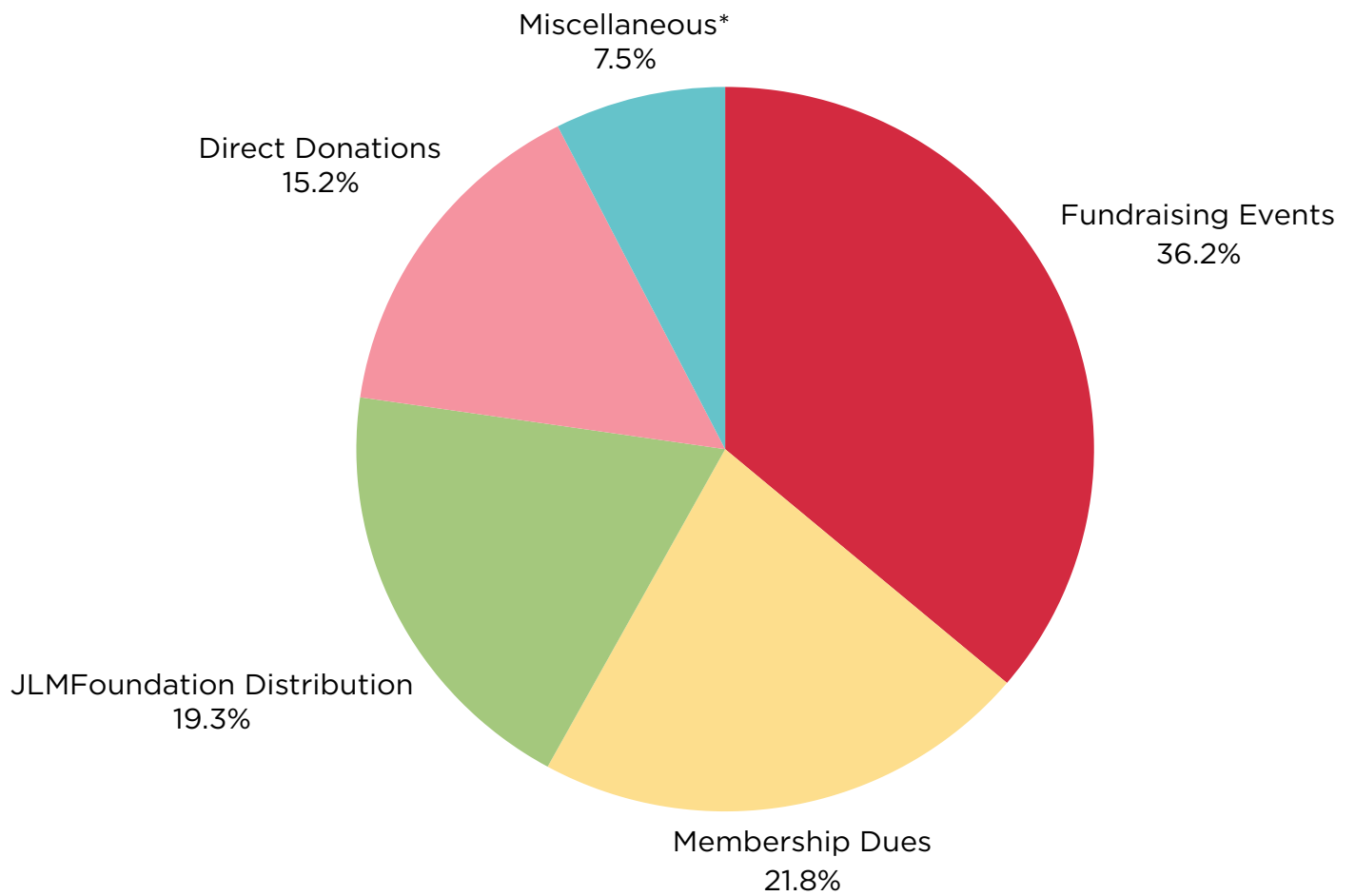
# NEW MEMBER PROGRAM

Through a series of requirements, new members were introduced to our foundational values of leadership development and volunteerism. The new member experience fostered personal growth and a deeper understanding of the League's mission and connection to active and sustaining members for our 105+ new members.

105 new members | 89 newly-active members | 35 members  
accelerated onboarding

# FINANCIALS

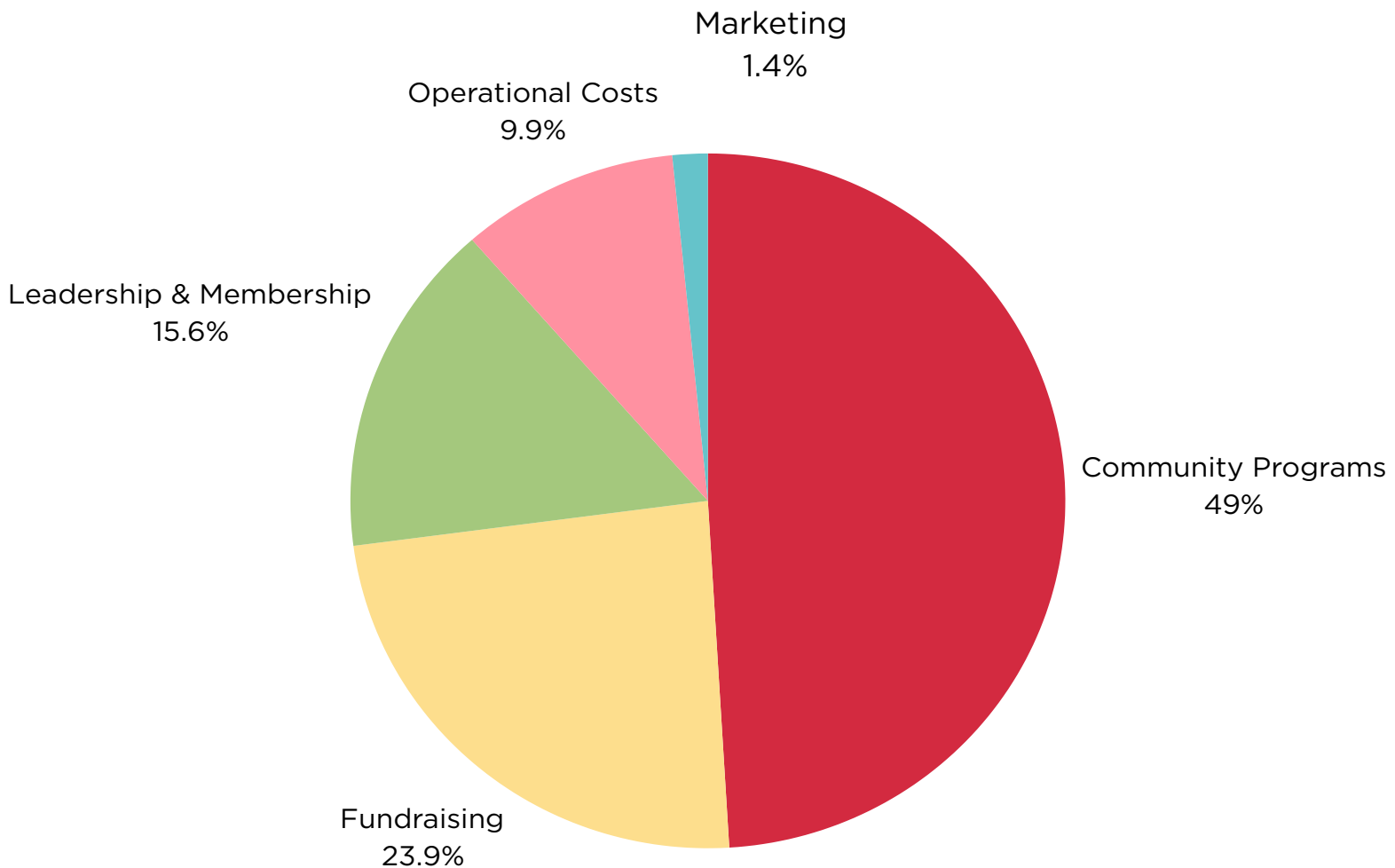
## REVENUE



\*Miscellaneous revenue includes Centennial

The Junior League of Miami raised over \$410,000 for the June 1, 2024 through May 31, 2025 fiscal year, as of April 30, 2025. Budgeted expenditures for this same period totaled approximately \$377,000, the majority of which goes towards community impact and leadership development.

## EXPENSES



# DONORS

A special thank you to our over 500 donors. We could not do all we do without your generous support!

## **\$30,000+**

Junior League of Miami  
Foundation

## **\$15,000-\$29,999**

Elemis

## **\$10,000-\$14,999**

Karen Throckmorton

## **\$5,000-\$9,999**

Commissioner Marlene Bastien  
Ava and Maurice Habif  
Beatriz Lopez-Castro  
Publix Charities  
Mary Bradley Shafey  
The Uppaluri Family Foundation

## **In-Kind Donations**

305 Hive  
Bay 13  
Belmont Village  
Betty Lopez Castro  
Bloom Bar  
Branches, Inc.  
Coconut Groove  
Coral Gables Magazine  
Debbie Korge  
El Carajo  
Elemis  
FIU Herbert Wertheim  
College of Medicine

Grant Thornton  
Jae's Jewelers  
JoEllen Strump  
Kendra Scott  
Kerastase  
KLA Schools of Coral  
Gables  
Kristen Reyes  
League of Women Voters  
Lynn Kerdyk

Miami Chains and Co.  
Miami Diaper Bank  
Miami Rum Club  
Miriam Tapia  
Place of Aroma  
Rock Orange  
Sarita Baigorri  
Simply Bails  
Sip Channe  
Southern Glazers  
Wine 41

## **\$1,000-\$4,999**

Katie Lane Arriola  
Baptist Health  
Ballast Construction  
Bill Seidle's Auto Group  
Laetitia Blanchard  
Vanessa Blanco-Baños  
Susan Bonner  
City National Bank  
Citco Construction  
First American Bank  
Sue Garcia  
Cheryl Goldstein  
Marissa A. Haskett  
Jana and Andrew Hertz  
Sally Heyman  
Ela Hernández  
Commissioner Eileen Higgins  
Peggy Hudson  
Faequa Khan  
Lavender Greenberg Estate  
Planning and Probate Law  
Melissa Lustbader, Founder, üüps  
The Martorella Family Foundation  
Kendra Scott  
Bibi Cruz-Ledón Sears  
Laura Van Gorden  
Michelle Vidal  
Dale Webb  
Whole Foods Market

## **\$500-\$999**

Julia Rea Bianchi  
Cherie Bosarge-Dutton  
Maria Byrd  
Stacy Bolduc  
Natasha Carr  
Marianne Devine  
Andria Dickinson  
Maddie Guillard  
Eric Haas  
Rhosean Scott-Hancock  
Anne Helliwell  
Emma Herman  
Lisa and Michael Herman  
Erin Knight  
Dev Bala Lefferdink  
Anna Luthra  
J. McLaughlin  
Kristie Milam  
Miami Foundation  
Helen Picard  
Powell Family Foundation  
Carter Sox  
Andres Tejidor  
Charles and Stephanie  
Throckmorton  
Christy Vidal  
Detra Shaw-Wilder



305-443-0160



713 Biltmore Way  
Coral Gables, FL



@JuniorLeagueMiami

[www.jlmiami.org](http://www.jlmiami.org)

