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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

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

“Nothing 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.”
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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.

WELCOMES A NEW ADDITION TO THE TEAM

Please help us in welcoming our new member of the Slesnick & Jochem family. We are happy to have Cecilia as part of our team as we continue to serve our community.

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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 Whispering Mares, 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.
Advocating for real issues

By Kendall Brown, SPAC Co-Chair

The League’s State Public Affairs Committee (SPAC) continues 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 officials, 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.

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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-economic, 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 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, conversations 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.

“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 actively to 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
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 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.

“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
An Intimate Look Into Abuse

**By Kimberly Laughlin, CVAC Committee and Magazine Committee Member**

A RESOURCE FOR THESE LADIES.

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

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By Maria M. Ruiz, Magazine Committee Chair-Elect

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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 barriers faced by victims. “Wow, if I’d known about this place years ago, I might not have...”

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"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 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 done. I ended up in another relationship that I thought was better, but I didn’t realize that he was taking advantage of my mental weakness. He did everything he could to keep me down, as if he was the one in control. He said he loved me, but I didn’t know how to handle money like men, and he was the one who controlled all the money. He said he had a part-time job, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but..."

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"He worked all day, while I worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two jobs, but he worked two 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The Junior League of Miami partners 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 2013, contact marolaravins@gmail.com.

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

As I mentioned above, the mentoring program for now. 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 can be acutely aware of the fact that we own ITN, but it is about an issue: transitional housing for victims of domestic violence. It is a challenge we definitely face right now, 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 have right now, and one I want to be sure every one of our members is equipped to handle.

\textbf{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 have right now, and one I want to be sure every one of our members is equipped to handle.
With member feedback in mind, the League has 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.

Our second workshop of the year, Authentic Leadership: Finding Your True North, 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 Huenes: “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, gaily 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 finished.”

“Women leading the way”

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 (?)
We asked why they joined

By Shannon Egan, Provision Co-Chair

“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

“I decided to join 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 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.”

— Sue Valdivia

“The primary reason I joined 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

“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 women 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

“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 Hask

“I grew 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.”

— Michael Colon

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— Mabel Colon
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