



THE LARIAT

Junior League of Fort Worth



Debra and Vernell Sturns at Western Hills Elementary

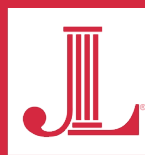
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JUNIOR LEAGUE FORT WORTH

Mission

The Junior League of Fort Worth, Inc. is an organization of women whose Mission is to advance women's leadership for meaningful community impact through volunteer action, collaboration, and training. Its purpose is exclusively educational and charitable.

Vision

The Junior League of Fort Worth, Inc. will strive to improve our community by directing our resources to positively impact the well-being of children and families by providing a legacy of trained volunteers.

Impact Areas

Arts and Culture | Basic Human Needs Education | Physical & Mental Health Supports Fort Worth

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.

Today, the JLFW comprises approximately 2,000 Members and is part of The Association of Junior Leagues International, Inc. (AJLI) which constitutes one of the largest, most effective volunteer organizations in the world. For more information, visit www.juniorleaguefw.org.

The Lariat is published three times a year by the Junior League of Fort Worth, Inc.

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Editors' note: We learned after the publication of Volume 32, Issue 1, of the incorrectly identified author of the Christmas in Cowtown article. It was written by Stephanie DeRosa. Our sincere apologies on the error. It has been corrected for our online edition.

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PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

As we settle into 2025 and the second half of our League year, I am filled with excitement for the incredible achievements and opportunities still ahead. This year promised to be one of trailblazing initiatives, meaningful connections, and impactful work. My hope is that this issue brings these moments to life.

We wrapped up Rodeo season and the spring social calendar is full of opportunities to connect! In February, we hosted our much-loved Neighborhood Membership Meetings and kicked off our Love Our League campaign with the goal of 95% of Member participation. In March, we'll gather for our Member Celebration and announce our Member of the Year. We have big plans in April to showcase the heart of Cowtown—celebrating one another and those in our community.

Our recent achievements are equally exciting!

- We welcomed over 21,000 patrons at the 18th annual *Christmas in Cowtown Holiday Gift Market*. The event was a huge success thanks to our powerhouse committee, our wonderful merchants, and our generous sponsors raising \$1,000,000 to support our Mission.
- On our Fall Day of Giving, 187 Members generously contributed almost 600 hours to 18 different community agencies. Our volunteer teams helped these agencies meet critical needs in our community, making a lasting impact with each hour of service.
- We've hosted numerous trainings focused on providing education around the greatest community needs and building leadership skills. One of our recent trainings focused on hospice and palliative care, the framework for aiding people living with life-limiting illnesses. Our volunteers serving agencies like *Community Healthcare of Texas*, are better equipped to compassionately support and even improve the patients' quality of life during challenging health journeys.
- At our November General Membership Meeting, more than 250 Members gathered to focused on "Thanks and Giving". The meeting featured a roundtable discussion with community leaders from the *Fort Worth Botanical Gardens*, *Justin's Place*, and *Laundry Love Fort Worth*, highlighting JLFW's impact on these organizations.
- In January, we kicked off Rodeo season with Randy Rogers Band at the 12th Annual *Grand Entry Gala*. Our Rodeo Program Sales (RPS) committee and prizegoers were thrilled to be back in the iconic red boxes at Dickies Arena to "Yell and Sell".

Looking ahead, the incoming Board has slated more than 200 women in leadership positions for the 2025-2026 year. Current leaders are working diligently to ensure a smooth transition as strong transitions lay the foundation for future success. These trailblazers are committed to preparing our leaders for the next steps in their journey, advancing our Mission, and deepening our impact in the community.

Our Members are the heart of everything we do, and it's an honor to serve such a dynamic, dedicated group of individuals. Thank you for your passion, vision, and support as we embark on this next chapter. Here's to a happy, healthy, and trailblazing 2025!

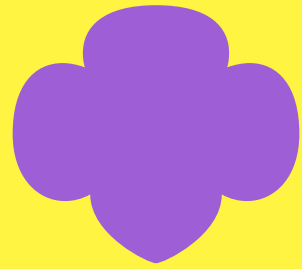
With gratitude,

Sarah Washington
2024-2025 President

JLFW

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EMPOWERING YOUNG LEADERS: PARTNERING WITH ACADEMY 4

BY JANIE LATIMER

The Junior League of Fort Worth (JLFW) is proud to support Academy 4, a transformative in-school mentoring program for fourth graders in Title 1 schools. With a \$25,000 investment, JLFW is funding the expansion of Academy 4 to two Tarrant County schools, impacting 120-180 students through mentorship and leadership development.

JLFW volunteers will serve as Spark Club Leaders and Mentors, dedicating two Fridays per month to engage with students. Each session includes hands-on extracurricular activities, leadership lessons, and one-on-one mentoring and many activities are in partnership with other JLFW community agencies. Spark Clubs introduce students to new experiences—including Cooking, Wearable Art Golf (in partnership with First Tee - Fort Worth) and Theatre (in partnership with Casa Mañana).

Beyond Spark Clubs, students participate in LEADERS Assembly. They explore leadership qualities like Respect and Service and connect with JLFW Members during a personalized Mentoring Time with their assigned mentor. This structured approach fosters confidence, curiosity, and essential life skills.

Each JLFW volunteer will contribute over 50 hours throughout the academic year, developing meaningful relationships with students while reinforcing JLFW's commitment to education.

Through this partnership, JLFW continues to make a lasting impact—empowering young leaders and strengthening our community, one student at a time.

JLFW PARTNERS WITH COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE OF TEXAS TO BRING COMFORT AND BELONGING

BY JANIE LATIMER

The year Junior League of Fort Worth (JLFW) is honored to partner with Community Health Care of Texas through *The Dove Love Project*, an initiative bringing comfort, connection, and dignity to hospice patients and their families. With a \$35,000 investment, JLFW is helping to create meaningful moments for families navigating end-of-life care.

The Dove Love Project provides emotional and spiritual support to patients and their caregivers through legacy activities, family dinners, and healing arts. JLFW volunteers play a hands-on role in offering comfort—serving meals, leading creative art activities, and stocking comfort carts with blankets, pillows, and legacy bears. Volunteers also assist with Life Celebrations and Last Wish events, helping families create lasting memories during a challenging time.

By combining mental wellness and creative arts, this project fosters community support and helps families find moments of peace during difficult times. JLFW’s commitment to *The Dove Love Project* reflects its dedication to addressing family needs, reinforcing the League’s Mission to serve and uplift the Fort Worth community.

For those seeking a meaningful way to give back, this partnership offers an opportunity to make a profound impact—one filled with compassion, dignity, and love.



LAUNDRY LOVE: A COMMUNITY OF DIGNITY, KINDNESS, AND CONNECTION

BY LIBBY MANESS



The story of *Laundry Love* began with a simple, compassionate question: “How can we come into your life in a meaningful way?” For the homeless, the answer was simply a safe place to do laundry in hopes of finding dignity among the soiled clothes made fresh again. And so, *Laundry Love* was born.

In 2018, the Fort Worth chapter was established by two women who saw a student being bullied for not having clean clothes. This moment made them realize the need for a laundry service could help those in need within their community to have access to clean clothes and provide a sense of belonging.

Laundry Love hosts events on the first and third Saturday of every month, to give families a chance to wash their clothes, experience the Kids Club area, and receive a light meal. “Through the Junior League of Fort Worth (JLFW), we’ve been able to donate \$20,000 and have 10 volunteers at each event – doubling

their impact,” said **Taylor Woods**, JLFW Laundry Love Project Development Chair.

Thanks to JLFW, *Laundry Love* expanded to include a second Saturday each month, serving 40-50 additional families. These events created a safe, stress-free atmosphere where families can connect. JLFW volunteers provide a welcoming environment for families, assisting with client check-in, facilitating laundry machine usage, and providing different activities in the kid area. “This is the most fulfilling placement I’ve had,” Woods said. “I cannot speak highly enough about this organization, their mission, and the impact they’re making.

Through kindness and fellowship, *Laundry Love* creates a community where everyone is acknowledged, inspiring courageous stories to be shared, and motivation to continue the love.

ROLLING THROUGH IMPACT: PROVISIONAL CLASS TAKES A JOURNEY THROUGH JLFW SERVICE

BY JANIE LATIMER



If you spotted a convoy of buses cruising through Fort Worth on October 5, filled with enthusiastic women and a whole lot of Junior League spirit, you witnessed the Provisional Bus Tour in action. **Danielle Hoefeld** and **Laura Kirspele**, Provisional Co-Chairs, were inspired when JLFW President, **Sarah Washington**, shared the history of the bus tour within JLFW and shared how other Leagues have adopted this event to welcome the Provisional class. With the help of Community Vice President, **Cara Hardin**, the Provisional Co-Chairs got to work and revitalized this tradition that gave the Provisional class an up-close look at how the JLFW serves the community, making stops at key community agencies and sharing the ‘why’ behind the League’s long-standing commitment to volunteerism.

to maximize learning about community impact so between the three main stops the bus hosts kept the conversation going on the road, sharing stories about JLFW’s many other community partners and this years’ initiatives. While the Provisionals noted how involved and excited the community agencies were to host, Community Vice President shared “All of the agencies we visited were so impressed with the interest and thoughtful questions from them. They have already asked when we can do it again!”

More Than Just a Ride

The Provisional Bus Tour is more than a day of sightseeing; it’s a chance for Provisionals to see the League’s Mission in action and envision how they’ll contribute through future placements. By stepping inside the spaces where change happens, these future leaders left with a deeper appreciation for the power of volunteerism and the responsibility that comes with being a part of the JLFW legacy.

In a lighter moment, the energy on the buses was high, and even included some unexpected singing by bus hosts, playing shuffle your buns for Provisionals to get to know each other which added to the fun and camaraderie of the day. To remember the day, each Provisional left with a postcard that led them to a digitally curated resource to learn more about the agencies that partner with the League.

As the buses rolled back to their starting point, the Provisionals were no longer just passengers—they gained understanding and were ready to advance their leadership building on JLFW’s 95-year legacy of service. Will the Provisional Community Bus Tour be here to stay? Provisional Co-Chairs are all in favor. Maybe it will expand to others new to JLFW, like the Transfer class or as a training to see the impact for any Member. No matter what the future holds, let’s hope the wheels on the bus keep going round and round, all through the town!

A Tradition with Historic Roots

According to historical findings, JLFW conducted a bus tour to educate and inspire back in the late 1960’s, when the Education and Preservation Committee took Provisionals (and Transfers) on a tour of local historical sites. While the destinations have changed, the intent remains the same—connecting League Members with the heart of Fort Worth’s nonprofit community.

The Bus Tour Experience

The Provisional Class boarded three buses, each led by two bus hosts fueled with knowledge, enthusiasm, and a few fun facts along the way. We cannot rule out that some may have also been fueled by caffeine. Starting at *Casa Mañana*, the Provisionals learned about the All-Abilities class and stood on the same stage where the class with perform Newsies in May. The buses then stopped at three other remarkable agencies including: *Justin’s Place*, *The Women’s Center*, and *Presbyterian Night Shelter’s Journey Home Housing Project*. At each stop, an agency spokesperson shared how impactful the League has been to their organization, bringing a message to life in a way that no video or meeting presentation could do. The Provisional Co-Chairs wanted





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LOVING OUR LEAGUE THROUGH LIFE'S VALLEYS WITH GATHERING HOPE

BY MORGAN COFFEY

This article contains references to miscarriage. It also offers a local agency that provides community and resources to women after pregnancy and infant loss.

In January 2024, my husband and I were thrilled to learn we were expecting our first child. But two months later, we experienced the heartbreaking loss of our pregnancy. While I had known women who had suffered miscarriages, I was now learning firsthand the depth of that sorrow. In my search for healing, I discovered *Gathering Hope*, an organization offering community and support for those who have experienced miscarriage, stillbirth, and infant loss.

A month after my miscarriage, *Gathering Hope* hosted a grief workshop. Although it was out of my comfort zone, I signed up. Sure enough, the experience left me with a sense of *hope*. The sadness remained, but I also felt gratitude - for finding *Gathering Hope* when I did and hopeful that I could use my loss experience to help others.

Pregnancy and infant loss can feel very isolating, especially when it happens in the early months of pregnancy when many keep their news private. Even when we lean on loved ones, they may not always know how to support us. How do you comfort someone when you haven't faced the same loss yourself?

When brainstorming training topics for the year, I reflected on my own journey, those who stood beside me and those who, despite good intentions, didn't know what to say. The League collaborated with *Gathering Hope* and hosted a workshop to connect Members with this organization and equip them with tools to support moms of loss in their circles. The training was both impactful and deeply meaningful, connecting Members to an incredible nonprofit while fostering understanding and empathy.

What does Love Our League mean? To me, it means appreciating how the League strives to support its Members through both joys and challenges. By partnering with *Gathering Hope*, the League helped provide resources and guidance to support our Members through loss—ensuring no one walks through grief alone.

Butterflies

IN THE GARDEN

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FORT WORTH
BOTANIC
GARDEN



COMMUNITY AND COFFEE

BY MADELINE HUNT

As the aroma of freshly brewed coffee filled the air on September 20, 2024, the Junior League of Fort Worth (JLFW) hosted its inaugural *Coffee & Community* event, bringing together 60 representatives from community agencies registered with JLFW. This meaningful gathering provided an opportunity for collaboration and collective problem-solving to better serve our Fort Worth community.

Participants were divided into groups based on shared impact areas: Arts & Culture, Basic Human Needs, Education, and Physical and Mental Health. These focused discussions allowed attendees to share innovative ideas, explore new ways to connect, and identify opportunities to share resources, ultimately aiming to reach more individuals in need.

The feedback from these conversations was invaluable. Attendees shared resources with each other, and highlighted opportunities for JLFW to better partner with agencies, strengthening our shared goal to make a

greater impact. The success of the event reinforced a core belief: **collaboration is key to transforming our community.**

Following the momentum from September's event, we hosted our second *Coffee & Community* event on Friday, January 17, 2025. That event focused on physical and mental health and basic human needs impact agencies. They networked and collaborated on new initiatives they are launching in the new year, and JLFW Leaders provided training on internal and external communications. These ongoing meetings ensure our partnerships remain strong and impactful.

Our final *Coffee & Community* event for this League year was on April 11, 2025. We encourage all registered agencies to join us as we continue to build bridges, one conversation at a time. Together, over a cup of coffee, we are shaping a brighter future for Fort Worth.

BUILDING BRIDGES: REFLECTING ON BELONGING AND EQUITY

In January, a small group of Junior League Fort Worth (JLFW) Members participated in the 10-Day Racial Equity Challenge, an annual offering by AJLI since 2021. This initiative provides an opportunity for Members across our association to engage in meaningful, sometimes difficult, conversations about race, inequity, and how to foster a true sense of belonging within our League and in the wider community.

One of the key resources in the challenge, *Bridging - Towards A Society Built on Belonging* from UC Berkeley's Othring and Belonging Institute, explores the concepts of "breaking" and "bridging."

Bridging focuses on finding our common ground, continually expanding who fits into the concept of "Us." It focuses on our shared humanity rather than the things that divide us. The Junior League's Commitment to Diversity calls us to build bridges - welcoming all women who embrace our Mission and creating a space where we can belong as our authentic selves.

This month, take a moment to reflect on what it means to "bridge" and what it means to belong in JLFW. "True belonging is not passive. It's not the belonging that comes with just joining a group. It's not fitting in or selling out because it's safer. It's a practice that requires us to be vulnerable, get uncomfortable, and learn how to be present with people without sacrificing who we are. We want true belonging, but it takes tremendous courage to knowingly walk into hard moments." - Brené Brown, *Braving the Wilderness*



FROM THE ARCHIVES

BY MADELINE HUNT

As the Junior League of Fort Worth (JLFW) commemorates its 95th anniversary, we reflect on the enduring legacy of our Rodeo Program Sales, a tradition that began in 1957. During that inaugural year, dedicated Members raised \$1,319.39, with proceeds directed towards community programs focusing on children, notably supporting the new Tarrant County Youth Center.

Over the decades, the "Yell & Sell" initiative has become a hallmark of JLFW's fundraising efforts. Each year, Members enthusiastically sell the Rodeo Souvenir Annual during the Fort Worth Stock Show & Rodeo (FWSSR). Two dollars from every program sold directly supports local organizations making a difference in JLFW's impact areas: Arts & Culture, Basic Human Needs, Education, Physical & Mental Health, and Supports Fort Worth.

JLFW's partnership with FWSSR has only deepened over time. In 2013, the League introduced the *Grand Entry Gala*, further strengthening this collaboration. By 2016, JLFW became part of the FWSSR badge culture, offering a unique lapel pin for patrons to showcase their support.

As we mark 95 years of service, the Rodeo Program Sales continues to exemplify the League's commitment to community impact. The dedication of our Members ensures that this cherished tradition not only endures but thrives, contributing significantly to the betterment of Fort Worth.

GRAND ENTRY GALA CELEBRATING TRADITION AND IMPACT

BY JANIE LATIMER



Since its inaugural event in 2013, the Junior League of Fort Worth's (JLFW) *Grand Entry Gala (GEG)* has become a cherished tradition, blending Fort Worth's western heritage with a powerful commitment to community impact. Held annually in partnership with the Fort Worth Stock Show & Rodeo (FWSSR), *GEG* marks the start of rodeo season while raising critical funds for the League's Mission of promoting voluntarism, empowering women leaders, and improving the community.

Over the years, *GEG* has evolved into one of the city's premier events, featuring dinner, dancing, and live entertainment. Past performers such as Ray Benson, Jack Ingram, and Gary P. Nunn set a high bar, and this year's headliner, Randy Rogers Band, delivered a show-stopping performance that kept guests two-stepping into the night.

The 2025 *Grand Entry Gala*, co-chaired by **Caroline Padron** and **Sarah Shaw** with Molly and Rusty Reid Family as honorary chairs, continued the tradition of excellence. Guests enjoyed a memorable evening featuring a gourmet dinner by Reata, an exciting raffle, and a 3-Minute Challenge, which directly

supported the League's efforts to improve the lives of women and children in Fort Worth.

JLFW President **Sarah Washington** and Fund Development Vice President **Rachel Navejar Phillips** expressed heartfelt gratitude to attendees and sponsors, highlighting the event's enduring legacy. "The *Grand Entry Gala* is more than a celebration—it's a testament to the power of collaboration and generosity," shared President Washington.

In its 13 years, the *Grand Entry Gala* has raised over \$2 million for community programs and initiatives, fueling the League's ability to give back.

For JLFW members, donors, advisors, and community partners, the *Grand Entry Gala* represents the spirit of Fort Worth—a blend of tradition, purpose, and vision. The 2025 event not only celebrated the League's history but also set the stage for a brighter future, ensuring its Mission thrives for years to come.



LIFE IN THE LEAGUE



LIFE AS A PROVISIONAL:
CHLOE LEWIS

For **Chloe Lewis**, applying to The Junior League was a natural choice driven by her desire to give back to the community that has supported her. “I’ve been fortunate to receive so much support from my community over the years, and it’s inspired me to give back,” Lewis said. “The League embodies this spirit of service, and I believe that the Junior League of Fort Worth sets the standard.”

This year, as part of JuniorMINTS, Lewis has had the chance to serve at several Fort Worth ISD elementary schools, engaging with parents and students. The joy on the children’s faces and the gratitude from the parents are particularly rewarding. One of her most memorable experiences was participating in Trunk-or-Treat at Western Hills Elementary School. Before the event, the school shared a need for more cars, so Lewis decorated hers, gathered candy, and joined in the festivities. “It was incredible to see the children and parents dressed up, moving from car to car. I loved seeing families in coordinated costumes and hearing the children reunite with joyful screams.”



LIFE AS AN ACTIVE:
DR. ERIN WILSON

Dr. Erin Wilson’s journey crossed a couple Junior League chapters before transferring to Junior League of Fort Worth (JLFW) in 2023. Now a *Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging* Advisor, she champions the League’s Mission of empowering women and strengthening communities.

Her dedication to leadership has earned her the honor of being the first Empower Hour speaker of 2025 for the Association of Junior Leagues International (AJLI). In her session, *Lean into Your Strengths*, she explored how embracing natural talents can lead to success.

As Founder and CEO of Design Ideal Consulting and co-author of *Strategic Rest in Leadership*, Dr. Wilson helps organizations foster collaboration and growth. She partners with Fortune 500 companies, educational institutions, and hospitality leaders to enhance leadership practices. Beyond her career, Dr. Wilson mentors League Members and advocates for inclusive leadership. She embodies the JLFW spirit — empowering women to drive lasting change. Congratulations to Dr. Wilson on this achievement and continued impact!



LIFE AS A SUSTAINER:
TERRI SEXTON

Terri Sexton exemplifies the spirit of giving back to her community. Her journey with the Junior League of Fort Worth (JLFW) began in 1990, balancing motherhood with her Provisional year. Over the past 26 years, her dedication to the League has flourished, culminating in her role as President from 2000-2001 and continuing today as a Sustainer and Community Advisor.

Sexton’s leadership experience in JLFW profoundly shaped her career. With a background in accounting and fundraising, she transitioned from the oil and gas industry to nonprofit leadership. After serving as Director of Fund Development at Baylor Scott & White, she became Vice President of Development at Texas Ballet Theater, where she doubled donations before retiring as CEO.

For Sexton, faith, family, and friends remain at the heart of everything. She and her husband, Greg, enjoy pickleball, hiking, and spending time with their family and grandchildren. (Sexton continues to share her expertise in nonprofit business development and fundraising while mentoring the next generation of leaders.) She encourages leaders to embrace the unexpected, step out in faith, and be willing to serve in areas beyond your comfort zone—you never know the impact you might have.

LIFE IN THE LEAGUE

LITTLEST LEAGUERS



Jenny and Michael Geekie welcomed daughter, Mary Alice Geekie, on August 2, 2023



Claire and Marshall Jones welcomed daughter, Caroline Elise Jones on July 18, 2024

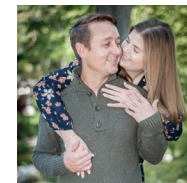


Savannah and Richie Petronis welcomed daughter, Esther Jayne Petronis on October 7, 2024



Diana Bockus Davis and Spencer Davis welcomed son, Oliver Eugene Davis, on October 9, 2024

CONGRATULATIONS



Miranda Peterson and Cleatus Steele, engaged on September 26, 2024.



Natalie Bowen received the Ruby Lee Piester Award as an employee of the Gladney Center for Adoption.



Jasmine Medoza was named to Fort Worth, Inc.’s 40 under 40. Medoza is the Chief Marketing Officer at ALG Holdings.



In 2024, Cathy Neece Brown was appointed to the national Innovation and Social Impact Advisory Council of the American Society on Aging (ASA), with a three-year term.



Elizabeth Negron completed her Master of Science degree in Mind-Body Medicine in December 2024 from Saybrook University with a 3.8 GPA.



In October 2024, Kayla Sanchez accepted the Rodeo Entertainer Program Director and Marketing Manager role at Molly’s Custom Silver.



Lisa Schuessler was promoted to be Chief Operating Officer at the Gladney Center for Adoption.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

TRANSFER IN

Alason Connell | S | *JL Houston*
Kelsey Cooper | A | *JL Dallas*
Michaela Cushman | P | *JL Dallas*
Ashley Gridley | A | *JL Austin*
Sonia Leal | A | *JL San Antonio*

TRANSFER OUT

Sabine Jacobson | A | *JL Collin County*
Makenzie Logan | P | *JL Midland*

CHANGE OF STATUS

Heather Bronold | A | *Leave of absence*
Whitney Franklin | A | *Leave of absence*
Allison Gross | A | *Leave of absence*
Allison McClellan | A | *Leave of absence*
Brittney Williams | A | *Leave of absence*
Callen Willis | A | *Leave of absence*

REINSTATE

Nicole Bettinger | S
Charlotte Branch | A
Leslie Eugenio Bloom | S

CONDOLENCE

Mia Daniels | P | *Loss of grandmother*
Connie Davis | S | *Loss of mother*
Sherry Key | S | *Loss of mother*
Suzanne Levy | S | *Loss of husband*
Madison Nadler | P | *Loss of father*
Kimberly Ramon | S | *Loss of mother*
Michelle Rivera | A | *Loss of mother*
Dee Dee Wix | S | *Loss of mother*

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GITTINGS SPOTLIGHT



CARA HARDIN | 2024-2025 COMMUNITY VICE PRESIDENT

Born in Corpus Christi, Texas, and raised in Tyler, **Cara Hardin** moved to Fort Worth 12 years ago with her husband, John. In 2012, she joined the Junior League of Fort Worth (JLFW) to connect with her community and make a positive impact. Over the years, Hardin has developed a deep love for the city and is proud of the League's growth. Serving as the Community Vice President (VP), Hardin oversees a council of more than 25 women dedicated to improving Fort Worth. Under her leadership, JLFW supports initiatives addressing the rising cost of living, affordable housing, and educational challenges in Tarrant County. Hardin's journey with JLFW has been transformative. "From my first volunteer experience with Presbyterian Night Shelter to my leadership in community placements, I've built lasting relationships, honed my leadership skills, and made lifelong friends," Hardin said. "This year, I'm excited to oversee more than 50,000 volunteer hours and \$1 million in community support!" Hardin's biggest goal this year is to be a servant leader, guiding with compassion and setting an example for others. "The greatest joy I've experienced as Community VP is serving alongside women who care deeply for our community and for one another."



RACHEL NAVEJAR PHILLIPS | 2024-2025 FUND DEVELOPMENT VICE PRESIDENT

After 12 years with Junior League of Fort Worth (JLFW), **Rachel Navejar Phillips** has found her niche, using her leadership skills to support and strengthen the Mission. As the current Fund Development Vice President (VP), Navejar Phillips is passionate about raising funds to support the League's initiatives. "I've always loved helping with fundraising—it's where I found my true leadership passion," she shared. "It's funny to think I took on such a big role in my last year before sustaining."

Beyond JLFW, Navejar Phillips is involved with several Fort Worth organizations, including the Presbyterian Night Shelter, Trinity Metro, and the Greater Fort Worth Real Estate Council. She also works as the Business Development Manager for her family's engineering firm, The Rios Group. Her time with JLFW has been transformative. "Serving in the League has fine-tuned my leadership skills and taught me how to balance tough conversations with genuine teamwork," she said. Reflecting on her journey, Navejar Phillips offers this advice to future leaders: "Always be willing to do what you ask of others. Leading by example makes having hard conversations much easier."



JESSICA WALSH | 2024-2025 MEMBERSHIP VICE PRESIDENT

Jessica Walsh is a dedicated mother, wife, and professional, who has made a lasting impact in both her career and community. Originally from Alvin, Texas, Walsh moved to Fort Worth in 2011 after a successful career as a reporter and anchor in East Texas and North Carolina. She transitioned into fundraising, eventually becoming Vice President of Development at Cristo Rey Fort Worth. Over the years, Walsh has held numerous leadership roles in JLFW, from volunteering with the Union Gospel Mission to leading a provisional class. As Membership Vice President, she is committed to creating an inclusive and supportive environment for all Members. "I strive to ensure every Member feels included, valued, and supported," Walsh said. "Whether it's helping Members navigate challenges, ensuring they meet commitments, or simply being a friend, I'm here to enhance the Member experience and foster a sense of community." As a seasoned leader, Walsh encourages future leaders to embrace their unique perspectives and passions. "Not all leaders are the same, and that's what makes our Board and our League strong," Walsh said. "Be a catalyst for change and know that your experiences and viewpoints matter. Show your enthusiasm and dedication, and you'll inspire others to believe in you."

Sewell is proud to support the
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