

THE JUNIOR LEAGUE OF HOUSTON, INC.

HOUSTON NEWS

WINTER 2020



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—Neville Goddard

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WINTER 2020

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

**"Imagination is the most marvelous, miraculous, inconceivable powerful force
the world has ever known."**

– Napoleon Hill

In my wildest imagination, I could have never envisioned the journey we have all taken over the last eight months. Every plan, every vision for the beginning of a new decade is now vastly different. What is truly meaningful and most important has certainly been put into perspective for each of us. Our League, our community and our world remain in extraordinary times. Yet, as you will read in this wonderful issue of *Houston News*, it is times such as these that highlight the strength and adaptability of League volunteers, and ignite the opportunity to create new and innovative programs to meet the needs of our community and those we serve.

When I shared that this year's theme would focus on "*Imagining*," I truly had no idea how profoundly significant that focus would be. Chosen more than a year prior, the theme *Imagine* is very personal to me, grounded by the League's Vision statement and a reflection of my life's journey after the loss of my father. Today, there is not a better descriptor for all we are undertaking as an organization, quite literally, re-imagining every aspect of the League experience, as we continue to adapt to what the world has presented us this year.

I have heard many times that *Imagination creates Reality*, and as you will read in the stories included in this issue, this is undoubtedly a true statement. Although unique and challenging in so many ways, this year has created opportunities to serve and provide training to our League community in methods previously not possible. The League worked to adapt and to essentially recreate our community service model, temporarily altering volunteer efforts for the year. There is no greater example of the League's ingenuity than the new volunteer IMPACT program. Through this new program, League volunteers continue to serve our 34 long-standing partner



agencies, as well as past Community Assistance grant recipients and many additional nonprofit agencies across Houston.

For almost a century, the Junior League of Houston has been an organization of change makers; on the forefront of identifying problems and finding impactful solutions in collaborative and innovative ways. Through direct hands-on training, the League strives to give members the skills needed to create solutions and to improve the Houston community and the lives of those we serve.

The list of issues we have tackled is robust and includes healthcare for children, food insecurity, literacy and abuse and neglect to highlight a few. Recent events have brought us to another moment in our history, where together, we have the opportunity to pioneer change grounded in the values of our organization.

We seek to construct the steps that will bring forth an equitable society free of racism, inequality and injustice. The

League is committed to offering educational opportunities to ensure we are living our values of inclusion, community and service, and to providing our strong and diverse membership the tools to effectively participate in the difficult but meaningful conversations ahead. As an organization committed to "Building a Better Community" we are focused on actions aligned with our Values.

If you look across this great city of Houston, you will see a reflection of the Junior League's efforts, purpose, and impact spread across the landscape of our community. Together, guided by our Mission and Vision, we will continue to create innovative opportunities to serve. We will lift one another, we will learn from the challenges faced this year, we will build upon our storied history, and we will absolutely continue to be the change makers for our city. Because truly, there is no limitation to what we can achieve...except those of our own *Imagination*.



Rachel Podsednik Regan

President



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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

"So often in life, things that you regard as an impediment turn out to be great, good fortune."

— Ruth Bader Ginsburg



The Junior League of Houston is built on 95 years of traditions. Although, this League year, our 97th President **Rachel Regan** described how we lost one of our most important traditions – the tradition of togetherness. Almost every plan and vision our executive team had for the year is now different.

If there is a motto for 2020 it must be, "We are living in uncertain times." Day after day, the same handful of phrases clog our social media feeds, in-boxes and conversations. Ubiquitous phrases like 'unprecedented situation,' 'feelings of uncertainty,' 'trying times,' 'the new normal' and how can we leave out 'you're on mute' from this list? These catch-all terms for difficult things that test our resilience have empowered many to reimagine the future.

Rachel could not have selected a better word for her theme this year – *Imagine*. In a year like no other, our leadership and members have persevered and found new and creative ways to continue the League's mission of "Building a Better Community." What was imagined at the start of the League year by members from home offices and kitchen tables, has now become reality.

From virtual General and Group meetings, to Zoom Council calls and curb-side Pantry pick-ups, the League has adapted and found alternative ways to continue serving our community by supporting agency partners and training volunteers.

While we may not be able to celebrate many League traditions in the ways we are used to, some things have not changed. Provisional

and Transfer teams have found ways to foster relationships with new members, rising leaders are being trained through Leadership Institute Training (LIT), community agencies are now being served through the newly created IMPACT program and the Tea Room's orange rolls are still just as sweet.

From my time in the League, I have learned the more you put into it, the more you get out of it. After many years of volunteering with various community agency partners, I finally mustered the courage to raise my hand and apply for an administrative position. I was elated when offered the prestigious opportunity to serve as Editor of *Houston News*. I have learned more in this position than I have in any other League placement. Hopefully, my story will inspire others to put themselves out there, try something new and apply for the many leadership opportunities the League offers.

I am honored to serve as this year's editor. An extra thanks goes to the veterans on the *Houston News* team for their guidance and support as I navigate my first administrative placement. A big thanks to **Melissa Matsu**, our Sustainer Advisor, who always has answers to my many questions, and **Sarah Davidson**, *Houston News* Assistant Editor, who managed her responsibilities and more all the way from Singapore!

The Winter 2020 issue of *Houston News* is devoted to featuring how our members have reimaged what is possible for the Junior League of Houston.

Alle Crouch Houston

Houston News Editor



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JLH Healthcare Hero: *Dr. Elisabeth Netherton*

JUNIOR LEAGUE OF HOUSTON MEMBER ELISABETH NETHERTON, MD
CO-FOUND THE “MENNINGER MOMS” PROGRAM TO OFFER
SELF-CARE SOLUTIONS TO MOTHERS IMPACTED
BY THE STRESSES OF COVID-19

By **Sarah Davidson**, Houston News Assistant Editor

"M

others will so frequently
move mountains to
meet their children's
needs, but neglect

their own wellbeing in the process," said **Elisabeth Netherton, MD**, a Junior League of Houston member who serves as a practicing psychiatrist. Her observation is especially timely in the context of today's global COVID-19 pandemic. To address this matter, Dr. Netherton has recently partnered with a colleague, psychologist **Jessica Rohr, PhD**, to develop Texas' first virtual maternal mental wellness program called **Menninger Moms**. Designed by mothers, for mothers, the telehealth program aims to provide solutions to help moms cope right now and develop long-term habits for managing their mental health in the future.

Dr. Netherton is originally from Austin, Texas, where she graduated from The University of Texas at Austin. After moving to Houston to attend medical school at the University of Texas Health Science Center, she completed residency training at Baylor College



Elisabeth Netherton, MD, psychiatrist

of Medicine three years ago, specializing in adult psychiatry. Today, Dr. Netherton serves as a staff psychiatrist at the Menninger Clinic, Houston's nationally-renowned specialty psychiatric hospital, where she focuses on the treatment of depression and anxiety, primarily in women. Board certified in psychiatry, she is also an assistant professor at Baylor College of Medicine, where she lectures to medical students and performs clinical teaching.

A second-generation member of the Junior League, Dr. Netherton fondly remembers accompanying her mother, a Junior League of Austin member, to her administrative shifts as a young child. In her five years of service to the Junior League of Houston, Dr. Netherton has held a variety of placements, including Tea Room Cashier Chairman, Group Meetings Coordinator, Membership Council Assistant, Leadership Institute Training Candidate, and Provisional Mentor. Dr. Netherton is the mother of two children, ages six and four, and enjoys practicing yoga and listening to live music in her spare time.

TODAY, DR. NETHERTON SERVES AS A STAFF PSYCHIATRIST
AT THE MENNINGER CLINIC, HOUSTON'S NATIONALLY-
RENOWNED SPECIALTY PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL,
WHERE SHE FOCUSES ON THE TREATMENT OF
DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY, PRIMARILY IN WOMEN.



Dr. Netherton speaks on a panel about mental health at the Junior League of Austin



Jessica Rohr, PhD, psychologist



Dr. Netherton and Dr. Rohr give a presentation



Dr. Netherton with her work partner, Dr. Jessica Rohr

Completing her provisional League year near the end of her residency training was a formative event for Dr. Netherton. She cites her understanding of the challenges arising from juggling League shifts and call schedules, all while caring for her two young children, as a driving force behind her professional calling to care for mothers. “I had two children during my residency,” she said. “This experience certainly shifted my understanding of and empathy for the challenges facing working mothers. I also increasingly appreciate that through working with mothers, I have the ability to improve the wellbeing of women, children, and the family systems in a lasting way,” she stated. During the 2020-2021 League year, Dr. Netherton elected to take leave from active service to focus on launching the *Menninger Moms* program.

On August 4, 2020, Dr. Netherton and Dr. Jessica Rohr co-hosted a virtual Group Meeting for League members entitled “Women’s Mental Health”, where participants learned about self-care strategies for managing pandemic-related stress and about the *Menninger Moms* program. In the Group Meeting, Dr. Netherton explained how the current global pandemic has presented an especially trying time for mothers, “Motherhood has always been challenging, but as a result of COVID-19, many mothers are now also struggling with isolation and fears about health and the economy. Additionally, many moms are now balancing working from home and homeschooling for the first time. Together these factors create a huge need for help with managing the mental and emotional burden of these challenging times,” she said.

The doctors informed meeting participants of the extensive virtual offerings of the *Menninger Moms* program, which includes therapy for individuals, groups, families and marriages, as well as support groups. Additional services include consultations for medication management, substance use, nutrition and exercise and spiritual counseling. Dr. Netherton shared, “My hope is to normalize the idea of investing in ourselves and our own wellness as a necessary and accessible component of mothering and also to normalize the idea of struggling, because we know that so many women are.”

Dr. Netherton also drew attention to the virtual format of *Menninger Moms* as an important part of its usefulness: “Women are able to get started working with us without a wait, and when questions arise they are able to call us directly,” she said. “I find that women often worry about whether they will be judged if they reach out to clinicians, are unsure of what kind of therapy might be useful for them or are frustrated by phone trees and long waits to see someone. Our hope is that *Menninger Moms* will remove some of these barriers and provide services that are women-centric and helpful to the challenges that moms are facing right now,” she concluded.

This popular Group Meeting was attended remotely by 45 League members, with over thirty waitlisted. Participant **Courtney Durham** expressed her appreciation to the League for hosting the virtual gathering: “Being a mother of three young children, including a baby, I am grateful to the League for hosting a meeting focused on Women’s Mental Health, especially given the current pandemic we are all facing and the challenges that have arisen for all women, including mothers,

continued



Dr. Netherton with her son



Dr. Netherton with her daughter at the Junior League of Houston's Brunch with Santa

during this time," she said.

Courtney also noted that one of the self-care strategies presented, allowing herself permission to grieve, has particular relevance for her current season of life. She shared, "Dr. Netherton spoke about giving ourselves permission to feel sad during periods of uncertainty and stress. She assured us that it is okay to allow ourselves permission to feel both sadness and gratitude at the same time. For example, I can be saddened by missing out on having one-on-one time with our newborn at home and I can also be grateful for having all three children at home together. Both feelings can co-exist."

Jessica Mitchell Essalih, Group Meetings Coordinator, reflected on the successful event, "The Training & Education team and I were thrilled that Dr. Netherton and Dr. Rohr took the time to speak to our members about a topic that is so relevant and timely! Member feedback was overwhelmingly positive. From the useful content, to the enthusiastic delivery and presentation, Dr. Netherton and Dr. Rohr helped us to execute a thought-provoking group meeting."

The *Menninger Moms* program is currently available to any Texas mother of children under 18 years of age. To find more information about the program, visit <http://www.menningerclinic.org/treatment/treatment-for-adults/outpatient-programs/menninger-moms-program> or call (713) 904-1876 for a free phone consultation. 🦋

"MY HOPE IS TO NORMALIZE THE IDEA OF INVESTING IN OURSELVES AND OUR OWN WELLNESS AS A NECESSARY AND ACCESSIBLE COMPONENT OF MOTHERING AND ALSO TO NORMALIZE THE IDEA OF STRUGGLING, BECAUSE WE KNOW THAT SO MANY WOMEN ARE." - Dr. Elisabeth Netherton



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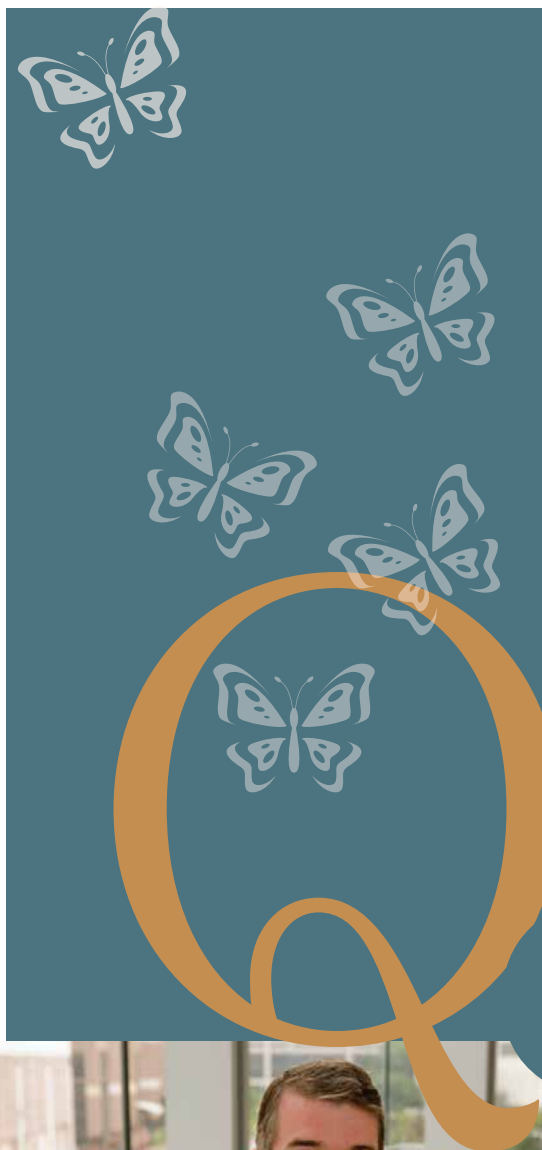
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As COVID-19 continues to affect lives across the Greater Houston Area and the world it's important to seek trustworthy, reliable sources of information and answers. The still-evolving nature of the pandemic has created a variety of complex challenges and uncertainty. The Junior League of Houston remains focused on protecting the health and safety of members, guests, employees and their families from the risks associated with the virus. As the news and research continue to unfold, the League wanted to share some frequently asked questions related to the current health crisis.

Our goal is to keep our community safe, informed and empowered – especially during these difficult times.

In this “Ask the Expert” Q&A, we do just that: We met with healthcare professionals with ties to the League to answer some of the coronavirus-related questions that are top of mind as the world continues to navigate these uncharted waters.

Q&A WITH INFECTIOUS DISEASE EXPERT

DR. WESLEY LONG AND JLH HEALTHCARE HEROES ON THE FRONTLINES

By **Dolores Ann Lozano**, Houston News Writer

DR. WESLEY LONG

Dr. Wesley Long is currently the Medical Director of Diagnostic Microbiology Laboratory at Houston Methodist Hospital. He received his MD degree in 2007 from The University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) in Galveston, TX, where he also earned a PhD in Experimental Pathology. Dr. Long has experience in leveraging next generation sequencing and his research centers on genomics of multidrug-resistant bacteria and now, COVID-19. He currently serves as a member of the Editorial Board for Archives of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine. Dr. Long's wife, **Megan Arbour Long**, is now a sustainer.

Dr. Long started preparing for COVID-19 in January 2020, and quickly began working with his colleagues in the clinical lab to develop and roll out testing. From early March through Easter, there was not a day that he was not present in the hospital.



Researching microscopic life forms and processes



What exactly is a virus?

More specifically, what is COVID-19, also known as coronavirus?

Viruses are extremely simple – just nucleic acid and a few proteins. Viruses are dependent on other living organisms – in the case of COVID-19, dependent on us as humans – to reproduce and spread. They are entirely dependent on our bodies and our behavior. COVID-19 falls in the same category as many viruses that cause the common cold. In general, coronaviruses are a class of viruses that cause upper respiratory infections, ranging from mild to severe.

How severe is this illness? Despite the reported cases across the world, is catching COVID-19 twice rare?

Most cases of the new coronavirus are mild to moderate. Severe cases can lead to pneumonia, difficulty breathing and even death. Those most at risk of developing a serious case of COVID-19 include individuals who:

- Are over the age of 65;
- Have chronic health conditions; and/or,
- Are immune compromised, or otherwise immune suppressed.

Right now, reported reinfections are incredibly rare. If you had a confirmed positive case of COVID-19 that you recovered from, your body's immune system should give you some protection for some period of time after you've recovered. Because the virus is so new, we still do not have a large body of data or a lot of experience to teach us how long the immunity lasts. Time, testing and more research is the recipe to understanding the risk of reinfection. The biggest takeaway is that whether you have previously tested positive for COVID-19 or not, you still need to wear masks, you still need to wash your hands, social distance, and do all the best safety practices to protect yourself and others.

Why is it critical for people to get a flu shot?

We need everybody that can, to get their flu shot. Everything we are doing to prevent the spread of COVID-19 – handwashing, masking, and social distancing – should help prevent transmission of flu as well, but getting a flu vaccine this season is the best thing you can do to keep yourself out of the hospital. You definitely do not want to get

influenza and COVID-19 at the same time. Hopefully, we will have a COVID-19 vaccine as early as the Spring of 2021. Clinical trials are happening now. Definitely, you need to get your flu shot. People need to remember, even if we are better off in terms of number of cases than we were at the peak in July, COVID-19 is still out there and circulating. We are still diagnosing people with COVID-19 every day. So, until we get a vaccine and get COVID-19 under control, we are still at risk of another wave. We need to keep influenza cases low, so we have maximum resources available to fight COVID-19.

Dr. Long says he has been comforted by his family and virtual cooking classes. "I would have never thought about making pasta by hand before. I just ordered an outdoor kitchen. Lots of home cooking has definitely helped my family get through these times."

BRIELLE CROVETTI

Putting together the pieces
in medical school



Brielle Crovetti is a third year Medical Student at Baylor College of Medicine and is an active League volunteer. She graduated from The University of Texas in 2016, where she earned a Bachelor of Science and Arts with High Honors in Biology.

During the first two months of the pandemic, Crovetti recalls being removed from hospital rotations due to personal protective equipment (PPE) shortages. Fortunately, this allowed her to participate in many different volunteer efforts around Houston, as well as further research interests. She even took a course on medical Spanish. Now, back in clinics, Crovetti supports patients both in and out of the operating room on her general surgery rotation. COVID-19 has prevented most patients from having visitors, so she has the unique opportunity to act as their support system while they are in the hospital. On top of it all, she currently serves as the Executive Special Projects Coordinator.



Why do healthcare workers play an essential part in society, particularly during times of crisis?

Healthcare workers, doctors, nurses – really everyone in the healthcare space – are leaders in society. We are expected to be leaders in the community. In medical school applications, for example, leadership is one of the most important pillars that admissions officers look for. We are constantly put in leadership positions and evaluated on what we can do to ultimately improve. In this COVID-19 crisis, healthcare professionals need to be leaders in the hospital, but more importantly, in the community. We must model the practice of wearing masks, social distancing and more to keep our communities safe.

How did medical school change during the pandemic? And was a career in medicine a lifelong dream for you?

Luckily, we were done with our work in the classroom and already placed in the hospital full-time for core rotations. I was on my family medicine rotation when the pandemic first started. And to be honest, they pulled us out of clinics because there was not enough PPE and there was so much uncertainty. So, unfortunately, we had to quickly pivot to online learning, which is a lot less fun than seeing patients in person. However, Baylor handled the whole situation extremely well. We were given time to focus on research that could be done remotely, like retrospective chart reviews and case reports. We were one of the first medical schools to go back to the hospital full-time, to help with patient care. Then, we were eased into treating COVID-19 patients. I really enjoyed the experience because it equipped us with the knowledge needed to deal with a pandemic. After all, this could happen again and we will be the doctors in charge. All that said, we are still on track to graduate and I am very grateful for that.

Medicine has been pretty much a lifelong dream. I was born during my father's last year of medical school so one could argue that I was exposed to medicine from the very beginning. Fortunately, my mother raised us to be strong, empowered women so I never saw a boundary to becoming a physician and was driven from a young age. I am thankful to have my dad as a role model that introduced me to medicine while I am also proud of myself for seeking out my own path as I navigate the field of medicine. My sister is also a medical student and a year below me. We are a family of doctors.

Where is the best place to receive factual updates about COVID-19?

Everyone should be careful of what they are watching, listening to and reading. Remember to follow reliable sources regarding COVID-19 in Houston. In addition to incident command centers from your employer, the Texas Medical Center, Harris County Public Health, Houston Health Department and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are trusted sources regarding all COVID-19 information. Be patient with your doctor as he or she may not have all the answers to your COVID-19 questions. After all, we are all watching the scientific method unravel together.

Like Dr. Long, Crovetti has made tons of pasta during the pandemic. She said, "I was set to get married and my bridal shower was the last weekend before the shutdown. Luckily, my wedding registry has kept us busy in the kitchen."

EMILY SHUSHTARI

Working with Children and Families during COVID-19



For the last two years, Emily Shushtari has worked as a Pediatric Nurse Practitioner at Texas Children's Urgent Care. Previously, she worked as an RN within Texas Children's for 10 years. Shushtari is also the 2020 – 2021 Provisional Chairman.

How have you dealt with the extra risks treating patients with COVID-19?

Our institution has implemented safety precautions for staff, patients and visitors to lower the risk of exposure to the virus. Examples of these precautions include screening staff, patients, and visitors, lessening the number of visitors allowed for each patient and additional PPE for the staff when in contact with each patient. All healthcare facilities have made many changes to screening and PPE



along the way. I feel like we are in a good spot now. We are always learning and adapting to the latest research and recommendations.

How can the League community better support frontline healthcare workers?

The best thing the League community can do to help healthcare workers is to stay safe! Wearing a mask, washing hands and practicing social distancing will lessen the overall disease burden which, in turn, lessens the stress on healthcare workers and our facilities. Following these safety precautions is particularly important for League volunteers serving in the community. Once a safe and effective vaccine is released,

it will be important for our community to vaccinate its members to protect everyone.

Though Emily has not made pasta by hand, due to long shifts, she started menu planning each week. She said, "In between long shifts, I take every opportunity to order groceries online and plan my meals."

Whether a result of self-isolation, social distancing, or simple convenience, people have been cooking at home more often. From healthcare professionals on the frontlines to teachers in virtual classrooms, everyone seems to be experimenting with new dishes, and even joining friends and family for virtual dinner parties. No doubt about it – cooking nourishes our well-being, soothes the soul and feeds the mind. *Imagine* all the new recipes you will add to family cookbooks and share with friends at the end of the pandemic. 🦋

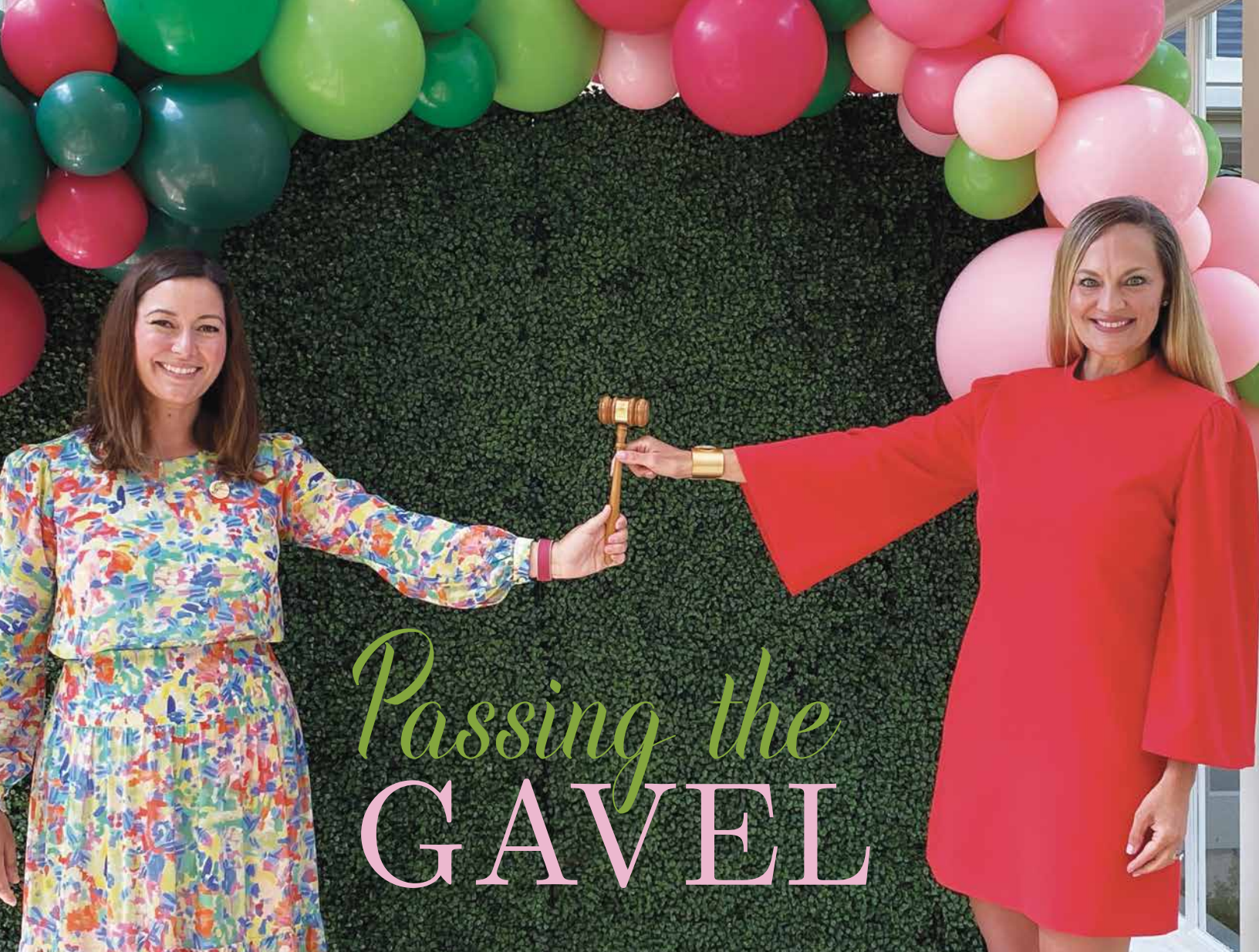
"WHAT IS NOW PROVED WAS ONCE ONLY
IMAGINED." — WILLIAM BLAKE



The advertisement features a top banner with the Taste of Texas logo (a star with 'EST. 1977' on either side) and the text 'TASTE OF TEXAS' and 'GRILL-AT-HOME STORE'. Below this is a photograph of a gourmet meal kit spread out on a wooden surface. The meal includes a large brisket, several ribs, a bowl of creamy sauce, a dish of asparagus, a bowl of green beans, a bowl of corn, and a bowl of bread. The bottom of the ad has a white background with black text.

TASTE OF TEXAS GRILL-AT-HOME STORE

PICKUP EASY GOURMET MEAL KITS FOR THE HOME COOK.
OR SAME-DAY DELIVERY FOR \$10.
10505 KATY FREEWAY • (832) 973-7171 • WWW.TASTE OF TEXAS.COM



Jayne Sheehy Johnston passes the gavel to Rachel Podsednik Regan

By **Melissa Strathman**, Sustainer Writer

The League always finds a way to further its mission while honoring tradition. On May 26, 2020, **Rachel Podsednik Regan** became the 97th President of the Junior League of Houston, Inc. Passing the gavel, a time-honored tradition, was quite different this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The May General Meeting was held virtually, for the very first time, and those presiding over the meeting were required to be physically distant. It was another representation of the challenging times and circumstances that our city and the rest of the world have recently faced. It also highlighted the creativity and perseverance of the women chosen to lead our organization through it.

For **Jayne Sheehy Johnston**, this gavel passing brought her Junior League of Houston experience full circle. She reflected on her first event at the League as a transfer from the New York Junior League

and said, “Rachel was one of the first people I met at the League. She was so gracious and encouraging about getting involved in the many opportunities the League had to offer. I was excited to work with her and be a part of such an amazing group of women.”

Jayne’s experience working in other large leagues, such as New York and Boston, gave Jayne a deeper understanding of the many moving parts of the League as an organization. Rachel’s 17 years of experience in the Houston League provided the historical knowledge of how our League operates. When asked about working with Jayne, Rachel said, “Walking alongside Jayne in this journey has been one of the greatest blessings in my life. Her ability to lead with compassion, to lift others with her words and yet allow their voices to be heard and to act with decisiveness and grace were beautiful examples of leadership.”

In preparing to lead the League as President, a process that takes place over 18 months, Rachel recalls the effort that was put into

planning for the upcoming year. "Every plan had to be revisited and changed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The 2020 – 2021 year will undoubtedly be very different," said Rachel.

Rachel is excited and optimistic about the great work that the League will do in the year ahead. She believes that it is important that we remain steadfast in our commitment to service in the community and continue to create our League story. Rachel sees the opportunity to develop new and innovative ways to meet our League members where they are, and to reimagine how we serve. In addition, she is grateful for our members and for their time and engagement. "They have chosen to be a part of the League and that commitment is how we change the community we serve for the better," said Rachel.

Rachel is fortunate to have her supportive husband, Tom, who has always given her the ability to pursue her passion of serving in the League. She is a mother to two wonderful children, Wynn and Ella. In addition, Rachel serves as the Senior Vice President of Global Acquisition at Exclusive Resorts. Even though the year will undoubtedly be busy, Rachel hopes to be an example to her children and others, stating, "That giving of yourself, not because you have to, but because you want to, is the greatest thing you can do in your life." This is a lesson she learned from her parents and one she exemplifies today.

Jayne received a silver tray, courtesy of **Tenenbaum Jewelers**, to acknowledge her dedication and service to the League. Jayne presented Rachel with a custom designed pendant commissioned by Tenenbaum Jewelers. 🦋



Regan Family



Johnston Family



Regan family with her mother Kathy Podsednik



Jayne Johnston at May General Meeting



Rachel Regan with her children Wynn and Ella



Rachel Regan with her daughter Ella



Rachel Regan with her mother Kathy Podsednik



“Before we can build the world we want to live in,
we have to imagine it.”

- Simon Sinek

diversity

After two months of being safer apart to prevent the spread of COVID-19, the country and world came together upon the death of George Floyd on May 25, 2020, to demand a stop to systemic racist oppression and universal acknowledgment that black lives matter. Protests occurred in cities across the country to bring about awareness of injustice and drive change. In Houston, protests occurred throughout the city and even in the suburbs of Greater Houston. These protests included powerful gestures such as kneeling for the 8 minutes and 46 seconds that a police officer knelt on George Floyd's neck. Some even chose to bring their children to give them the experience of participating in this important movement.

inclusion

By **Corynne Hume Yamasaki**, Diversity and Inclusion Chairman

The funeral for George Floyd was held in multiple cities across the U.S. including his hometown of Houston. The Junior League of Houston closed the building Monday, June 8 and Tuesday, June 9 to allow members and staff to honor Floyd's life and to reflect on actions we can take to move forward to a society free of racism and inequity.

A summer Conversation with League Leaders Meeting Series was held to facilitate discussions between League membership and leadership. Members gathered over breakfast or lunch and met virtually in the evening, during this series of six meetings. Discussion topics included the biggest issues facing the Junior League internally and externally, what members need from the League to feel supported, and how we can make the League more inclusive for all. Connections made in the small breakout groups of virtual meetings allowed members a direct opportunity for open discussion with members of the Executive Committee and Board of Directors.

Recent Group Meetings focused on racial inequality and what we can do to eradicate it. The Junior League is committed to offering education opportunities to ensure we are living our values of inclusion, community and service.



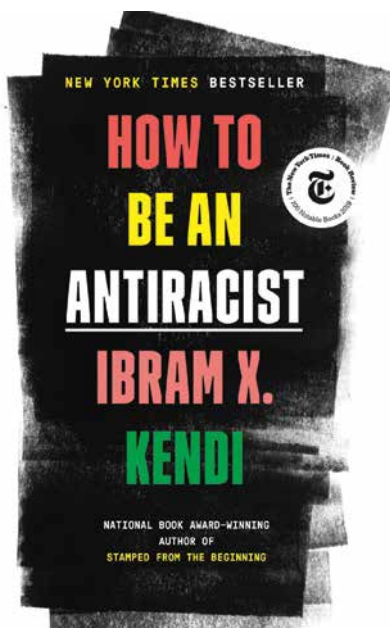


On August 13, **Dr. Alan Dettlaff**, Dean and Professor at the Graduate College of Social Work at the University of Houston, presented a Group Meeting entitled "Understanding Racial Disparities, Unconscious and Conscious Bias" to members highlighting racial disparities in the Child Protective Services and Foster Care system.

On September 16, President **Rachel Regan** led a discussion called "The League Listens: The JLH Black Member Experience," as requested by a letter to the Board of Directors from a group of Black members and allies to help promote and provide the League's diverse membership the tools to effectively participate in the difficult but meaningful conversations ahead.

On September 23, Membership Vice President **Helyna Bledsoe**, Financial Vice President **Wendy Lewis Armstrong** and Diversity and Inclusion Chairman **Corynne Hume Yamasaki** led a book club discussion of Ibram X. Kendi's *How to Be an Antiracist* and how we can implement antiracist guidelines within the League. The Strategic Planning Committee Diversity and Inclusion Study this year is examining the League's policies, requirements and ways to increase inclusivity. The Strategic Planning team held a focus Group Meeting to solicit input from League members on September 8, 2020; the team sought feedback on best practices from other Leagues across the country and provided an anonymous survey to garner member feedback. The results from the Diversity and Inclusion Study will be available in Spring 2021.

The Association of Junior Leagues International (AJLI) held multiple sessions of the 21-Day Racial Equity Challenge each with



500 participants to provide an intensive learning experience for members to engage in discussions about their role in achieving racial equity in their communities across the world. Challenge participants were paired with a small group of Junior League members from other cities to meet each day to discuss learning objectives provided by AJLI. The first session started Friday, June 19, 2020, and quickly filled to capacity, so additional sessions were added in July, September and November. The challenge teams grew close over the 21 days and participants advised they highly recommended the challenge to League leadership and all members. After the completion of the first two sessions, Houston League participants met to discuss lessons learned and how to apply

those locally. AJLI plans to host several more sessions in January and February 2021. If you are interested in participating, you can learn more at AJLI.org.

There are more opportunities available to get involved. Applications for the AJLI Organizational Development Institute (ODI) open every summer and include an opportunity for a League member to participate in the AJLI Diversity and Inclusion training track. I attended this training in October 2019 with the electric **Erica Merritt**, CEO and Founder of Equis Group, a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion consulting firm, and Junior League of Cleveland sustainer.

While ODI was not held this fall, it is an excellent experience highly recommended from past participants. Please provide feedback and suggestions to Inclusion@jlh.org or directly to any member of the Executive Committee or Board of Directors. There is so much we can all do to educate ourselves and use our strong voices to advocate for the world in which we want our children and grandchildren to thrive. 🦋

OUR VALUES

- ✦ Providing a meaningful and measurable impact on the community
- ✦ Recognizing and leveraging members as its most valuable asset
- ✦ Training and empowering women to be highly effective volunteers and leaders
- ✦ Embracing the unique diversity of its membership and the community
- ✦ Promoting fellowship among women volunteering for a common purpose
- ✦ Maintaining financial strength through sound stewardship
- ✦ Encouraging innovative responses to the needs of members and the community
- ✦ Building upon the League's past accomplishments and a tradition of excellence



2020 — 2021

community projects

By Catherine Watkins,
Houston News Writer



“Imagination belongs to hope. It is the creative dance of possibility.” - Sharon Weil

The Junior League of Houston is continuing its mission of “Building a Better Community” by committing volunteers and financial support to its Community Program. The League’s Community Program consists of community projects, community assistance grants, emergency and resource contingency grants and community collaborations.

COVID-19 has presented unprecedented and unexpected challenges this year. Despite these challenges, the Junior League has continued to prioritize the needs of the community and redesigned the Community Program to allow volunteers to make the greatest impact. In response to COVID-19, the League consulted with each of the agencies and it was determined that a select number of community placements could proceed in the traditional format with slight adjustments and modifications to hours.

Additionally, a new **volunteer IMPACT program** was created and has been implemented for the 2020 -2021 year for the remaining community agencies. The IMPACT program provides flexible dates and times for volunteer shifts and a variety of different types of volunteer opportunities as community agencies and the Tea Room are able to

make shifts available. The League is able to offer both in-person and remote options for volunteers.

The 2020 – 2021 Board of Directors recognized the importance of flexibility for volunteers and voted to reduce the volunteer hour commitment for active members to 30 hours and provisionals to 21 hours or the equivalent number of shifts for the current League year. The League continues to focus on meeting the needs of the community while providing flexibility for members. The League currently supports 34 community projects. Each project falls within one of five **Community Impact Committees** – Culture and Enrichment, Education and Mentorship, Family Support, Health and Well-Being and Neighborhood Outreach. 🦋



Culture and Enrichment

Children's Museum of Houston
Holocaust Museum Houston
Houston Arboretum & Nature Center
Houston Museum of Natural Science
Houston Zoo
The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston



Education and Mentorship

Books Between Kids
ChinquaPals – Chinquapin Preparatory School
DePelchin Children's Center
Pen Pals
Picture Pals – The Westview School
Star of Hope



The Junior League of Houston created a Focus Area Event, The Junior League of Houston Community "SUPER" Market, to help meet the needs for families served in several long-standing League community agencies including Star of Hope, DePelchin Children's Center, Houston Area Women's Center and Bo's Place.

Family Support

Bear...BE A Resource for CPS Kids
Bo's Place
Casa de Esperanza de los Niños
Child Advocates, Inc.
Houston Area Women's Center
Kids' Meals
Ronald McDonald House Houston



Health and Well-Being

AIDS Foundation Houston, Inc.
Baylor Teen Health Clinic
Camp for All 2U
Camp Janus
Camp Rainbow – American Diabetes Association
Texas Children's Hospital
The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center*



Neighborhood Outreach

CPR
Dress for Success Houston
Houston Food Bank
Project C.U.R.E.
Ready Hands
Sheltering Arms Senior Services
Sing Along with Seniors (SAWS)
VIEW (Volunteers in Evening Workshop)
*placement on pause for the 2020 – 2021 year

Provisional members gather together virtually to decorate bags that will be filled with sensory activities for patients at Texas Children's Hospital





Seante M. Johnson, Founder of Birthday Bash Box and Junior League of Houston member



The Junior League of Houston has worked diligently to pivot and formulate the most optimal plan for League volunteers to continue to serve our community, while respecting the updated needs created in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Traditional community placements were assessed to determine if the projects could continue as planned, while also providing a safe environment for both the volunteers and the corresponding agency. In many cases, traditional volunteer service in League community projects have been placed

on a temporary hold and new opportunities to volunteer have been created to meet both the agency and community needs, while ensuring volunteer safety.

This year, these adjustments have paved a new way for League volunteers to serve through the creation of the volunteer IMPACT program. The IMPACT program allows League volunteers to sign up for individual shifts, working with various agencies who have created new ways for our volunteers to provide assistance. The IMPACT shifts are offered both in-person, adhering to socially distanced guidelines, as well as virtually and at home.

One of the many agencies that the League is serving through the IMPACT program this year is the **Aid to Victims of Domestic Abuse (AVDA)**. AVDA is a nonprofit organization providing free legal resources to victims of domestic abuse in Harris County. AVDA works to help with obtaining protective orders, divorces and custody orders to people who are victims of domestic abuse. AVDA has previously been selected as a Junior League Community Assistance Grant recipient but has never been a placement opportunity open to League members. League volunteers assist with new client intake as well as with telephone support for individuals seeking resources in their time of need.



“Imagination is the spark that ignites the fire of creativity.”

- Richard L. Peterson

The support of League volunteers allows the AVDA trained counselors to remain in the field helping clients at shelters and police stations instead of focusing on paperwork.

Lauren Brogdon has completed her volunteer commitment for 2020 – 2021 working with AVDA and said, “Our work has been extremely impactful. Sometimes, all we need to do is listen, as our phone calls are a survivor’s first time telling her story to a kind and listening ear.” Lauren, along with other League volunteers, assist connecting survivors with the available resources needed to help them escape their abuser and to create a plan of action with transitional housing, financial aid or other needs.

Clothed By Faith is another organization which had previously been selected as a League Community Assistance Grant recipient and now offers opportunities for volunteer support with the volunteer IMPACT program. Clothed By Faith is a nonprofit organization that provides a week’s worth of gently used clothing and notes of encouragement to those in need. Due to the increased community need for clothing, combined with staffing limitations of the organization, League members are helping to launder donated clothing so the organization can fulfill community needs. For both August and September, all of the laundry needs for Clothed By Faith were completely fulfilled through the help of League volunteers!

Another of the League’s IMPACT program shifts is helping give birthday smiles to children all over the Greater Houston area by packing Birthday Bash Boxes with gifts, cake mixes, books and supplies to promote literacy and a social-emotional experience through birthday celebrations.

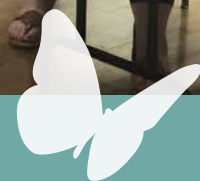
Founded in 2018 by League member **Seante M. Johnson, Birthday Bash Box** is a 501c3 nonprofit that gives children in low-income families a wonderful birthday experience. “We give families everything they need to have a birthday party for their child,” said Seante. “Currently, through our Birthday Box program, we have the capacity to celebrate 20-25 children per month. As we grow our volunteer base, we will be able to celebrate even more birthdays.”

As of October 2020, Birthday Bash Box has celebrated 918 children’s birthdays.

These are just a few of the agencies the League has been called to assist during the continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic. As our community’s needs continue to shift in light of this crisis, the League remains flexible, creating and adapting to new ways of volunteering.

The IMPACT placement is intended to provide new ways of serving the community as agency requests and community needs evolve through the pandemic. The League is listening to the needs of our partnered agencies and responding to fulfill assistance

requests where League volunteers can provide meaningful impact. Anyone can request help from the League or refer ideas for projects through the Ready Hands form available at www.jlh.org.



IMPACT

*Community Agencies Supported by
IMPACT volunteers*

Aid to Victims of Domestic Abuse
BakerRipley
Birthday Bash Box
Books Between Kids
Camp Aranzazu
Carrying Hope
Children’s Museum of Houston
Clothed By Faith
DePelchin Children’s Center
Girls Inc.
Houston Independent School District
Houston Food Bank
Houston Museum of Natural Science
Kids’ Meals
Memorial Park Conservancy
Nature Discovery Center
ReVision

The League plans to continually add community partners to the IMPACT placement throughout the year.
(List last updated October 10, 2020)





Featured Community Partner: **SEWELL**

SEWELL AUTOMOTIVE COMPANIES

is proud to support the Junior League of Houston's commitment to community service, voluntarism and the advancement of leadership opportunities for women.

Sewell's financial contribution supports the extensive outreach of the Junior League and furthers the impact of its members. In addition to its financial support, **Sewell Automotive Companies** also hosts an educational group meeting as part of the **Junior League's Training and Education Program**.

Sewell represents Audi (3), BMW, Buick, Cadillac (4), GMC, INFiniti (3), Jaguar, Land Rover, Lexus (2), Mercedes-Benz, and Subaru, with locations in Austin, Dallas, Fort Worth, Grapevine, Houston, McKinney, San Antonio and Sugar Land. 🦋

Premier Community Partner: TEXAS CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

COVID-19 VACCINES: WHERE ARE WE TODAY?



At Texas Children's Hospital, we know this pandemic is directly impacting many people in our community. We continue to monitor closely the rapidly evolving global health situation involving the coronavirus infectious disease (COVID-19) and to develop our best public health defense: a safe, effective, low-cost vaccine.

BACKGROUND

At least three known coronaviruses can cause severe upper respiratory infections. We first began seeing serious lung disease from outbreaks caused by a coronavirus in 2003 with SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome), which caused approximately 800 deaths. This was followed by MERS (Middle East Respiratory Syndrome), which has resulted in a similar number of deaths since 2012.

The third, the 2019 novel coronavirus (the virus that causes the infectious disease known as COVID-19) is SARS-CoV-2. It is highly transmissible—even by individuals who have the virus but are not exhibiting any symptoms—and it has a mean incubation period of 5.8 days.

TEXAS CHILDREN'S IS LEADING THE WAY

Texas Children's Center for Vaccine Development, co-directed by Drs. Peter Hotez and Maria Elena Bottazzi, has a successful track record of developing and advancing recombinant protein-based vaccines, including ones for the previous coronaviruses. Their research team is using its extensive expertise with these related viruses to forge new strategic alliances; accelerate the development of affordable, safe, effective, and globally accessible vaccines against COVID-19 using a recombinant protein-based approach; and prepare for future coronavirus outbreaks.

In May 2020, the Center for Vaccine Development launched a partnership with PATH, a global nonprofit organization dedicated to improving public health. PATH has expertise in advancing the development and licensure of affordable and effective vaccines—including new vaccines for meningococcal A meningitis, malaria, pneumococcal disease and rotavirus—and ensuring their availability and accessibility for low- and middle-income countries.

"Through this partnership, Texas Children's has strengthened its commitment to developing the most promising, safe, low-cost, easily administered, and rapidly scalable SARS-2 vaccine for COVID-19 for the public good, including low- and middle-income countries," said Dr. Hotez.

Drs. Hotez and Bottazzi are working specifically on a vaccine platform that is already in use for many other vaccines (including the one for Hepatitis B). The SARS-2 vaccine for COVID-19 will prime a person's immune system to recognize the receptor binding domain (RBD) of the SARS COV-2 spike protein and then produce high quantities of antibodies to block the virus from entering the body's cells, thereby stopping the infection.

"There is very good preliminary scientific evidence of the potential for this to be a superior and safer vaccine candidate in minimizing the risk of vaccine-associated adverse events, and that will possibly distinguish it from other coronavirus vaccines in development," said Dr. Bottazzi.

At Texas Children's, we are committed to doing everything we can to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 in our own community and around the world—and that means we are committed to developing the very best vaccines possible. 🦋



Lunch bags decorated by Provisionals for Kids' Meals



Virtual

PROVISIONAL TRAINING

CREATING A WELCOMING, EDUCATIONAL,
INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR OUR
NEWEST MEMBERS

By **Blaire Burdine**, Membership Communications Manager

HISTORICALLY, PROVISIONAL MEMBERS OF THE JUNIOR LEAGUE OF HOUSTON HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE IN A ROBUST ONBOARDING PROGRAM THAT INCLUDES NETWORKING, SOCIAL EVENTS AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES AT THE LEAGUE AND IN THE COMMUNITY. WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN YOU HAVE 256 EAGER WOMEN READY TO JUMP IN WITH BOTH FEET, BUT ARE PREVENTED FROM MEETING IN PERSON DUE TO A GLOBAL PANDEMIC? YOU GET CREATIVE.



“TRUE CHANGE TAKES PLACE IN THE IMAGINATION”

– Thomas Moore

EMILY
SHUSHTARI
Provisional Chairman

MARGIE SUTTON
*Provisional Assistant
Chairman – Education
and Engagement*

JUDY PETERSON
*Provisional Assistant
Chairman – Tea Room*

KATE HAYS
*Provisional Assistant Chairman –
Community*

The provisional team stepped into their placements on day one knowing they were walking into uncharted territory. They were tasked with creating the League’s first ever virtual Provisional Orientation, and so far, it has been a resounding success.

“We knew it was going to be a challenge, and we had safety as our first priority, but we really wanted to create a program that allowed provisionals to interact with each other and learn about the League as personally as possible,” said **Emily Shushtari**, Provisional Chairman. “My goal for this year has been to effectively and efficiently communicate with the provisional class. From the start, I’ve believed this would be paramount to their success.”

The Provisional Orientation was originally scheduled to be held the day before the city-wide shutdown in March. The League building had already been closed to large groups, but the provisional team knew they needed to think outside of the box for a way to welcome our newest League members. In March, the provisional team partnered with the Tea Room Director, Texas Children’s Hospital Chairman, Diversity and Inclusion Chairman, and Training and Education Director to record a virtual orientation that could be shared with provisionals – except the file was too large to be emailed. Not to be deterred, the team once again thought outside of the box, and created a page exclusively for provisionals. The website enables training, such as the Provisional Orientation delivered in March, and large files to be uploaded to the web and accessed and referenced at any time. There is no doubt this website will prove to be an invaluable tool utilized this year and beyond.

continued



Similarly, Agency Visits have been reimagined to still allow provisional members to view volunteer placements for the League within the community. The Provisional Assistant Chairman – Community **Kate Hays** worked diligently to create four virtual Agency Visits per month so provisional members could continue to learn about local nonprofit agencies the League supports while engaging with other provisional members.

A placement at Texas Children's Hospital (TCH) has been a rite of passage for thousands of Junior League of Houston members, yet this year TCH is not in a position to accept in-person volunteers. As a result, changes were made to allow for virtual shifts to ensure that the League could still support one of our long-standing community agencies. In addition, the League's community leaders introduced IMPACT Shifts. The newly created volunteer IMPACT Shifts offer opportunities for in-person and virtual shifts. The Houston Food Bank and The Children's Museum of Houston are welcoming provisional members for in-person volunteer opportunities, and Kids' Meals offers a virtual option. In addition, Clothed by Faith shifts allow for volunteers to work within their own homes.

Tea Room shifts are also being approached creatively to still allow provisionals the chance to volunteer in the Tea Room while maintaining a safe approach. The provisional class was split into Fall and Spring segments and had the chance to prepare for their shifts by accessing the newly created virtual training materials and instructional videos via the provisional website. Provisionals have the opportunity to work as a cashier, as administrative support in the Front Office or serve in The Pantry.

The team also thought of a virtual way to help provisionals reduce their stress during this undoubtedly difficult time – virtual yoga! Two virtual yoga classes were offered for the Summer Engagement event and allowed for members to take time out of their busy schedules to slow down and practice self-care.

There is no doubt this League year will be a memorable one for all members – but the provisional team has done an outstanding job. Not only have they developed tools and procedures that will be used for years to come, they have remained committed to receiving and listening to provisional feedback to make adjustments to the program if something could be improved. They truly exemplified this year's Imagine theme by creating a welcoming, educational, inclusive environment for our newest members. 🦋

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IN 2020,

we have been reminded of

what matters most:

our families, our communities,

and the comfort of knowing

that our assets will be protected

and our financial futures secured.

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independent trust company,

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Margaret Clark, Annam Zamorano, Rachel Regan, Mariam Hejazi, Ginger Baldwin welcome the Bubbles and Brunch guests with Peace Meals cookbooks

Tea Room Events *Reimagined*

New ways we are serving our members, patrons and the Houston community

By Michael Ann Young Singleton, Tea Room Communications Manager



Tutu Okongwu, the League's first-ever Videography Chairman

March 2020 changed the world with the spread of COVID-19, leading cities, states and countries to mandate shutdowns and stay-at-home orders for months. The Junior League of Houston has changed with the world and responded with the adaptability that is at the heart of the League's mission in serving the Houston community. Through these changes, the Tea Room has transitioned, evolved and creatively developed strategies for serving members, patrons and the Houston community.

One of the most immediate areas that needed to transition was how to train volunteers in the Tea Room given that training has typically been conducted as a hands-on, in-person experience. Provisionals first commitment to the League is serving guests in the Tea Room. This, as you can imagine, dramatically changed – from their schedules to their training. The Provisional Membership Team Leaders quickly responded by working with the new Videography Chairman, a role approved by the 2019 – 2020 Board of Directors, to develop videos and guides for Provisionals to use as they navigate this new normal to comply with CDC guidelines.

Tutu Okongwu, the first-ever Videography Chairman, has begun to help the League improve its virtual presence, specifically for the 2020 – 2021 Provisional Class by creating training videos for each of the League building placements: Tea



Ginger Baldwin takes a Bubbles and Brunch pickup order to a patron to enjoy while watching the French Cuff Boutique style show at home



Cheers to Fall! Mimosas and Bloody Mary mix to be enjoyed at home



Cars lined up to receive their Bubbles and Brunch pickup orders



The Junior League of Houston front door welcomed guests to a reimagined Bubbles and Brunch



Cashier Training, Tea Room Server Training, Front Office Training

continued



Room server, Tea Room cashier, Tea Room kitchen, Tea Room Front Office and The Pantry.

"I am thrilled at the opportunity to support the League with video content," said Tutu Okonogwu, Videography Chairman. "The theme for this year is *Imagine*, and I believe that an online portal of Tea Room training videos aligns perfectly with that vision. My goal is to create video content that will be reusable for years to come to help train League members. Members can now access training resources at any time to help equip them to perform their Tea Room duties. We are excited to roll out this new content and are looking forward to continuing to support League members through digital media."

"The Junior League of Houston has gone above and beyond to ensure the Provisional Members have the necessary resources and training to fulfill our duties during this first year," said **Mary Anne Baring**, a Provisional Member. "Volunteer support in the Tea Room is vital to the League's success."

"The training materials were detailed and incredibly helpful in walking me through what I would or could encounter during my shifts," said Baring. "I felt informed and confident going into my first shifts in The Pantry and the Tea Room Front Office and had a wonderful volunteer experience."

Since the uncertain spring days during the full shutdown, the Tea Room has met the challenge of Governor Abbott's reopening stages with a variety of options and actions. One key strategy has been to serve customers where they are comfortable being served: pickup, curbside, and now back in the League building with the full service of the Tea Room.

After the shutdown was lifted, the Tea Room

shifted to offering Pickup Specials on Fridays and Saturdays that helped bring in additional revenue during a crucial time. The Friday Fried Chicken was such a hit that it is now being offered on the Fall Pickup Menu available for pick up Tuesday through Saturday from 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.

What had been an obstacle has now inspired volunteers and staff to reassess operations and add existing services to the 'main menu' of delighting and surprising customers. The Tea Room is now fully open, welcoming back both diners as well as events, and the new pickup options will continue to be available for the foreseeable future helping to maximize the revenues which are so critical to the League's mission of "Building A Better Community."

Tea Room Special Events were put on hold throughout the summer months and are being reimaged for the 2020 – 2021 League year to reflect the changed landscape. The first special activity of the season, **Bubbles and Brunch** was held Saturday, September 12, 2020, with a tailored brunch pickup meal complete with the option of mimosa or bloody mary kits, a copy of the Junior League of Houston cookbook, *Peace Meals*, and a virtual style show featuring

French Cuff Boutique, enjoyed by members from home! Bubbles and Brunch was a resounding success, selling out.

On Saturday, October 24, 2020, the League hosted the **Fall Festival** through a combination of in-person and virtual elements. The Pantry provided picnic style to-go meals for families. Little Leaguers took home themed activity kits after snapping a photo in the pumpkin patch photo booth. 🦋



Megan Ryan assisting
at kid's activity table



Michael Ann, Will and William Singleton



Backrow: Anaam Zamorano, Ginger Baldwin, Marissa Gutierrez and Eryn Roche
Front Row SET Volunteers: Camille Brewer, Audrey Anderson and Julia Peacock



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The Burdine family enjoys the socially distanced member engagement event at the Arboretum

Virtual and Socially Distanced Member Engagement

EVENTS

NOW, MORE THAN EVER, MEMBERS ARE STAYING CONNECTED, COMING TOGETHER, AND EMBRACING A 'NEW NORMAL'

By **Dolores Ann Lozano**, Houston News Writer

Since its inception, the Junior League of Houston has provided an engaging atmosphere for women to make meaningful connections. And as John Schaar once said, “the future is not some place we are going, but one we are creating.” We are creating a future that brings thousands of women together each year united by the common interest of “Building A Better Community.”

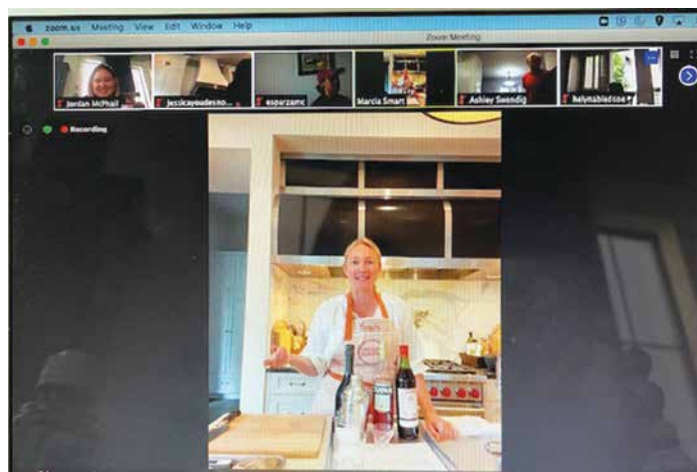
As our community looked for answers in response to COVID-19, Junior League leadership and our member engagement team needed to pivot and create pathways of connection beyond traditional programming. Despite the daunting challenges, the League discovered it has both the capacity and capability to do things differently with great success. The pandemic has generated a tremendous opportunity to experiment and adapt to meet the changing needs of League members.

“We moved as many membership engagement events online as we could. We looked at what had been approved to see if those could be virtual and still create a sense of interaction among our members. We knew League members were itching for social contact and this was a good time for us to experiment with new ways of engagement,” said **Jordan McPhail**, Membership Engagement Coordinator. “Our goal for these virtual and innovative engagement opportunities centers on bringing each other together. It was important for us to be flexible, with an eye toward the future.”

The first virtual membership engagement event was held on June 18, 2020, hosted by Junior League of Houston Sustainer **Marcia Smart**.

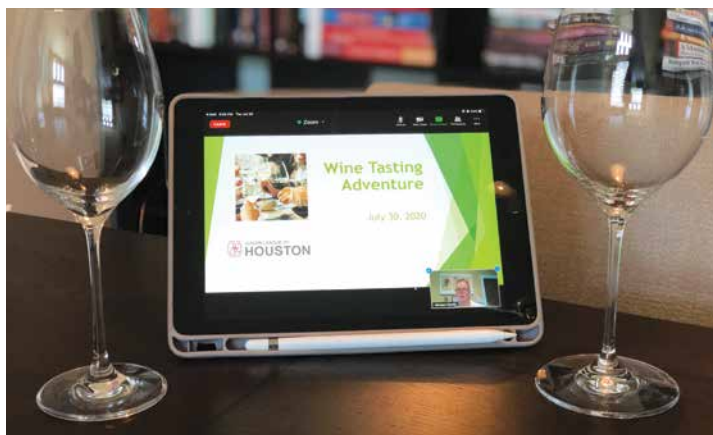
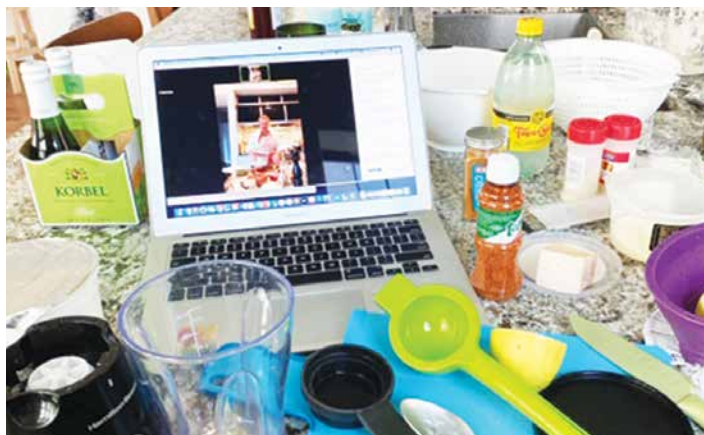
Throughout the hour-long cooking class, Marcia shared some of her own recipes from the Junior League of Houston’s cookbook, *Peace Meals*. Members followed along and enjoyed cooking fresh, healthy recipes from their own home kitchens. After learning to prepare steak chimichurri, artichoke dip and a specialty cocktail, many League members said the event was one they truly enjoyed. Food and cooking has become a focal point for many during this crisis and now, more than ever, the opportunity to connect with each other over a shared meal is an experience to remember.

With summer in full swing and most public entertainment options still closed, the member engagement team filled our glass with more fun. Though nothing beats a real-life vineyard experience, League



Junior League of Houston Sustainer **Marcia Smart** hosts a one-hour virtual cooking class, where she shared some of her own recipes from the Junior League of Houston’s cookbook, *Peace Meals*

continued

*Wine Tasting Virtual Engagement Event**Carson and Blaire Burdine with children Charlie & Margot at the Arboretum*

members had an opportunity to partake in a virtual wine tasting from the comfort of their own home. On July 30, 2020, a 'sip and learn' event was filled with summer wine favorites as **Monique Studak**, Certified Sommelier with the Court of Master Sommeliers and founding member of Women of Wine Charities, shared how to discern between wines of differing origins. The tasting included notes on French and New Zealand Sauvignon Blancs, along with some lovely Pinot Noirs. As we began adjusting for a safe and socially-distanced fall, the League created an engaging experience at the **Houston Arboretum & Nature Center**. On Saturday, September 19, 2020, members and their families had an opportunity to escape daily stress with those they love for a morning of social distancing fun at a beloved Houston nature sanctuary. The morning included a favorite Junior League trail and a Houston Arboretum favorite: the Habitat Hike. The arboretum, a 155-acre home to native wildflowers, prairie grasses, and other plants, bloomed connections between League members while improving their mental health and emotional wellbeing.

The Houston Arboretum & Nature Center is also

one of the League's traditional community placement opportunities. Volunteers serve in the Discovery Room, located within the Nature Center, and teach visitors unfamiliar with the forest and wetlands, how to use their senses to observe and experience the Arboretum. The Discovery Room contains hands-on exhibits like the Learning Tree Challenge and the Tree Habitat Expert Board. This opportunity allows volunteers to act as facilitators for visitors demonstrating tools such as the Discovery Boxes and Field Guides which help visitors find answers to their nature questions. League volunteers have also engaged in conservation projects throughout the year. The adventures and memories around the Arboretum will be cherished by League members for years to come.

On Wednesday, October 14, 2020, the member engagement team hosted a virtual holiday wrapping & decoration prep with **Christina Leigh Frederick**. Members are also invited to sign up to attend Zoo Lights at the **Houston Zoo** on Friday, December 11, 2020, through the League's Calendar.

Without a doubt, since the onset of the pandemic, the Junior League of Houston has been holding the line for its members. The League continues to evolve to meet its members' needs. The League will continue to remain nimble and responsive, embodying this year's *Imagine* theme. 🦋

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100 Years Later

*A focus on the League's Founding and the 1920s
in honor of the League's upcoming Centennial Anniversary*

By **Catherine A. Watkins**, Houston News Writer



On January 22, 1925, 12 women gathered at the home of **Mrs. Luke Bradley** to consider the idea of forming a chapter of the Junior League in Houston. They unanimously decided to establish a chapter and develop a fundraising plan and a major charitable project to be named after extensive research. They also drafted the following to serve as the Executive Board:

President – **Adelaide Lovett Baker**

Vice President – **Ella Rice**

Treasurer – **Mary Cullinan**

Secretary – **Virginia Chew**

continued



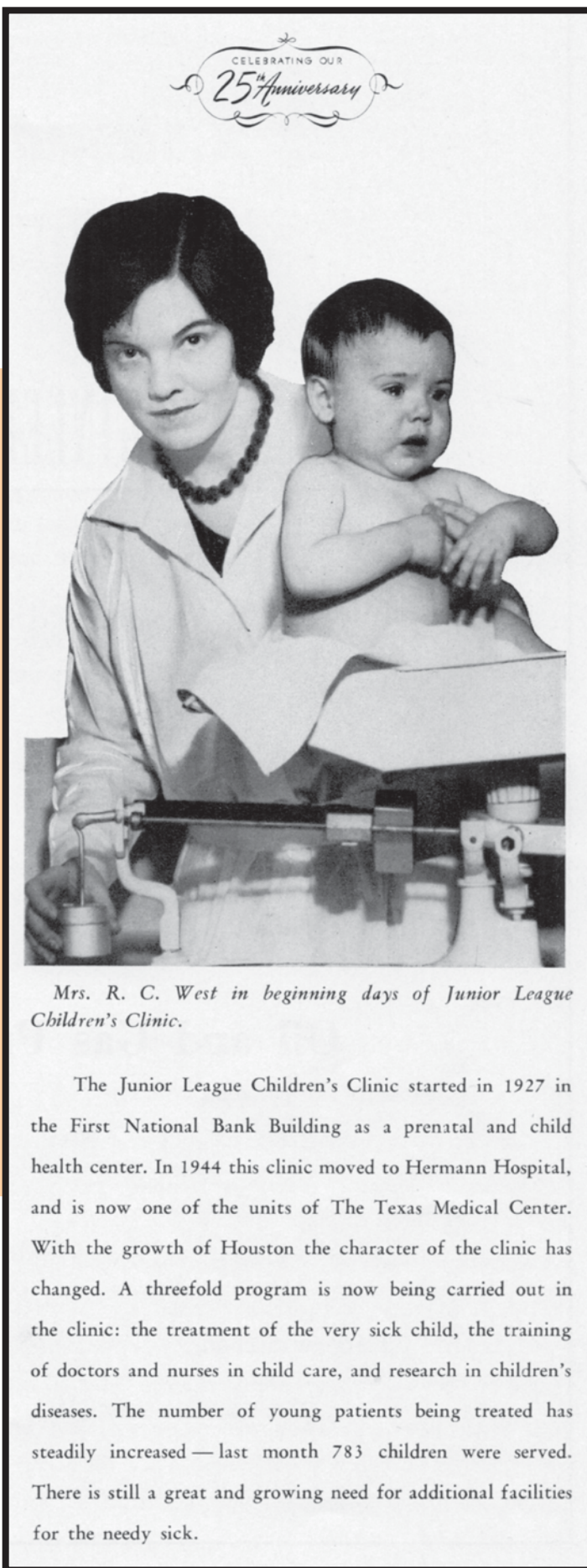
Junior League of Houston Tea Room waitresses in 1929

With enthusiastic encouragement from **Frankie Carter Randolph**, the group decided to form a luncheon club.

On June 24, 1925, The Junior League of Houston was founded by 12 forward-thinking women by the granting of a charter. The Association of Junior Leagues of America, Inc. admitted the Houston League in 1926. Ninety-five years later, the League continues to build on its legacy in the community. In 2025, the League will celebrate its centennial anniversary marking 100 years of "Building a Better Community." The League has a long history of celebrating major milestones. In anticipation of the centennial anniversary, the Houston News team will highlight the past 100 years in a series of articles about the League.

The first Junior League of Houston President, Adelaide Lovett Baker, began a legacy of volunteering that thousands of women have participated in and continues to be a focus of the League to this day. The first project for the League was the Luncheon Club. While some may have doubted the success of the Luncheon Club, the women persevered, and the concept grew into what is now known as the Junior League Tea Room.

The 1920s also brought the start of the **Junior League Health Center**, open from 1927 – 1944. The Health Center functioned as a privately-owned relief organization with staff consisting of one physician, one secretary and League volunteers. The Junior League Health Center was the League's first community project and was designed to provide services for children from families without resources. The Health Center ultimately led to the League developing relationships with major medical resources, including Baylor College of Medicine, Ben Taub Hospital, The University of Texas at MD Anderson Cancer Center, Memorial Hermann Hospital



Mrs. R. C. West in beginning days of Junior League Children's Clinic.

The Junior League Children's Clinic started in 1927 in the First National Bank Building as a prenatal and child health center. In 1944 this clinic moved to Hermann Hospital, and is now one of the units of The Texas Medical Center. With the growth of Houston the character of the clinic has changed. A threefold program is now being carried out in the clinic: the treatment of the very sick child, the training of doctors and nurses in child care, and research in children's diseases. The number of young patients being treated has steadily increased — last month 783 children were served. There is still a great and growing need for additional facilities for the needy sick.

Houston News archival article celebrating the League's 25th anniversary by honoring Mrs. R.C. West volunteering at the Junior League Health Center



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Junior League of Houston Luncheon Club Invitation



The decade ended with the Junior League moving into its first building at 500 Stuart Street in 1929

– Texas Medical Center and Texas Children's Hospital.

To help raise funds to support the new Junior League Health Center and to assist survivors of the epic Mississippi River floods, the League hosted its first gala on May 10 and 11, 1927, **The Circus Ball**, also known as the **Noah's Ark Follies**. Held at the City Auditorium with members putting on a show much like those seen in the **Charity Ball** presented for the first time in 1949, the gala netted \$5,180. The League donated \$2,000 to the Mississippi River flood victims and used the remaining funds to operate the Health Center.

The decade ended with the Junior League moving into its first building at 500 Stuart Street in 1929. This location is now Brennan's restaurant. The building housed the Luncheon Club, the Health Center and provided space to the League members to work on plans and host activities.

As the League approaches its 100th anniversary, plans to celebrate and commemorate the occasion are underway. During the 2019 – 2020 League year, the Strategic Planning Committee's 100th Anniversary Committee was charged with developing an implementation plan for celebrating the anniversary. As a result of this study, a Centennial Anniversary Committee was formed with the purpose of supporting the mission of the League and researching, evaluating, planning, executing and celebrating the League's centennial anniversary in 2025. The Committee will work over the next five years on planning centennial year celebrations as well as a large gift to the community. The Committee is also charged with creating and implementing a centennial anniversary fundraising campaign to raise the amount needed for the community gift. The community gift will align with the League's mission as well as meet a critical community need providing a strong community impact. Opportunities for volunteer involvement will also be explored by the Committee.

One hundred years is a milestone that deserves to be celebrated in a big way. The League has built an exemplary record of charitable achievement and there is no doubt that the coming years will yield the same result. 🦋



The Junior League Health Center



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Council Member Pollard at a food distribution and census event in Houston during summer 2020



2020 CENSUS UPDATE

with Sustainer Margaret Wallace Brown

By Melissa Strathman, Sustainer Writer

Great cities don't just happen. Large and prosperous cities like Houston are planned and developed by many professional planners in our community. They ensure that growth is achieved in a thoughtful and sustainable way. One such professional is our own **Margaret Wallace Brown**, Director of the City of Houston's Planning and Development Department and a Junior League of Houston Sustainer. Margaret oversees a variety of important development programs including: property subdivision, neighborhood character

preservation, long range transportation planning, geographic mapping efforts, the Mayor's Complete Communities Initiative and managing the City of Houston's U.S. Census Complete Count effort.

Margaret has worked for the City of Houston planning department for more than 32 years. When asked how she's been so successful with so



many initiatives, she said that her team's strength is "knowing how to get the right people to the table to make informed decisions to better the Houston community."

The City of Houston's U.S. Census Complete Count effort is responsible for taking on the arduous task of counting every person living in Houston and the surrounding areas. Why is it so important to Houston and the League? The impact of the data collected by the Census is critical to many different aspects of daily life. It is used to allocate hundreds of billions of dollars in federal funding for roads, schools, fire departments and health services. "In fact, many of the League's community partners, such as the **Houston Food Bank**, are recipients of grants provided by the federal funding determined by the Census," said Margaret. The League provides the volunteer time to support their work in our community.

Margaret explains that while federal funding is the most publicized reason for the Census, there are many other decisions made by the data collected that are not as obvious. The data collected by the census determine the number of seats each state has in the U.S. House of Representatives (a process called apportionment) and is also used to distribute billions in federal funds to local communities. "As the city of Houston's population grows, we should have more influence over the decisions made in Austin for our community," said Margaret. "Census data also helps business owners determine where to build additional facilities and know what size and type of stores to open in a particular

community. Good roads and good schools in our neighborhoods are important. Political representation is important. Quality jobs are important. These affect the lives of every Houstonian."

The Complete Count campaign, managed in Houston and led by Margaret, was largely built around face-to-face interaction to inform people of the importance of being counted in the 2020 Census and the impact it has on our community. Their schedule included attendance at fall festivals, the **Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo** as well as many other public events. Just as the campaign was due to commence, the city was hit by the pandemic. As we all are painfully aware, many events were canceled due to social distancing protocols and city and state mandates prohibited large gatherings. Every plan had to be changed. The previous in-person efforts evolved into digital options, such as social media posts and text messaging. Margaret notes that while these efforts get the message out they are not nearly as effective as in-person interactions.

As Margaret and her team worked their way through the crisis created by the pandemic, the team continued to observe appropriate protocols such as wearing masks and practicing social distancing while partnering with entities providing resources at distribution sites across Houston. Every effort is still being made to ensure that each person is counted for the 2020 census. The impact of their efforts will be felt in the Houston area, as early as 2022. 🦋



*BakerRipley Back to School Backpack
giveaway on September 24, 2020*



SUSTAINERS



MAKING A DIFFERENCE

By Laurie Maddox, Sustainer Writer

*Sustainer Amy Ragan is constantly on the run for The Houston Food Bank**Sustainer Pat Sorrells gets a pie in the face for Camp For All**Sustainer Kay Bruce tours The Gordy, Stages Theatre in January 2020*

The COVID-19 pandemic changed our way of life and our way of thinking. Almost overnight, everyone was isolated in some way, working remotely when possible and physically distant from family when working on the front lines, avoiding places of worship, restaurants, stores, gyms and theatres. Masks became an essential fashion statement to shop for the most basic groceries. Weddings and funerals were postponed while our sick and elderly were quarantined, restricted from their closest family members in the name of protection.

Within this environment, our most vulnerable part of the League family, the Sustainers, stepped up. Even though these remarkable women faced increased risks of contagion, Sustainers nursed the sick, fed the vulnerable, led some of our city's most vital organizations and helped our artistic communities thrive. Armed with decades of Junior League training, these women brandished their new-found knowledge of Zoom to passionately attack the overwhelming needs of our community.

No one exemplifies the "can do" attitude more than **Pat Sorrells**, a member of the Junior League of Houston since 1975 and CEO of **Camp For All**, a barrier-free camp for children and adults with special needs. Through partnerships with 65 organizations, over 11,000 campers experience the joy of camp annually. When COVID-19 caused the camps to close, Pat and her team did not hesitate to blaze trails into the virtual world.

"I look for silver linings," says Pat who quickly engaged a Board Member to match donations for a hilarious Pie in the Face Challenge. The donations provided immediate support to secure jobs at Camp For All.

Pat explains, "We needed to embrace our campers, donors, partners and volunteers in more exciting ways." Pat and her Camp For All team masterminded YouTube videos and My 20 Fox TV broadcasts designed to entertain homebound or hospitalized children. Currently, Pat is busy promoting Camp For Y'All, which gives families the opportunity to function as a unit while observing physical distancing and enjoying fun activities. Pat promises that many of these



initiatives will survive COVID-19, a true silver lining.

Kay Bruce honed her love of theatre with Charity Ball performances in the 1960s and serves as Secretary of the Board of Directors of **Stages Theatre**. Just off a massive 35-million-dollar campaign to launch The Gordy complex for Stages, Kay understood the overwhelming crisis that the March closure of the new theatre created. Immediately, she started making phone calls and crafting personal notes. New to Zoom, she adapted for crisis Board meetings, brainstorming imaginative concepts to create awareness of the theatre's innovative programming: Zoom performances, radio shows and artists' reflections. "We have not had to lay off anyone," Kay states proudly. "Many theatres are struggling but we are fortunate to have such creative and flexible leaders at Stages."

A League member since 1985, **Cheri Fossler** enlisted her husband to make lunches for those in need at **Lord of the Streets**, a church for the homeless run by the Episcopal diocese. When their volunteer base was lost to stay-at-home orders, Cheri realized that the three remaining staff were overwhelmed by the daily toll of preparing 350 hot meals and sack lunches. Since a 3-pack of bread equals 66 sandwiches, Cheri shopped for 66 bags each week. Each bag was filled with a ham, salami and cheese sandwich, chips, apple and an energy bar. "The people are so appreciative, respectful and polite that it gives me hope," Cheri says. "Being cloistered away, this is something we can do."

A League member since 1989 and Chief Development Officer of

the **Houston Food Bank**, **Amy Ragan** plays a vital role in emergency relief. The pandemic created new challenges for her team to overcome. Not only did the Houston Food Bank lose employees and volunteers to the quarantine, but also, food needs skyrocketed. Amy explains, "Suddenly, we had to raise funds to purchase food that was normally donated. People were hoarding, so it became more difficult to find fuel, food and labor."

Amy and team initiated "no contact" home deliveries to at-risk seniors and children. She collaborated with over 1,500 community partners to run four drive-through super sites and hundreds of smaller sites. The Houston Food Bank is one of the partner agencies the League has been able to support with in-person volunteers.

Amy also developed partnerships with Amazon and United Airlines, which resulted in thousands of volunteer hours packing and delivering food. Harris County produced funds to hire over 65 out-of-work restaurant and YMCA employees. Amy managed media relations and communicated with potential donors, all while helping to stage for two hurricanes.

"The giving from the community has been amazing," Amy says. "The Junior League's support has been steadfast through everything we have confronted including hurricanes, drought and the pandemic. We can't do what we do without reliable, hardworking volunteers from the Junior League." She encourages people to volunteer for the distribution sites, home delivery and the new remote call center. 🦋



*Provisionals volunteering
at the Houston Food Bank*



*Cheri Fossler drops homemade lunches
for the homeless at Lord of the Streets*



*Cheri Fossler hands bag lunches to
Will Symmes, Director of Volunteers
at Lord of the Streets*



Finance Council 1997 – 1998

THE HISTORY *of the* *Community Endowment*

Phenomenal Growth Seen from the Junior League of Houston Foundation

By Judy Fernbach Simon, Sustainer Writer

In 1997 – 1998, then Junior League of Houston (JLH) President **Ann Stern** and President-Elect **Dorothy Ables** attended The Association of Junior League International (AJLI) conference session on Junior League Endowments and decided that they needed to study the prospect of establishing an endowment. They worried that there may come a year where the Junior League would not be able to hold a Charity Ball due to a hurricane, recession, or some other unforeseen catastrophe

and wanted to make sure that the League could continue its community programs and charitable support. Ann and Dorothy proved to be wise beyond their wildest imagination! Who would have dreamed a pandemic like COVID-19 would impact our world 20 years ago?

True to Junior League form, a committee studied what it would entail to start an endowment and based on the positive results from the study, the entire membership voted to establish it.



The **Community Endowment** was officially born in 1999 with the goal to raise \$10 million. Once the Endowment reached its initial fundraising goal, it was able to start making grants back to the Junior League of Houston. In 2005, the League decided to establish the Community Endowment as its own separate foundation housed under the broader League umbrella.

In 2005, a separate organization, the **Junior League of Houston Foundation**, was created and the Community Endowment assets were transferred to the new Foundation. It is governed by four outside community advisors, three Junior League active advisors, and two sustaining advisors. The Foundation's board is charged with overseeing the management, investment and distribution of funds. The purpose of the Community Endowment Fund is to sustain and expand the League-designated Community Program in perpetuity, as well as to help fund new initiatives.

The Foundation was exceptionally successful reaching its \$10 million goal in 2012. For the first time during the 2012 – 2013 year, a grant was made from the Foundation in the amount of \$75,000 to go towards Community Assistance Grants. With continued support by membership and growth in the stock market, the Foundation is now worth over \$17 million and contributed more than \$400,000 back to the Community Program during the 2019 – 2020 League year. The Foundation contributes 3% of its net worth to the League each year, so the greater the size of the Foundation, the more money the League receives for its community outreach.

Most recently the League was able to purchase a new SuperKids Pediatric Mobile Clinic, which will be operated by **Texas Children's Hospital**. The Foundation funded 83% of the mobile clinic, to lessen the financial burden on the League's regular Community Program budget.

Becky Pivec, the League's Administrative Director and sustainer who serves ex-officio on the Foundation's board, says that no additional funding requests from the Foundation have been made during the COVID-19



Dorothy Ables



Judy Simon

pandemic, but that the League made some Community Program Fund reallocations due to cancelled programs in the spring. She says that the Foundation has enabled the Community Assistance Grants to increase to \$150,000 annually and has allowed the Community Program to continue to grow. To date, the Foundation has provided more than \$2.5 million in support of the League's Community Program.

Pam Lovett, also a Sustainer Advisor to the Foundation, agrees that the Foundation has enabled the League to do more for our community by increasing funds available for Community Assistance Grants. She said, "The League is a collective of smart, compassionate women and this Foundation is to keep the impact of Junior League in perpetuity. This is another legacy and tribute vehicle for people that goes far beyond our lifetimes. It is a beautiful gift to our city."

Dorothy Ables is now a sustainer and this year's **Adelaide Lovett Baker Award Winner**. She is grateful that the membership voted to establish the Foundation in February of 1999, which allowed our League to enjoy

a strong financial position today.

Beyond the Junior League of Houston Foundation, there is another endowment that is less talked about for its incredible value to our League – our Junior League Sustainers. This group of women serve as the "volunteer endowment" to our League and its membership grows each year! Sustainers are frequently invited to participate in necessary projects or to engage the community for added volunteer impact. The collective volunteer and professional experience of this group of women is beyond compare and they play a huge role in the time and talent giving equation of The Junior League of Houston. The membership of our sustainers is composed of former League members who are at least 40 years of age or have served at least 10 active years of service. These women still have much to give and much to share! The Junior League of Houston Foundation and the "volunteer endowment" go hand in hand to making the work of our active members and community programs go further and our city made better by our team of many. 🦋



"Imagination is the beginning of creation. You imagine what you desire, you will what you imagine and at last you create what you will."

– George Bernard Shaw



FINANCIAL IMPACT

FROM COVID-19 ON THE JUNIOR LEAGUE OF HOUSTON

By **Sameka Wood**,
Finance Communications Manager

The ever-evolving COVID-19 pandemic has not only taken the world by storm but has also impacted nonprofit operations in the Houston community as well. The Junior League of Houston has built its mission around improving the community through effective action of volunteers and has supported charitable work within its current financial structure.

Like all event venues and restaurants in Houston, the League was not able to host special events in the Ballroom or Tea Room during the citywide shutdown. The League obtained some financial relief under the Small Business Administration's Paycheck Protection Program to maintain employees while the building was closed.

As the League continues to navigate through uncharted waters, the League is slowly returning to business operations following in line with city health guidelines and safety procedures in place. The first wedding of the fiscal year was celebrated in the Ballroom and some special people were showered with love in the Tea Room during the month of September.

Although the revenue that is typically generated by patrons, guests and members has declined, the League continues to maintain its Community Endowment and committed charitable efforts. The

League will continue to manage through these obstacles while maintaining an optimistic financial outlook for the future.

"During this time, we have seen a decrease in expenditures due to the decrease in activities with our community placements," said **Zerlene Shamblee**, Community Treasurer. "We are still supporting our commitment to grants and program support that accompanies our rather limited volunteer efforts. The community will need our help more than ever as we proceed through these unprecedented times."

"We will forge ahead stronger and more determined to be the innovative leaders and problem-solvers our community needs and expects us to be," said **Wendy Armstrong**, Financial Vice President. "The Junior League is committed to move forward through this ongoing crisis with strength and resiliency, creating reimagined solutions to continue 'Building a Better Community.'"

The COVID-19 pandemic is said to be a once in a century event and the League is endeavoring to meet the challenges head on. The Junior League will continue to serve as a source of support for the Houston community, as it has for the last 95 years. 🦋

"In times of crisis, it's wonderful what the imagination will do." - Ruskin Bond



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HOW THE LEAGUE HAS ADAPTED ITS FUNDRAISING EFFORTS

"Without leaps of imagination,

or dreaming, we lose the excitement of possibilities.

Dreaming, after all, is a form of planning."

– Gloria Steinem

By Emily Vechan, Development Communications Manager

The public's attention is fixed on COVID-19, our collective anxiety is at an all-time high and both individuals and businesses are taking financial hits they never could have anticipated. As the pandemic stretches on with no clear end in sight, nonprofits across the country have been confronted with challenges to their sustainability. Rising to the occasion, the Junior League of Houston has adapted its fundraising efforts. And, with the 2020 – 2021 year now in full swing, the League has begun to see how the community is responding to those efforts. That response has been remarkable!

Fundraising is critical to supporting the League's Community Program, operating expenses and building preservation. Funds are raised in a variety of ways. **The Community Partner Program**, a formal partnership between the League and businesses committing more than \$20,000 to the League annually, is especially important. Community Partners receive a variety of benefits, including recognition on the League's website, publications, social media and at general membership meetings. Thankfully, we have strong ongoing relationships with



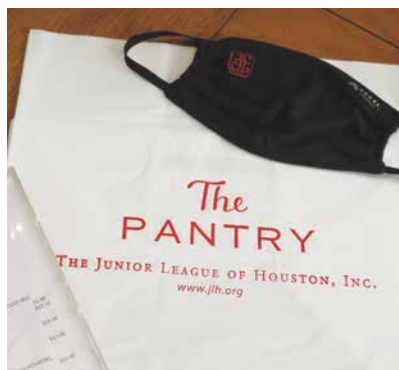
Community Partners and have received renewed support during this difficult time from several long-standing League partners including: **Texas Children's Hospital** – the League's Premier Community Partner, **Sewell Automotive Companies**, **Children's Memorial Hermann Hospital** and **CCRM Fertility Houston**. We are grateful for this continued investment in the mission and work of the Junior League in support of our 34 community projects, community assistance grants and emergency grants.

Another key component of the League's fundraising is the **League Legends Annual Fund**, a giving campaign which in many years is accompanied by a late spring social event celebrating donors who contribute \$250 or more. The League is on track to meet our League Legends Annual Fund goal, but will still need support in this area and ask all members to consider investing in the annual fund this year at any level you feel comfortable giving, no gift is too small and all are received with joy. Another source of revenue – ad sales in *Houston News* – has been similarly performing at or above levels seen in recent years. The Spring edition of *Houston News* is actively seeking ad sales

support right now, so if you are reading this article, you know that a wide audience views this publication – consider placing an ad.

The Tea Room has seen demonstrable changes, with large social events canceled postponed or modified to incorporate virtual and social distancing measures. These events have re-established their momentum, and are once again successfully holding the attention of members and patrons – as evidenced by the sold out virtual Bubbles and Brunch event held in September. Food sales through The Pantry are more in the spotlight than ever too, with successful menus featuring to-go drinks and delicious entrees like fried chicken or fajitas classico.

The 73rd Annual Charity Ball, *Illuminate*, will be held on Saturday, May 1, 2021. This one night, reimagined event will offer both in-person and virtual options to attend as we raise critical funds to support the Junior League of Houston. There are several ways to support *Illuminate* to ensure light and hope are spread throughout the Houston community. Underwriting opportunities are available and donations are being accepted to support both the silent and live auctions. Your generous support of Charity Ball will ensure the light



Junior League's face masks

of more than 4,500 volunteers will continue to *Illuminate* our great city.

New fundraising efforts have further added to the League's success. Amazon Smile, a service which offers the same products, prices and services as typically found on Amazon, offers anyone the ability to assign 0.5% of all eligible purchases to automatically be donated to the League at no additional cost. To sign up, simply open the Amazon Shopping mobile app or go

to smile.amazon.com, select the Junior League of Houston, Inc. as the charity of choice and enjoy some feel-good shopping!

The creativity doesn't end there, as the League has officially started selling JLH-branded face masks through The Pantry. Extra encouragement has also been placed on donations to the League through corporate matching programs.

The League continues to make lemons out of lemonade and do its best in promoting voluntarism and developing the potential of women in service to our community. Please consider donating to the League today, support is needed now more than ever so that the League can continue its great work across the city of Houston.



THE JUNIOR LEAGUE OF HOUSTON, INC. WOULD LIKE TO THANK OUR 2020-2021 COMMUNITY PARTNERS





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