



THE LARIAT

Junior League of Fort Worth



The Petronis Family

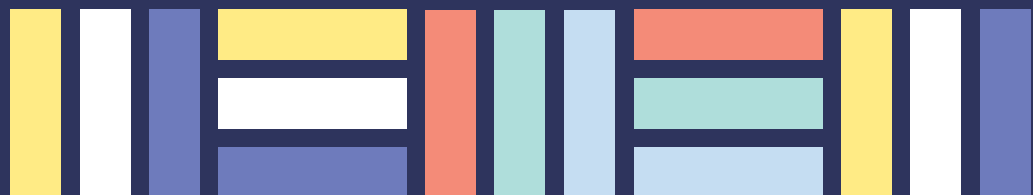
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JUNIOR LEAGUE FORT WORTH

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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PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

It has been my absolute honor to serve as President of the Junior League of Fort Worth this year. This year has been a powerful testament to **what we can accomplish together**, driven by purpose and commitment of our Members. We strengthened Fort Worth by investing \$1,100,000 in community programs and initiatives, dedicating thousands of volunteer hours, and hosting recordbreaking fundraisers that will leave a lasting legacy in our community.

As we celebrate our 95th year, I am truly inspired by the impact and accomplishments of our membership. It has been an incredible year of collaboration, leadership, and meaningful change!

- We prioritized the needs of our sustaining, active, and provisional members while continuing to develop the potential of women. It was a year, including awarding scholarships for Texas Christian University's MBA programs and JLFW's **Community Bus Tour**, showcasing our impact and educating Provisionals about community needs. Our Board of Directors also introduced "**Love Our Leaders**," a spring event honoring the 200 women who drive our Mission forward.
- We maximized our impact through **strategic partnerships** and a **bold communications strategy**, ensuring our story resonated with stakeholders. We strengthened relationships with donors and key community partners, including Texas Christian University, Fort Worth Stock Show & Rodeo, North Texas Community Foundation, Tarrant Area Food Bank, and Fort Worth ISD, collaborating to advance our mission. From planning meetings to press releases, to social media and email campaigns, this multifaceted approach has deepened our community connections and reinforced the League's presence.
- Behind the scenes, we took strategic steps to strengthen our operations. Thanks to **Sara Dameron and our dedicated staff**, we streamlined key processes, allowing leaders and members to work more efficiently and increase their impact. These efforts will sustain the League's success for years to come.

To our **Sustaining Members, 1,200 women strong, thank you!** Your unwavering support, guidance, and leadership continue to propel our Mission forward. You lead by example, making a profound difference in both our League and the broader community, and we are deeply grateful.

We warmly **welcome our new Provisional class** of 175 women, eager to contribute to our Mission, and celebrate the Provisionals transitioning to Actives, as well as Actives stepping into their Sustaining role. Your dedication and service as gold-star volunteers this year have set a strong foundation, and I look forward to watching how you help shape the future of Fort Worth.

Serving as President has been one of the greatest privileges of my life. This organization has shaped who I am today, and I am endlessly grateful to serve alongside the most passionate, committed, talented, and generous women I know. A special thank you to the **2024-2025 Board of Directors**, my **Sustaining Advisor Carrie Cappel**, and **Assistant to the Board Kristi Brhlik**, your leadership, dedication, and friendship have made a lasting impact on both my life and our League.

Looking ahead, I am excited about the direction of JLFW for next year. With visionary leadership, Shay Gipson, our 96th President, and the incoming 2025-2026 Board of Directors are ready to build on our momentum and drive even greater accomplishments. I cannot wait to see how JLFW continues to grow, evolve, and advance women's leadership for meaningful community impact. Our collective dedication to volunteer action, collaboration, and training remains our guiding force, and I know the best is yet to come.

All the best,

Sarah Washington
2024-2025 President

JLFW



SNAPSHOTS





Your Year of Exploration



Explore the outdoors



Learn how to be a good friend



Gain hands-on STEM experience



Earn badges by learning new skills

Big adventures await you as a Girl Scout!



JOIN TODAY

Sign up for our Extended Year Membership* today! Girls can join for \$63, and adults for \$42. Start now and enjoy months of fun through September 2026! Visit girlscouts.org/benefits to learn more.

Scan the QR code to learn more about our Extended Year Membership.

girl scouts
of texas oklahoma plains

*The Girl Scout Extended Year membership spans April 1, 2025, to September 30, 2026, followed by the annual membership year from October 1 to September 30, which requires yearly renewal.



THE WOMEN'S CENTER: TRANSFORMING LIVES

BY LIBBY MANNESS

In 2024, an average of 111,907 individuals turned to The Women's Center for support, guidance, and empowerment. Serving women, men, and children from diverse backgrounds, the center provides vital services to help people overcome poverty, violence, and crisis. With programs in employment solutions, rape crisis and victim services, counseling, and violence prevention, The Women's Center has become a beacon of hope for many.

The Junior League of Fort Worth partners closely with the center's Employment Solutions Program. Every quarter, four JLFW volunteers host events tailored to those learning about finances, technology, and job networking. They also produce newsletters highlighting top-hiring industries in Tarrant County, including manufacturing, IT/tech, healthcare, and logistics. Through these efforts, JLFW plays a vital role in helping participants secure meaningful employment and stability.

"The work The Women's Center is doing is critical," said Connie Song, Women's Center Development Chair. "They're meeting people at different phases of their lives and providing resources to help them get back on their feet."

In addition to these events, The Women's Center provides crucial services to those in crisis. From offering gas cards for job interviews to providing specialized care for victims of sexual assault, the center's work goes far beyond traditional counseling. It has become a lifeline for those needing mental health treatment, therapy, and support.

Anyone seeking assistance can walk into The Women's Center or call its 24/7 hotline at 817-927-4000. The Women's Center stands as a pillar of support for individuals of all ages, offering hope and resources to rebuild lives, making it an ideal partner for JLFW.

JLFW DISTRIBUTES NEARLY 6,000 DIAPERS TO LOCAL FAMILIES

BY MADELINE HUNT

This year, the Junior League of Fort Worth (JLFW) proudly served hundreds of families through two large-scale diaper distribution events, led by the 2024-2025 Provisional Philanthropy Committee. With a generous budget of \$50,000 and the support of dozens of volunteers, the League placed more than 597,000 diapers and 70,000 wipes directly into the hands of families in need across Fort Worth.

The fall distribution took place Sept. 28, 2024, at four locations: Junior League Headquarters and the Cook Children's Neighborhood Clinics at Renaissance, Northside and Morris. Thanks to the incredible efforts of our volunteers, 502,000 diapers and 70,000 wipes were distributed.

The spring distribution was held March 1, 2025, at four locations: Cook Children's Renaissance and Morris clinics, along with two new partners—LVT Rise and Como Community Center. A total of 95,000 diapers were distributed, with logistical support from Two Men and a Truck, who generously transported supplies from the Tarrant Area Food Bank.

Led by **Natalie Platschka**, the Provisional Philanthropy team included **Maegan Dietze**, **Mary Gracen Bradshaw** and **Kathlyn Ferguson**. Their efforts, along with the leadership of Provisional Co-Chairs **Laura Kirspel** and **Danielle Hoefield**, made this initiative a success. Additional support came from President **Sarah Washington**; Membership Vice President **Jessica Walsh**; Diaper Bank Co-Chairs **Claire Hicks** and **Julie Wilkinson**; and **Sara Dameron**, whose contributions were invaluable. The spring event also saw strong support from Major League Members, who assisted with inventory and distribution.

Throughout the year, the Provisional Philanthropy team worked diligently to coordinate site logistics, meet with property managers and prepare volunteers. From renting tents and tables to ensuring every volunteer wore their League T-shirt with pride, no detail was overlooked. JLFW is honored to continue this impactful tradition—and excited for what lies ahead.



SUSTAINERS: LIVING THE LEGACY OF JLFW

BY MADELINE HUNT

The Sustainers of the Junior League of Fort Worth remain a vibrant and vital part of the organization, continuing to lead and serve with passion and purpose. Their experience and commitment enrich both the League and the broader community in countless ways.

From literary societies and fashion events to epicurean gatherings and art tours, there's something for everyone. Special Interest Groups like the Sunshine Singers bring music to retirement communities, while a dedicated group volunteers monthly at the Tarrant Area Food Bank.

For those easing into Sustainer life, the Sustainer Lites program offers fun, flexible opportunities—like the annual Christmas party and a spirited pickleball tournament.

As **Evie Richardson** shared at a recent General Membership Meeting, “By the time you sustain, you have been trained to be a volunteer and a volunteer leader. Now it is your time to go forth and



use what you have learned... The world is now your volunteer oyster.” With events ranging from museum tours to birthday celebrations at Colonial and monthly book clubs—and guidance from leaders like **Richardson, Mary Kathryn Anderson** and **Colleen Kleuser**—JLFW Sustainers are proof that League service doesn't end, it evolves.





ALL ABOARD: EMPOWERING AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP

BY MAGELLAN TAYLOR-BRICKY

In its 10th year, the Junior League of Fort Worth's All aBoard program underwent a transformative overhaul to better equip members for personal and professional leadership. The reimagined curriculum was designed around essential qualities of holistic leadership—communication, strategic decision-making, emotional intelligence, culture-building, innovation, and resilience.

Each monthly session combined these leadership themes with foundational board governance training through BoardBuild, covering nonprofit essentials like bylaws, parliamentary procedure, fiscal responsibility, and strategic planning. Participants also engaged in self-reflection through their CliftonStrengths, exploring how to lead authentically and effectively with their unique talents.

"All leaders need a toolbox of essential skills to serve on nonprofit boards, and we've kept that through BoardBuild," said All aBoard Chair **Magellan Taylor-Brickey**. "But what we added is a focus on

authenticity—how to lead as your whole self, using your strengths to serve. Leadership isn't about titles or a packed résumé; it's about the actions you take to serve others."

The 2024–2025 cohort heard from dynamic leaders including Dr. Deidra Turner (UTA), Pam Cannell (BoardBuild), Stae Hall (Institute for Success and Leadership Training), Anette Landeros (Trinity Metro), Ebony Rose (Rose Community Consulting), Tracey Williams (TraComm Development Group), and Kathy Taylor (HerdWise Leadership Coaching)—alongside Junior League Members who modeled servant leadership in action.

By the program's end, graduates felt empowered to embody LEADERSHIP: Listen, Empower, Adapt, Decide, Encourage, Respect, Strategize, Honesty, Inspire, and Persevere.



ONE WEEKEND, BIG IMPACT

BY LIBBY MANESS

Over 150 women from the Junior League of Fort Worth (JLFW) gathered in April for the spring Day of Giving. Together, they dedicated 456 hours of service to 21 nonprofit agencies — a testament to JLFW’s commitment to building a better community through hands-on action.

Day of Giving is a unique JLFW experience, packing intense service and meaningful impact into just one weekend. Volunteers are scattered across Fort Worth, tackling projects ranging from organizing food pantries and clothing closets to painting playgrounds, planting gardens and assisting with community events. “The magic of Day of Giving is that it takes place over a single weekend,” said Megan Leger, Day of Giving co-chair. “It’s not just about the tasks being done, it’s about the unity and connection that comes from working together.”

Each spring and fall, local agencies submit applications

to host JLFW volunteers. Applications include project descriptions and explain how the work aligns with their mission. Agencies are selected based on the scope of the project and its potential impact.

Among this year’s projects, one especially meaningful shift took place at The Nest at Justin’s Place, a nonprofit that supports single mothers and their children. Volunteers prepared a home, organized a community store and even helped move in a new family. “The mission of Justin’s Place hits home,” said Leslie Cox, Day of Giving co-chair. “Knowing that our time and energy directly contribute to helping families rebuild their lives makes every task incredibly purposeful.”

Day of Giving also plays a key role in building and expanding relationships between JLFW and local nonprofits. This spring, several new agencies participated after learning about the initiative through JLFW’s Coffee & Community program.



North Texas Community Foundation generously supported the Day of Giving efforts, enabling each volunteer to don a JLFW Volunteer shirt. “It’s an important day to connect — not only with partners we already serve, but also with new organizations that might join us in future efforts,” Leger said. “This day shines a spotlight on the organizations we support and the issues we care about, and it often inspires others to get involved.”

Day of Giving proves that change begins with small acts of service and a united community of women determined to make a difference.

Important dates to know for the 2025-2026 Day of Giving include:

Fall: Saturday, November 8, 2025

Fall Application Deadline: Friday, September 12, 2025

Spring: Saturday, April 11, 2026

Spring Application Deadline: Friday, February 6, 2026





FROM BOARD 95: THANK YOU!

ADMINISTRATION

Reflecting on this past year fills me with immense pride and gratitude. It has been a year of **growth, resilience, and meaningful impact**—both within our council and throughout our community. We've streamlined internal processes, strengthened inter-council communication, and introduced new systems that will support the League's success for years to come. Each committee rose to the challenge with creativity and collaboration, making my role all the more inspiring.

I'm especially thankful for the opportunity to work alongside a council of **committed, passionate women** who show up not only to lead but to uplift one another. We've welcomed new voices, fostered mentorship, and built a stronger foundation rooted in transparency and trust.

This year, I witnessed leaders emerge in every corner of our League. To me, every woman who raised her hand, shared her ideas, or supported her fellow member was a **trailblazer**—helping to shape the future of this organization.

Here's to continuing this momentum, honoring our mission, and stepping into another impactful year with purpose and unity. I'm truly proud of all we've accomplished together.

Kaci Lightner

COMMUNITY

This year has been deeply rewarding. I've been inspired by the dedication of our members and the impact we've made in every corner of Tarrant County. In just a few short months, we've **partnered with 36 agencies**—teaching kids to swim, stocking food pantries, and meeting urgent needs with compassion and strength.

We expanded our reach by welcoming **six new partners** into our Projects and Placements, bringing meaningful service to even more neighborhoods. Our Diaper Bank hit a major milestone, distributing over **one million diapers** across monthly and mobile distributions. Done in a Day and Day of Giving introduced new organizations to our incredible volunteers, while programs like Paint a Playground and Little Leaguers helped create joy and teach the next generation the value of service.

Coffee & Community sparked strategic conversations with partners that will shape our collective impact moving forward. Through it all, the heart of this work has been our members—thoughtful, committed women who show up, lead boldly, and make change happen.

Thank you to the Community Council, our staff, and every volunteer who gives their time and heart to this work. It's been an honor to serve alongside you.

Cara Hardin





COMMUNICATIONS

Reflecting on my year as Communications VP, I'm filled with deep gratitude for the incredible women I had the privilege of serving alongside. This council provided a unique opportunity to see the League through a broad lens, working with every council and leader and gaining a true appreciation for the breadth and depth of our **collective impact**. I've witnessed firsthand the magic that happens when abundantly talented women unite around a common mission.

We've spent **thousands of hours** creating, refining, and pivoting, but through it all, what I'm most proud of is how we showed up for others. Time and time again, we came together to elevate the Mission, amplify voices, and tell the stories that matter. The **dedication and heart** brought to this council was nothing short of inspiring.

To all League Members: thank you. Your commitment made it possible for us to shine a light on the work being done to build a stronger community. I'm reminded of the line from What Do You Do With an Idea?: "**You change the world.**" Together, that's exactly what we've been doing—and I'm honored to have been a part of it.

Janie Latimer

EDUCATION

I am filled with gratitude for the growth and accomplishments we've seen across our Education Council. This year, the All aBoard Training program soared to new heights, and we proudly introduced the first-ever **Community Leadership Fair**, where current and past All aBoard graduates connected with opportunities for board positions, further empowering them to make an impact in the community.

A significant highlight this year was the restructuring of our training program, which successfully elevated our strategic plan and refocused on **leadership development**. Our Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Belonging, and Access (DEIBA) committee continued to excel, making sure every League Member felt seen, heard, and included.

We were honored to receive the **FWISD Volunteers Partnership of the Year** award, a true testament to the dedication and hard work of our members. The Education Needs Fund provided \$50,000 this year, supporting essential educational initiatives. And I was in awe of how seamlessly the MINTS program ran, showing the dedication of our members. It's inspiring to witness the hours of service we contribute to FWISD each year, and I am incredibly proud of all we've achieved.

Tara Reed, Ph.D.



FINANCE

This League year brings one word to mind: grateful. Grateful for the trust you placed in me, grateful for the team that supported this work, and most of all, **grateful for what we've accomplished**—together.

This year, we refined processes, strengthened transparency, and ensured every dollar worked harder for our Mission. We raised more than \$1.3 million, awarded \$350,000 in project grants, and committed \$450,000 more for the year ahead. That's not just good stewardship—**it's impact in action.**

From playgrounds and diaper distributions to member training and volunteer service, **the numbers tell a powerful story.** But behind those numbers are women who show up, ask the right questions, and make courageous decisions. Passing the 2025-2026 budget was more than just a milestone—it was a promise: that **we will continue building on this legacy of generosity,** strategy, and service.

Finance may live behind the scenes, but it touches every part of the League—and I'm proud to have played a small role in that.

Thank you for your dedication, your energy, and your belief in what we can do when we combine purpose with precision. It has been an honor to serve with you.

Emily Paul

FINANCE ASSISTANT

I'm proud of the incredible impact we've made together. Through the **Community Opportunities Fund,** we've supported 14 local organizations and sponsored 15 nonprofit events, deploying **\$75,000** into the community to meet emergent and unbudgeted needs. This work reflects the heart of our mission—responding with purpose and compassion where it's needed most.

We also launched the **Education Needs Fund,** which in its inaugural year has granted **\$50,000** to local educational organizations, helping expand learning opportunities for children across our community. These achievements are a direct result of your dedication, generosity, and spirit of service. Thank you for making this year one of meaningful progress and lasting impact.

Savannah Petronis

FUND DEVELOPMENT

“Service is the rent you pay for room on this earth.” That quote from Shirley Chisholm has always inspired me to **lead with purpose**—and this year, the Fund Development Council embodied that spirit in full force.

From a record-breaking Christmas in Cowtown to another successful Grand Entry Gala, this team showed up and showed out. Rodeo Program Sales will always hold a special place in my heart! These women work incredibly hard, and the funds they raise directly support our Fort Worth community.

Annual Fund led the charge on North Texas Giving Day and kept up the momentum with spirited merchandise throughout the year. Grant Writing shared our Mission so effectively that it resulted in grant funding to support our Diaper Bank—**proving that every word and every effort matters**.

If I’ve learned one thing this year, it’s that leadership isn’t about knowing it all. It’s about **listening, leaning on your team, and creating space for different perspectives**. That’s how we make the best decisions—not just for our council, but for the League as a whole.

Rachel Navejar Phillips

MEMBERSHIP

When I joined JLFW in 2015, I never imagined serving on the Board. But this year as Membership VP has been one of the **most rewarding experiences** of my League journey.

My role has been all about you—our incredible members. From answering questions to anticipating solutions before problems even arise, our goal has always been to create a meaningful and supportive experience. Leadership isn’t about having all the answers; it’s about **listening, showing up, and serving with intention**. I’ve learned the power of collaboration and witnessed firsthand the impact we make when we come together.

This work isn’t easy, but it’s deeply fulfilling. It takes **hours, heart, and hustle**—and I’m beyond grateful for the incredible women I’ve worked beside. My council has been a true force of positivity and progress.

As we close out the 95th year, **I hope you feel proud**. You are the heart of this League, and your energy, kindness, and commitment continue to shape our community for the better.

Jessica Walsh



NOMINATING CHAIR

Serving in this role was such an honor. I gained a deep appreciation for the importance of thoughtful succession planning to **recognize potential future leaders** within the League. I also found great purpose in supporting and empowering Members. Thank you for allowing me to be a part of your journey this year.

Corrine Hyman Quast

BOARD OF DIRECTORS ASSISTANT

This year, we celebrated 95 incredible years of impact—and what a year it’s been! Under the inspiring leadership of our Board of Directors, we leaned into innovation, strengthened community partnerships, and deepened our commitment to empowering women through service.

As a Board Assistant, I had a front-row seat to the **energy, passion, and big-picture thinking** that drives our League forward. From brainstorming new initiatives to seeing firsthand how decisions turn into real community impact—it’s been both eye-opening and fun. There’s something really special about being in the room where it happens (and yes, there’s laughter, snacks, and plenty of teamwork along the way!).

We celebrated record-breaking fundraisers, launched new volunteer opportunities, and doubled down on training and inclusion. It’s been a year of **growth, celebration, and meaningful connection.**

Here’s to 95 years of empowering women and transforming Fort Worth—and to an even brighter 96th year ahead!

Kristi Brhlik

PRESIDENT-ELECT

I’m filled with gratitude for the opportunities and experiences that have shaped me both personally and professionally this year. Attending AJLI Conferences was a true highlight—connecting with women from across the country who are passionately serving in their own Leagues was inspiring and energizing.

I had the privilege of sharpening my leadership skills and, more importantly, **empowering other League women** through trainings and development opportunities. Serving on the Project Research & Development Committee was especially rewarding as we carefully selected the nine agencies we’ll partner with in 2025-2026.

I’m also grateful for the opportunity to collaborate with the **incredible women** who will serve alongside me on the **96th Board of Directors.** Their passion and dedication are truly inspiring. And I cannot close this year without expressing my appreciation for our President, Sarah Washington, whose mentorship and grace have left a lasting impression on me. It’s been an **extraordinary year of growth, service, and sisterhood.**

Shay Gipson





PRESIDENT

“SERVING AS PRESIDENT HAS BEEN AN INCREDIBLE HONOR. THIS YEAR, OUR MEMBERS CAME TOGETHER WITH PURPOSE AND PASSION—INVESTING \$1 MILLION, GIVING THOUSANDS OF VOLUNTEER HOURS, AND HOSTING RECORD-BREAKING FUNDRAISERS THAT WILL LEAVE A LASTING IMPACT ON FORT WORTH.”

- SARAH WASHINGTON





WOMEN OF THE YEAR

Each year, the Junior League of Fort Worth honors members whose service, leadership, and dedication leave a lasting impact on our League and community.

Old Shoe Award: **Allison Gross**

This award honors an Active going Sustaining who has been the steady, loyal backbone of JLFW—and Allison is all that and more. With quiet strength and tireless dedication, she’s shown up year after year, leading with humility and heart. Her legacy of servant leadership will be felt for years to come. Congratulations, Allison!

Actives of the Year: **Laura Kirspel** and **Danielle Hoefeld**

Congratulations to Laura and Danielle, our Members of the Year! Their intentional leadership empowered this year’s Provisional class to grow in confidence and community. Through encouragement, excellence, and a heart for others, they’ve left an indelible mark on the League.

Sustainer of the Year: **Kim Blouin**

Congratulations to our Sustainer of the Year, Kim! With grace, wisdom, and unwavering commitment, Kim embodies what it means to serve for a lifetime. Through mentorship and continued service, she reminds us all of the power of Sustainer leadership.

MINTS of the Year: **Keishondalyn Butler-Bryant**

Kei went above and beyond in her MINTS placement, showing up with passion, consistency, and care. Her dedication to mentoring and supporting others made a lasting impact—she truly exemplifies what it means to be a Gold Star Volunteer.

Provisional of the Year: **Kristi J. Parks**

Kristi stepped into her Provisional year with energy, commitment, and a heart for service. Her willingness to learn, lead, and lift others up did not go unnoticed. We can’t wait to see how she continues to grow within the League!

MEMBER CELEBRATION

On March 27, JLFW hosted its annual Member Celebration, the Cowtown Classic, at the stunning National Cowgirl Hall of Fame.

The evening brought together Actives, Provisionals, Sustainers, and friends to honor a year of service, growth, and impact.

With a fun and sustainable twist, attendees were encouraged to re-wear a beloved dress and favorite shoes, proving that style and purpose can go hand in hand. From the festive atmosphere to the unforgettable company, the night was filled with laughter, connection, and celebration.

Highlights included the announcement of our Actives of the Year and a custom hat giveaway from Member-owned business, Blazing Brims, as well as bandana stitching, a true nod to our Fort Worth roots. Members also enjoyed a beautiful setting, lively conversation, and the joy of gathering with women who make a difference every day.

Special thanks to **Lizzy Sutton**, Member Celebration Chair and the incredible Member Celebration Committee for planning such a memorable evening. From start to finish, the Cowtown Classic captured the heart and spirit of the League: honoring tradition, celebrating leadership, and looking boldly toward the future.



MRS. EUGENE D. OLCOTT, MRS. ROBERT BERNARD and MRS. ROBERT L. BOWEN, left to right, of the Junior League's marionette committee, are shown with the stage and members of the "cast" for the marionette show "Rumpelstiltskin," which will be given a public performance at 10:30 a. m. Saturday in Fort Worth Children's Museum auditorium. The current production is being given a score of performances in children's homes, hospitals, schools and day care centers.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

BY MADELINE HUNT

Tucked away in the archives of the Junior League of Fort Worth (JLFW) is a charming and impactful initiative that many may not know about—the Puppet Show Program. Launched in the 1970s as part of the League's Poison Education Program, these shows featured characters like Mr. Yuk to teach children about the dangers of household poisons in a fun, memorable way.

League Members wrote original scripts, designed puppets and performed across schools and community centers, transforming complex safety messages into accessible lessons for young audiences. The hands-on initiative not only educated children, but also helped volunteers build skills in public speaking, storytelling and community engagement.

The Puppet Show Program exemplified JLFW's commitment to innovative, effective community education. By turning critical health information into captivating performances, the League reinforced its mission to promote volunteerism and improve communities through the leadership of trained volunteers.

Although the program has since concluded, its legacy lives on through JLFW's continued creativity in addressing community needs—including today's MINTS initiative, where League members support Fort Worth ISD schools. The Puppet Show Program remains a powerful example of how purpose and creativity can leave a lasting impact on generations of children and families.



A MILLION REASONS TO CELEBRATE FORT WORTH NATURE CENTER & REFUGE ENDOWMENT REACHES HISTORIC MILESTONE

BY NORTH TEXAS COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

As new neighborhoods and highways spread across North Texas, the Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge remains a place where time slows down, where birdsong drowns out city noise, and families can wander trails beneath the shelter of ancient oaks. The 3,650-acre sanctuary is one of the few places left where children can spot a bison, hear frogs croaking by the water's edge, and learn about the land that came long before us.

Preserving this natural treasure has been a shared effort, led by community leaders, volunteers, and passionate nature lovers. In 1987, Murray James took a bold step by establishing an endowment to provide a permanent source of funding for the Nature Center. Since then, donors have embraced her vision, steadily growing the fund and building a legacy rooted in conservation.

Just this year, the Murray James Nature Center Endowment Fund at North Texas Community Foundation surpassed \$1 million. This milestone marks the beginning of a new chapter, as the endowment will begin making annual grants to sustain and improve the Nature Center.

That means ongoing care for trails, restored habitats, and upgraded facilities will continue to enhance the experience for all who visit. It means educational programs will continue to engage visitors of all ages. It means the bison herd, prairie dogs and other wildlife ambassadors will receive ongoing veterinary care. And most importantly, it means the Fort Worth Nature Center will remain a place of wonder for generations to come.

Today, the endowment fund's leadership, **Marty Leonard**, Adelaide Leavens, Bill Meadows and Laura Harrison, carry this legacy forward.

You can be part of this legacy, too. Visit the Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge to explore its trails and wildlife or consider making a donation to the Murray James Nature Center & Refuge Endowment at North Texas Community Foundation to help strengthen its future. Learn more at northtexascf.org/donate.

Because some places are too precious not to protect.



**Passion for
Community**

**Expertise in
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Corrine Flynn Quast

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LIFE IN THE LEAGUE



**LIFE AS A PROVISIONAL:
KELLY M. WARD**

The League has made a huge impact on **Kelly M. Ward's** life in the most positive, but beautifully overwhelming way. She cherishes the sense of empowerment she has felt being surrounded by devoted, intelligent, selfless, and hard-working women. **Ward** shares that she's "felt so much purpose by serving alongside inspiring women that are like-minded in not only my values, but my daily life."

She is a Brazilian American art historian, who works in PR at the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth and teaches at UT Arlington. As an active parishioner of St. Patrick Cathedral, she also serves as a reader at mass. Like a lot of JLFW members, she has a lot on her plate, but she still managed to fulfill the provisional requirements.

Ward's advice to incoming Provisionals is to say "yes" to serving and social endeavors. The decision to join the League is a big commitment, but one that you will not regret. "Lean on your support system and your small group. Be hopeful and open-minded. Most importantly, know that Junior League women are not passive—we are a force—trailblazers, changemakers, and women who deeply care. Get ready to be a part of something life changing!"



**LIFE AS AN ACTIVE:
JACKIE REYES**
BY LIBBY MANESS

For **Jackie Reyes**, joining the Junior League of Fort Worth wasn't just about volunteering—it became a journey of connection, creativity and community. Now in her fifth year with JLFW, **Reyes** says the friendships she's built have been the most rewarding part of her experience.

"Being in a group with like-minded women has been so enriching and truly the highlight of my experience," **Reyes** said.

Reyes currently serves as co-chair of special events for the Christmas in Cowtown committee—a role she's held since her first active year. "Still going strong having served in various CIC leadership positions. I love CIC"

Outside of JLFW, **Reyes** runs her own business, Pink Petunia Baking Co., and is well known for teaching cookie decorating classes—something she enjoys sharing with fellow League Members. "I love teaching classes to the women of JLFW," she said. "It creates connection and joy through creativity."

Balancing business ownership with League commitments isn't easy, but **Reyes** embraces the challenge. "I'm constantly tired and feel like 'balance' is a foreign word, but JLFW has helped my business grow—and it's helped me grow too," she said.



**LIFE AS A BOARD MEMBER:
EMILY PAUL**

With a background in professional accounting and a heart for community service, **Emily Paul** has found deep purpose and connection through her time in the Junior League of Fort Worth. After earning both her BBA and MPA from the University of Texas at Austin, she built a successful career in finance, but it's her work with the League that she calls "some of the most meaningful and rewarding."

She loved her time as Diaper Bank Co-Chair. "It was such a hands-on experience that combined logistics, impact, and service," she recalls.

Now serving her second term on the Board, this time as Finance VP, she brings her professional skills to support the League's operations and future planning. "It's been an honor to give back to an organization that gives so much to others," she says.

Her advice to fellow Members? "Embrace your unique strengths—everyone has something to contribute, and the League is stronger when we all bring our talents to the table."

Outside the League, she enjoys life with her husband, Taylor, and their two daughters, Eleanor and Isla, who are beginning to understand what it means to be part of something bigger than yourself.

LIFE IN THE LEAGUE

LITTEST LEAGUERS

Morgan Coffey welcomed daughter Rowan Ruth Coffey on December 23, 2024.

CONGRATULATIONS

Martha Beardsley graduated with her master's degree from TCU.

Claire Berthold was promoted to Senior Learning Consultant at GM Financial.

Kim Blouin was named a 360West Magazine Women of Impact 2025.

Meredith Floyd became engaged to fiancé, Byron Hameline, on December 24, 2024.

Shay Gipson was named as a Fort Worth Business Press Great Woman of Texas 2025.

Kadey Heidrich graduated with her master's degree from UT Arlington.

Kaci Lightner became engaged to her fiancé, Sean Gibeault, on March 26, 2025.

Capriana Oyedeji was promoted to Office Manager.

Madison Obregon was promoted to Senior Manager of Marketing Operations for Love Management.

Lisa Schuessler was named as a 360West Magazine Women of Impact 2025.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

TRANSFER IN

Mary Claire Boycel | P | *JL Amarillo*

TRANSFER OUT

Jessica Corn | P | *JL Orange County*

Joanna Van Engle | A | *JL Austin*

CHANGE OF STATUS

Tiffany Anderson | A | *Leave of Absence*

Shannon Roussy-Sanchez | A | *Leave of Absence*

Kendall Tetirick | A | *Leave of Absence*

RESIGN

JLFW recently transitioned to a new membership platform.

If your status is listed incorrectly here, please reach out for assistance.

Danielle Alexander | A

Emma Barker | A

Katie Carpenter | A

Kayle Davis | P

Cassidy Duwe | A

Bailey Foldi | A

Kendall Frenkel | A

Kammi Herraid | P

Jessica Kirkpatrick | P

Hannah Kopriva | A

Irene Menderhoud | A

Patricia Nicholson | A

Lakeshia Pickett | A

Emily Roll | A

Kaitlyn Ruben | A

Anita Urenda | A

Colleen Whittlesey | A

Brooke Willis | A

Ali Williams | A

Kylie Williams | A

REINSTATE

Meredith Andrews | S

CONDOLENCE

Allison Gross | A | *Loss of Father*

Judy Jones | S | *Loss of Son*

Chloe Lewis | P | *Loss of Uncle*

Leslie Summers | S | *Loss of Husband*

Jessica Walsh | A | *Loss of Grandmother*

Katherine Ware | S | *Loss of Husband*

IN MEMORY

Isabelle Brown Newberry Hulsey | Sustainer Emeritus

Murray Armstrong James | Sustainer Emeritus

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GITTINGS SPOTLIGHT



KACI LIGHTNER | 2024-2025 ADMINISTRATIVE VICE PRESIDENT

As the current Administrative Vice President for the Junior League of Fort Worth (JLFW), **Kaci Lightner** brings intention, focus, and heart to her leadership. With a Public Relations degree from the University of Oklahoma, she leans on her background in communication to streamline internal operations and strengthen member engagement.

Lightner is also deeply committed to her community through her involvement with ACH Child and Family Services, supporting youth in need. She credits JLFW with sharpening her leadership style and building lifelong friendships. “I encourage members to lead with purpose, stay curious, and never underestimate the power of collaboration—it’s where the real growth happens,” she shared.

Her fiancé, Sean Gibeault, is a constant source of encouragement. Reflecting on her League journey, she adds, “Embrace every opportunity, because even the small moments can shape your greatest impact.”



CORRINE HYMAN QUAST | 2024-2025 NOMINATING CHAIR

Serving as this year’s Nominating Chair on the Board was such an honor for **Corrine Hyman Quast**. In this role, she gained a deep appreciation for the importance of thoughtful succession planning to ensure the continued success of the League. **Hyman Quast** also found great purposes in supporting and empowering members, helping them recognize their potential as future leaders.

A proud member of the Junior League of Fort Worth for 17 years, she has loved the opportunity to serve and give back to our community. She is a TCU graduate with a bachelor’s degree in marketing and a minor in social work. With her husband, Michael, they are proud parents to two children, Cartwright and Autumn. With over two decades of experience as a real estate agent at Williams Trew, Real Estate, **Hyman Quast** is grateful to be connected to this community through her career and her League service.



CARRIE CAPPEL | 2024-2025 SUSTAINING ADVISOR

For **Carrie Cappel**, being a Sustainer has had full-circle moments of impact, legacy, and leadership.

Serving as Sustaining Advisor to the Junior League of Fort Worth Board of Directors has been an honor and a great privilege—equally as rewarding as her time as President (2018-2019). “The League is composed of smart and driven women with servant leader hearts,” she shares. “Junior League women will blow you away EVERY... SINGLE... TIME!”

This year, she brought wisdom to her advisory role while also celebrating a major professional milestone: stepping into the role of Region Vice President – North Texas at Forestar Group Inc. After years practicing law, she’s embraced a new chapter and embraced the leadership foundation she built through her League journey.

To Members, she offers this advice: show up, stay curious, and lean into the relationships. “The League is a powerful launchpad—for personal growth, for leadership, and for community transformation.”

Reflecting on this year’s journey, she remains most grateful for the people: “Almost 2,000 Members—each one building a stronger Fort Worth and lifting each other along the way.”

Sewell is proud to support the
Junior League of Fort Worth.

S E W E L L



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