



the official magazine

90TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE | WINTER 2016 | www.jlmiami.org

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OUR MISSION: The Junior League of Miami, Inc. 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.

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Amanda Bilodeau, Kimberly Laughlin, Maria M. Ruiz, and Irene Tapanes.

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“No organization survives and flourishes for 90 years without a lot of help from its friends, and the Junior League of Miami’s continued success is thanks to so many in our community.”

From the President

How can I do justice to an organization that has been in existence and thriving for 90 years? Few organizations in this city can boast to being around for that long, and even fewer can match the impact that the Junior League of Miami has had on our community. Instead of giving a retrospective on all that we have accomplished throughout the years, though, I am going to keep this message simple and say, “thank you.”

To our partners in the non-profit sector who have worked with us over these nine decades, thank you for allowing us to take part in the amazing work you are doing. None of the work that we do would be possible without the financial support of so many corporations and individuals in this community. We can have countless members and ideas, but we need the funding to implement our mission. Guidance and advice from trusted people in the community also are vital to the success of an organization. Thank you to our Community Advisory Board for providing that to the Junior League of Miami. Your time, assistance, perspective, and wisdom are priceless, and we are extremely grateful and appreciative of all that you do for us.

Finally, the Junior League of Miami is only around because of the commitment, dedication and passion of our members. Thank you for choosing to become a part of this organization – for giving us your time and talents and for wanting to better yourselves and the community. Your enthusiasm, energy and excitement for the League will carry us through the next 90 years.

Thank you, Miami, for allowing us to serve you for 90 years. We will do our best to make the next 90 even better. To all of you, I say “thank you.”

Amanda Kessler
President



“I am so proud to be apart of a long legacy of community minded, driven and incredibly intelligent women.”

From the Editor

During my research for *the Magazine* I have learned a lot about the league’s service throughout the years. Our projects have evolved over the ninety years since we have been established but we continue to be committed to fundraising, service to those in need and impacting positive change in the community. I am so proud to be apart of a long legacy of community minded, driven and incredibly intelligent women.

Among these ladies I would like to recognize the women on my Magazine Committee that have made this magazine possible; Amanda Bilodeau, Rebekah Kurzweg, Kimberly Laughlin, Sarah Lobel, Maria Ruiz, and Irene Tapanes.

May the next 90 Years be as impactful as the first.

Stephanie O'Barr Garcia
Editor

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Stay engaged throughout the year

through a variety of community and volunteer activities

By Amanda Bilodeau



NAME THE MAG

Our magazine needs a new name, and we want you to be a part of it. Next February, the Junior League of Miami will take a vote to name our magazine. The new name will be revealed on the cover of our spring 2017 issue. Submit your proposal online at: bit.ly/JLMagazine

past events

90th Anniversary Celebration
November 10, 2016

90 for the 90th - Thanksgiving Basket Assembly & Delivery (ITS/ITN)
November 19, 2016

Therapy Dogs- Key Biscayne Library
December 3, 2016

Holiday Party
(90th Anniversary Event)
December 6, 2016

'round the corner

Done in a Day Gift Wrapping
December 10, 2016

ITN- Holiday Party
December 17, 2016

Therapy Dogs- Coral Gables
December 17, 2016

Membership Outreach Event
December 19, 2016

Book Club - Quiet: the Power of Introverts in a World that Can't Stop Talking by Susan Cain
January 5, 2017

Therapy Dogs - Key Biscayne Library
January 7, 2017

General Member Meeting
January 10, 2017

stay tuned

Therapy Dogs - Miami Lakes
January 14, 2017

Service Day
(90th Anniversary Event)
January 16, 2017

Therapy Dogs - Coral Gables
January 21, 2017

Therapy Dogs- Pinecrest
January 28, 2017

General Member Meeting
February 7, 2017

Book Clu - The Tsar of Love and Techno by Anthony Marra
March 2, 2017

Chili Cook-off Themed Area Meeting
(90th Anniversary Event)
March 7, 2017

General Member Meeting
April 11, 2017

Women Who Make a Difference Luncheon
April 28, 2017

Book Club - Visual Intelligence: Sharpen Your Perception, Change Your Life by Amy E. Herman
May 4, 2017

Annual Member Meeting
May 9, 2017



For a complete and up-to-date listing of events and volunteer activities log in to www.jlmiami.org

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Done in a Day

SERVICE THROUGH ONE PROJECT AT A TIME



Kamie179/Pixabay



Done in a Day Thanksgiving baskets project, November 19, 2016

By Jennifer Williams & Kimberly Salamone

During this whole year, Done-in-a-Day (DIAD) has been working hard to engage our membership, and include our donors, to celebrate the tremendous volunteerism through service that the League provides in our community.

On Saturday, September 24, the DIAD completed "See Her Vote", their first successful project in partnership with The Women's Fund this year. This grassroots campaign encourages women, living in underserved communities, to exercise their right to vote. Before hitting the pavement to canvass specific communities, volunteers participated in a brief training session to learn how to educate women voters about the power of their vote.

Our last event took place at place at Whispering Manes, Therapeutic Riding Center, an organization that works with children and adults with special needs or disabilities. The programming fosters and develops therapeutic relationships between the participants and horses, to encourage healing.

Volunteers enhanced the experience for

the program's participants, through a beautification project, that included gardening and painting.

To round out an exciting and packed fall project schedule, DIAD is teaming up with the League's signature projects, Inn Transition North (ITN), and Inn Transition South (ITS). To honor our 90th anniversary, the November project was named 90 for JLM's 90th! The Community Council Committees made 90 Thanksgiving baskets for the families residing at ITN and ITS to celebrate the holiday. The baskets included all necessary ingredients to prepare a full and wholesome Thanksgiving dinner.

Additionally, in December, there will be two holiday gift-wrapping projects for foster care children, and families of ITN/ITS. Given the scope of the project, partnered with the ITN/ITS and Breakthrough Miami committees to coordinate and wrap the gifts.

The DIAD committee celebrated JLM's 90th anniversary with a fun evening social, and we hope to see you at one (or more) of our upcoming events. ■

STAY TUNED

- WHAT** ITN/ITS Holiday Party Saturday, December 17, 2016; 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
- WHEN** 2016; 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
- WHERE** ITN & ITS
- WHO** Done-in-a-Day, Inn Transition North, Inn Transition South, Community Council
- HOW** To volunteer email: visit www.jlmiami.org

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Advocating for real issues



By Kendall Brown, SPAC Co-Chair

The League's State Public Affairs Committee (SPAC) continue to work hard and tirelessly getting to know our community officials. We advocate for issues and educate our representatives at the State Capitol.

Three times a year, representatives from the Junior League of Miami SPAC meet with the 25 Florida Junior League Chapters across Florida. In July, we met for the Summer Conference in Jupiter, and again, in September, for the Fall Conference in Tampa.

At the Summer and Fall conferences, we had full agendas, with speakers from Tampa Police. Also present were FBI, fire department, and local police officers from West Palm Beach discussing the pressing issue of safety in our communities.

During the Fall Conference, a vote was

passed deciding that health and hunger will be our next Florida State Focus during the Winter Conference in Tallahassee.

League members are known for being honest and truthful advocates, and for making things happen. We advocate issues, such as seeing both sides of the aisle, and effective meetings with elected official, speaking the facts with authority, dignity and integrity.

We must continue to be active in the community and stay involved with our local representatives by inviting them to our events at the Junior League of Miami.

With this being an election year, a lot of focus is being put on advocacy, and we must continue to uphold the League's reputation in the community by being present and involved. ■

- STAY TUNED**
- WHAT** Winter Conference.
- WHEN** Monday, February 6, and Tuesday, February 7.
- WHERE** State Capitol, Tallahassee
- WHO** State Public Affairs Committee.
- HOW** To participate email: spac@jlmiami.org, or visit www.jlmiami.org.

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Breaking Down Barriers to Education

PARTNERING WITH BREAKTHROUGH MIAMI, THE JUNIOR LEAGUE OF MIAMI OFFERS NEW OPPORTUNITIES TO UNDER-SERVED CHILDREN THROUGH EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS.

*By Alexandra Kagan,
Breakthrough Miami Committee Member*



The dream became a reality twenty-one years ago as a summer program to assist gifted middle-school students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds “break through” the barriers imposed by socio-economics, culture, and race. Today, Breakthrough Miami has grown into an eight-year academic enrichment program for over 1,200 students across Miami-Dade County. Serving students at five independent schools and one public charter, the enrichment program also provides a summer camp and Saturday sessions to keep students engaged and off the streets.

The vision of Breakthrough Miami is that all motivated, under-resourced students of Miami-Dade County will have access to excellent educational opportunities, graduate from high school and attend college. Through an academic enrichment program that uses a student-teach-student model, this

mission is achieved year after year. In 2013, one hundred percent of Breakthrough Miami seniors graduated on time from high school. Ninety-eight percent of those graduates enrolled in colleges or universities.

The Junior League of Miami has been honored to assist Breakthrough Miami for three years. Two Saturdays a month, committee members and volunteers lead dynamic college and career programs for over 150 high school students at the University of Miami campus. Additionally, three provisional projects will chair programs this year.

Highlighting the impact of the Junior League of Miami on the enrichment programs, Nichelle Haymore, Breakthrough Miami Director of College Access, has said—“The Junior League has provided diverse, innovative and engaging college and career programming for the past two years for

Breakthrough Miami. Due to this quality programming, our Saturday sessions attendance has increased from about 105 to 185 students. Now in the 3rd year of our partnership, the League has increased the Saturday sessions to twice a month to accommodate the growth and needs of increasing student participation at the College Bound program at the University of Miami. I am truly impressed with their programming and volunteers and have enjoyed working along with them.”

This year, the first Saturday program was held on October 1st. Volunteers from the League, dressed in red, welcomed eager children with warm smiles and joyful greetings. Each volunteer guided a small group of students in team-building activities that challenged them physically, intellectually and emotionally. As trust was built between volunteers and scholars, conversa-



SATURDAY PROGRAMS

- Admissions & Leadership
- Career Panel
- Yoga/Meditation/Mindfulness
- How to Pick the Right College
- College Life
- Essay Writing
- Stress Management
- Networking & Crafting Resumes
- Financial Literacy & Budgeting
- Summer Internship Fair
- UM Scavenger Hunt

WANNA BE PART OF THE CHANGE?

To volunteer for a Saturday morning with incredibly smart, fun, appreciative high school students, please sign up on www.jlmiami.org

For more information, please email committee Chairs, Rachel Vargo at (rachel.vargo@gmail.com) or Laura Van Gorden at (lvangoren@gmail.com)

“The partnership between the league and Breakthrough has grown by leaps and bounds over the last three years, with increased student attendance, and an evolving curriculum (...) Working with the Breakthrough Scholars on Saturday mornings, has given League members (...) the opportunity to actively engage in helping children reach their potential, and to have some fun in the process,”

Rachel Vargo, Co-Chair of Junior League of Miami Breakthrough Committee.

tions opened to topics such as “Black Lives Matter”, “what does my future hold?”, and “can we be friends?” Respect and maturity was demonstrated by all, and each Saturday moving forward promises to deepen the bonds of support.

Supporting Breakthrough Miami is one more way to fulfill the League’s mission of helping women and children. Although our stated commitment will have run its three-year course in May 2017, an extension for a fourth year commitment is possible. ■

A Mighty Ninety

THIS YEAR THE JUNIOR LEAGUE OF MIAMI IS CELEBRATING ITS 90TH ANNIVERSARY. EACH MONTH MEMBERS WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO ENGAGE AND IMMERSE IN ACTIVITIES CELEBRATING HOW FAR WE HAVE COME, AND ALSO PAYING HOMAGE TO EVENTS AND PROJECTS FROM YEARS PAST.

By: Maria M. Ruiz, JLM Magazine Chair-Elect



TAKE NOTE

90th Anniversary Committee needs your memorable Junior League photos. Send your picture, tell your story: jlm90@jlmiami.org



“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.” These are words from world-famous speaker, author and women’s advocate, Helen Keller, that embody the essence of Junior League.

This year marked the league’s 90th year anniversary; ninety years of women coming together to selflessly serve the community through leadership, advocacy, volunteering and much more. Through our notable community projects, Junior League of Miami has been key in helping the Junior League name keep its distinguished reputation of being a leader and advocate to the community.

Junior League of Miami’s signature projects, Inn Transition North and Inn Transition South, have been providing victims of domestic violence with a haven while they get back on their feet. Inn Transition residents have benefited from certified coaches and

speakers teaching the importance of breaking negative cycles, self-esteem building workshops, learning basic interview and etiquette skills, as well as being recipients of generous in-kind donations.

Another honorable project, Breakthrough Miami, is doing remarkable things for students by teaching them interview skills, public speaking tips, offering academic support and aiding them in test preparations. We are demonstrating to these young minds that they have a strong support system who believes in their potential. By teaching these kids the above skills, we are helping to ensure that they become responsible and caring individuals in society, and that is an immeasurable feat.

You might ask what lies in the horizon for Junior League of Miami? To ensure our future successes, we must revisit our past. As

“In a city founded in 1896 by a woman named Julia Tuttle, it is safe to say that women in leadership have been Miami’s “thing” from the beginning. Just a couple of decades after Julia made her mark, the Junior League of Miami began to make its own in our budding community. Among the early accomplishments of the league was the founding of the Miami Junior Museum, today’s Philip and Patricia Frost Science Museum. Over the decades the league has been advocate for women and children, helping to make our community a safe and resource rich environment for us all.”

*By Cecilia Dubon Slesnick,
90th Anniversary Co-Chair*

our president Amanda Kessler expressed so passionately, “We as league members need to educate ourselves on the day to day operations of the Inn Transition facilities.”

Being aware of the hard work it entails to gather funding, complying with city codes and everything that keeps these facilities running, ensures that we can join in the fight to preserve them in the face of adversity.

As members, we need to also be friends to the women we help. We need to go beyond our monthly few hours of community service in order to fulfill membership requirements. These women need someone to listen and be there for them, and who better than us? It’s time to go back to our roots and truly serve as confidantes to these ladies who so desperately need it.

Junior League is not just about empowering women and children in need; in the process, we also empower ourselves. We learn to be leaders in our community, we learn about fundraising, public speaking and, above all else, how to unite like-minded women. Junior League exemplifies growth, long-lasting friendships and, most importantly, women empowering other women.

If the past 90 years are any indication of what is to come, it is that Junior League is here to stay advocating for future empowered women. ■

An Intimate Look Into Abuse

TAKE A LOOK AROUND YOU. ONE IN EVERY THREE WOMEN HAS BEEN OR WILL BE ABUSED BY AN INTIMATE PARTNER IN THEIR LIFETIME. CVAC IS A RESOURCE FOR THESE LADIES.

By Kimberly Laughlin, CVAC Committee and Magazine Committee Member

"I will never again allow myself to be treated like that!" DaVida Claire (name changed to protect her privacy) exclaimed.

I sat across from a professionally dressed single mother of two. A look of eternal sadness reserved only for the reliving of painful memories stained her face. "After leaving my first boyfriend, I swore I would never let anyone lay their hands on me again, but I guess I underestimated the damage he had already done. I ended up in another relationship that I thought was better, because he hardly ever got physical with me, but I didn't realize that he was taking advantage of my mental weakness. He did everything he could to keep me down, and make me feel worthless. He stalked my every move, told me how to dress, controlled my car, my cell phone and made me feel like I couldn't do anything on my own. I'm embarrassed to admit that this went on for years."

Sadly, stories like this are not uncommon. The Miami-Dade Police Department reported 25,000 cases of domestic violence between 2010 and 2014; and those are just the cases that were reported. Many, like both cases DaVida experienced, go unreported. The reasons for not reporting offenses range from financial dependency to attempts at maintaining a certain reputation. "He worked a part-time, while I worked two jobs, but still, he controlled all the money. He said women couldn't handle money like men, and being that he came from an affluent family, I thought 'He must be right,' DaVida recalled.

The Coordinated Victims Assistant Center (CVAC) is a human service safe-space that DaVida was unaware of, created to eliminate the barriers faced by victims. "Wow, if I'd known about this place years ago, I might not have gotten into that second abusive relation-

President's update: ITN & ITS



Inn Transition has been a signature project of Junior League of Miami for years. The project, in partnership with Miami-Dade County, offers transitional housing and counseling to victims of domestic violence at two distinct facilities (Inn Transition North and Inn Transition South). The Magazine sat down with our very own president, Amanda Kessler, to get an insight into the Inn Transition project. We learn about her goals and vision for the project and the League, in the years to come, along the way.

By Maria M. Ruiz, Magazine Committee Chair-Elect

What is your vision for Inn Transition North and South in the upcoming year?

I really want to see the League get re-engaged with these projects in a more meaningful way. We need to be more aware of the business of owning and operating Inn Transition North, as well as more involved with the women and children who live at both of these facilities. Internally, I want to get our members educated about the history of these projects and also where they stand today. Externally, I want to be sure there is funding to sustain these projects indefinitely, and I really want to start doing more mentoring at ITN and ITS.

Could you go into depth as to the scare and near termination of the Inn Transition project?

Part of the founding for Inn Transition North and South has come from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. Each year, the Homeless Trust, which organizes and directs the Miami-Dade Homeless Plan, in an effort to end homelessness in the County, applies for this funding on behalf of providers each year. Unfortunately, 23 programs in Miami were defunded this year by US HUD, among them were ITN and ITS, which together lost nearly \$1 million. Without that money, ITN and ITS

could not remain operational. We were told right before Mother's Day that the woman and children at ITN and ITS were going to be informed that they had to find alternative housing within a couple of weeks, and that both facilities would be closed. Obviously, it was critical that we prevent that from happening.

Do you have any new ideas that you may be working on for Inn Transition?

My biggest thing is to get a mentoring program back at Inn Transition. We used to do it but have not done it for years now. I think each woman who is placed in one of the facilities should get a JLM mentor - someone who can help her maneuver the new normal she is facing. It will not be an easy program to start, but I think it will be so worthwhile for our members and for the women at Inn Transition.

Where do you see Inn Transition 10 years from now?

I hope that Inn Transition remains the signature project of the League and that 10 years from now we are fully engaged at the facilities. I want these to be premiere facilities for women and their children who have survived domestic violence. They should have a stable place to go where they can get the



ship.” CVAC offers protective, educational and supportive services to victims of domestic violence and/or sexual abuse. They look at the victim as a whole, gaging where they are coming from, where they are now, and where they want to be, helping all participants set and reach realistic and healthy goals.

Their compassion begins with screening the victims to best determine the services they, and their dependents will need. From that point on, these women are set on paths to “recovery” and “restructure.” The goal is to leave the program as a stronger, more independent individual with all the tools needed, not only survive, but to succeed.

The Junior League of Miami partners up with CVAC over the duration of two cycles, offering workshops to build general employability skills. The League comes on board as the women enter the “restructure” stage of their path, during the second cycle. Focusing on those with little-to-no-work experience, we offer valuable training in resume writing and interviewing skills, better preparing them to enter the workforce. A job fair at the end of the cycle offers a real opportunity to start on the path of economic independence. Since many researches suggest that Hispanics are disproportionately affected by the consequences of intimate partner violence, this year the CVAC Committee is aiming to have workshops also conducted in Spanish. ■

If you are interested in helping out with any of the presentations or with the upcoming job fair in May 2017, contact marcela.vieco@gmail.com.

resources they need to help them get back on their feet and be protected from their abusers. I would like to see us get more involved with helping these women find permanent housing as well. Inn Transition is transitional housing - the women are not supposed to stay longer than 24 months. In Miami, though, affordable housing is a big problem, and I think we need to look at being part of that solution as well.

What aspects, from earlier League years, would you like to bring back to Inn Transition?

As I mentioned above, the mentoring program for sure. I also really want our membership to understand the history behind these projects. They were started for a reason - to fill a need in Miami. That need still very much exists today. We need to strengthen our working relationship with the County so that we are more involved in the business of ITN and how these facilities operate. We used to be the preeminent organization on transitional housing for women who have been victims of domestic violence, and I want to see us bring back that leadership in this area.

What is your most memorable experience with Inn Transition?

My most memorable experience actually was when we combined two projects - Inn Transition and Whispering Manes Therapeutic Horse Riding Center. I tell this story often. We did a 10-week program for some of the women at ITS where they learned to work with horses at Whispering Manes. I will never forget the first week of the program

- the women were pretty stand-offish with us and really wanted nothing to do with the horses. Most of them were scared to get near them. But, but the last week, they could not wait to show off their skills for us - grooming the horses, trotting them, etc. And, they were much more open with us. That whole program was so unique and really showed me what an impact we can have on these women. We helped them regain self-confidence, learn about trust, and helped them understand more about building relationships. I would love to do something like that again. I think it was meaningful for the JLM members who participated and the women from ITS. This is why I am so intent on getting a mentoring program started. I really think we need more meaningful interactions with the women so we know we are making an impact.

As President, what do you find most rewarding and most challenging about managing Inn Transition?

This year, the biggest challenge and the biggest reward have been one in the same. Obviously, losing our funding at the very beginning of my Presidency was the biggest challenge (hopefully) we could have faced. But, I am so proud of the way the League handled the situation. We went back to our roots and advocated for these women and their children. We fought for this vulnerable population, and we made our voices heard. We need to do so much more of that. Some of my proudest moments as President thus far have come when we were standing up for transitional housing for victims of domestic violence. I think that is something we have to remember too, and it is a challenge - our fight is not about facilities, though we always have to be acutely aware of the fact that we own ITN, but it is about an issue: transitional housing for women and their children who have been victims of domestic violence. Nearly 30 years ago when we started ITN, we recognized the need for housing for this particular population, and that need is even greater today. We have to continue to make sure that the county, state and federal governments understand this critical issue and that they continue to support it. That is a challenge we definitely face right now, and one I want to be sure every one of our members is equipped to handle. ■



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Women leading the way



Illustration designed by Freepik

By Elle Beasley

“As a result of the (Art of Thinking On Your Feet) training I took away skills on how to confidently talk to someone at a networking event and when needed gracefully make my exit.”

— Heather Bellanton, (?)Active(?)

With member feedback in mind, the League has been curated the Leadership Agility Series to give our members the skills they need to align their behaviors with their goals. These workshops are applicable to your work in the League, your professional life, and your family life.

Our first workshop of the year, Master the Art of Thinking On Your Feet, featured Carey Kane, from Improv Yourself Communications. Our members had an interactive, educational, and fun morning learning about “thinking-on-their-feet”. Members learned how to set boundaries in situations with challenging colleagues, networking events, and with family and friends.

Authentic Leadership: Finding Your True North, our second workshop, featured Florida International University Professor of Communications, and League member Jessica Delgado. Our Junior League ladies learned about their own unique leadership styles, and how to leverage each person’s strengths in team settings. Additionally, they were taught

that by harnessing their specific leadership strength they can confidently navigate the journey of their “future-self.” Members were given an exercise about ITN that had them combine their various leadership styles. In the words of attendee Paola Huenbes:

“The most insightful, and dare I say, fun part of the program was when everyone was arranged according to their quiz results; lions, bees, dolphins, and elephants. The lions were slightly apart from each other, and duties were delegated to every team member. The dolphins were almost on top of each other, gingerly smiling. The elephants had arranged themselves in a beautiful circle with many wonderful ideas. The bees had made a list of the tasks that needed to be done. Jessica taught us how to integrate all of our ideas and make our interactions and, therefore, our organization better. This training will make everyone more successful in their personal and professional interactions. I could not help but feel accomplished when I finish.” ■

- STAY TUNED**
- WHAT** “New year, New you”
 - WHEN** Saturday, January 21
 - WHERE** JML headquarters
 - WHO** All members can participate
 - HOW** To volunteer email: alanasullivan.garcia1@gmail.com
Sing up online at www.jlmiami.org



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We asked a few of our new provisional members about why they joined the League, and what they hope to accomplish during their Provisional Year.

By Shannon Egan, Provision Co-Chair



"I joined JLM because I wanted to give back to the Miami community and engage on a deeper level while surrounded by strong women who inspire me."

— Abby Melone



"I'm at a point in my life where I'm evaluating how I can make a greater impact in the world. After meeting individuals through Junior League, I knew that my personal vision would also be relatable to my future colleagues."

The mission of helping woman within the community and within the organization become stronger and more confident both personally and professionally was attractive to me. I believe we are stronger when united rather than just working as individuals in this world and therefore the opportunity to collaborate is exciting."

— Jayme Chomat



"Growing up in Peru, I witnessed multiple incidents in which many women were afraid to leave, not only because of retaliation from their partner but also because of judgment from society. I joined the League because I believe in making a difference in the lives of women who are in dangerous situations."

— Sue Valdivia



"I decided to join JLM in order to be surrounded by more like-minded, powerful women outside of my workplace. As a social services professional, I am very passionate about serving the community I live in and feel like I have found the right niche to do so with JLM. It also gives me the opportunity to branch out of my comfort zone to meet new people and learn from their career paths and personal experiences."

— Mabel Colon



"When I heard about JLM, I loved the idea of a network of admired women with a long history in the Miami community. After meeting several members at a few events, I knew I could see myself wearing a red polo reppin' JLM."

— Adriana Hoak



"The primary reason I joined the JLM was to continue the family value of volunteerism instilled in me by my grandmother, who was a founding member of many organizations in central Florida promoting women and academic achievement. It has been an amazing experience so far and has made for such a smooth transition to South Florida after moving from DC."

— Danielle Ransom



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