THE BRIGHTEST STARS ARE THOSE WHOSHINE FOR THE BENEFIT OF OTHERS2015—2016 ANNUAL PROFILE



## OUR MISSION

Founded in 1926, The Junior League of Tampa, Inc. is an organization of 1,800 women committed to promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women, and improving communities through effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. Its purpose is exclusively educational and charitable.

## ABOUT THE LEAGUE

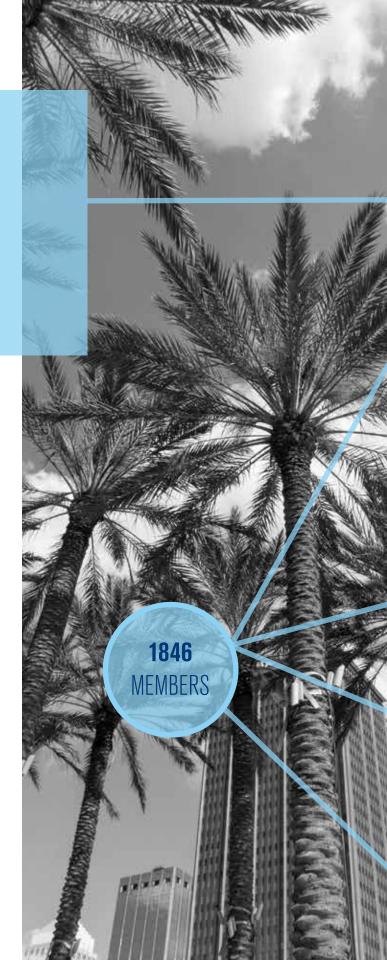
On April 2, 1926, 22 forward thinking women joined together to form The Junior League of Tampa. These insightful founding members declared their mission "...to foster interest among our members in the social, economic, educational and civic conditions of our own community, and to make efficient our volunteer service." While the wording has changed in 89 years, our dedication to our community and member development remains the same.

## **ISSUE AREAS**

The Junior League of Tampa is committed to helping break the cycle of poverty for our most disadvantaged children and families through:

CHILD WELFARE - Improving the lives of children and families touched by the child welfare system, particularly through the continuum of foster care.

EDUCATION - Providing educational programs that support emergent literacy, life skills, and health and nutrition.





STACY CARLSON PRESIDENT 2015–2016

> An invisible thread connects those who are destined to meet, regardless of time, place or circumstance. The thread may stretch or tangle but it will never break. May you be open to each thread that comes into your life - the golden ones and the coarse ones and may you weave them into a brilliant and beautiful life. — Ancient Chinese Proverb

## A MESSAGE TO OUR SUPPORTERS

I often think of this proverb when I think about The Junior League of Tampa. Our mission and commitment to impact our community is the thread that brings our membership together.

Each year, our membership advances the mission of the League. The 2014-15 year was one of tremendous growth and impact, from the 127 new members who joined our ranks, to the more than \$485,000 raised through our annual campaign, grants, endowment, events, and corporate sponsorships.

In 2014-15, we made a difference in the lives of thousands of families by offering expanded literacy activities, increasing the number of healthy, weekend food bags given to families and helping more children find forever families through adoption. Thanks to our advocacy, The Junior League of Tampa helped pass legislation which expunges the criminal record of human trafficking victims. Before this legislation, human trafficking victims, including children, were often re-victimized by being labeled as criminals, which kept them from receiving the type of help and support needed to be liberated from their illegal bondage.

As we look to 2015-16, we will build upon our past successes to strengthen our League. We've updated our leadership structure to include a Management Council, which will enhance the Executive Board's ability to concentrate on future initiatives, while improving the execution of our present day-to-day operations.

On April 2, 2016, The Junior League of Tampa will celebrate its 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary. This important milestone is a time for us to reflect on how we will continue to enhance our organization while continuing the great work of the women who came before us. It is only through our membership, community collaborations, and partnership that the League is able to reach these accomplishments. We are extremely grateful for your assistance and support.

Fondly,

Stac

Stacy Carlson, Ph.D. President, 2015 – 2016



## 2015 – 2016 EXECUTIVE BOARD



STACY CARLSON President

NICOLE HUBBARD President Elect

MELISSA KNIGHT NODHTURFT Secretary

SUZY MENDELSON Community Director

KATIE CAPPY Finance Director LAURA EVERITT Membership Director

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DANIELLE DENNIS Strategic Planning Director

CINDY CONEY Sustainer-At Large Director

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\*Serves on the Executive Board and facilitates Management Council

## 2015 – 2016 LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

90th Anniversary Gala and Events 90th Anniversary Gala and Events 90<sup>th</sup> Project Abolish Movement Arrangements Children's Literacy Project **Children's Literacy Project Community Action** Community Advisory Board **Community Outreach** Electronic Communications Enabling Fund Endowment Family Literacy Nights Food 4 Kids Fund Development Planning/Research Fundraising - Annual Campaign Fundraising - Corporate Gasparilla Invasion Girl Power Grants HEART Headquarters Holiday Gift Market Holiday Gift Market Impact Newsletter JLT Marketplace JLT Marketplace **Kids Connect** Kids in the Kitchen Provisional Project Legal Love Bundles Luminaries Award Luminaries Award Event Placement Project Dev. and Evaluation Committee **Provisional Education Public Affairs** Public Relations and Marketing Ready to Achieve Sandspur **Scholastic Success** Social **Special Events** Strategic Planning Sustainer Sustainer President Technology Training

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The Community Advisory Board (CAB) is a group of trusted, high-level advisors to The Junior League of Tampa. Representing a cross-section of professions and community experience, CAB members work with our Executive Board and Leadership Council to share their wealth of knowledge and provide guidance and direction for the League. Thank you to our CAB members for their continued support of our Mission and community endeavors.



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Kathryn Bursch Community Affairs Coordinator WTSP 10 News



Lissette Campos Anchor ABC Action News



Joseph Clark President Eckerd Family Foundation



The Honorable Virginia Covington United States District Judge Middle District of Florida



Sheff Crowder President Conn Memorial Foundation



The Honorable Janet Cruz State Representative-District 62 The Florida House of Representatives



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The Honorable Dana Young State Representative-District 57

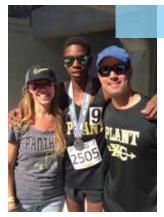




# IMPROVING LIVES

Young people are often the recipients of the thousands of volunteer hours The Junior League of Tampa members provide each year. Whether it's spending an afternoon reading to first graders or teaching tweens how to prepare healthier snacks and meals for themselves and their families, our members serve as much needed mentors and role models to disadvantaged children right here in our own community.

Some of our most inspiring work is working with children and families touched by the child welfare system, and particularly the continuum of foster care. The stories of the children below are evidence that our work strengthens and improves lives, and helps remove the barriers that limit a child from having a successful, productive life.



### QUASAN MARKOWSKI

Just a few short years ago, the only ambition Quasan Markowski (or Q for short) had was to grow up fast enough so that he could age out of foster care and be reunited with his older brother. Q and his four older siblings were in foster care for as long as he can remember. A family member

adopted his only sister, but Q and his brothers were sent to 12 different foster families in as many years, often living in separate homes. A birthday party thrown by The Junior League of Tampa changed Q's life. The event was the first real birthday party he'd ever experienced. That's where he met Junior League volunteer, Katina Markowski and her family. The family struck up a friendship with Q and after several months and a couple of mini-golf and bowling nights later, the Markowski's asked Q to join their family.

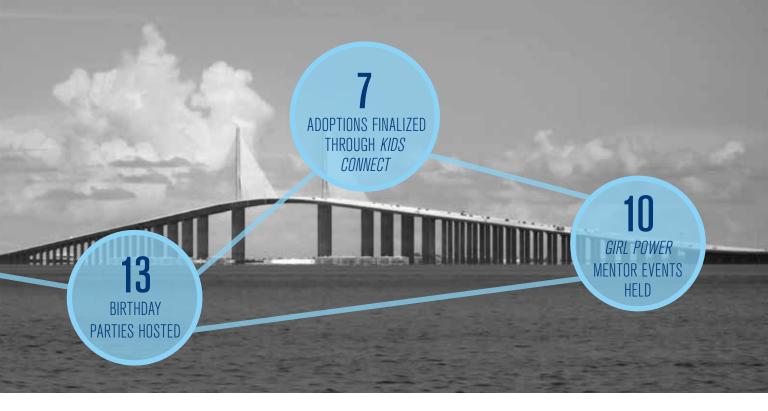
Q says his adoption was one of the happiest moments of his life. He finally had that family unit he was searching for. Wise beyond his years, his favorite saying is "difficult roads often lead to beautiful destinations." Q has finally found not only his beautiful destination but his forever family.



### STEVEN HERALDO

By age 18, Steven Heraldo had been shuffled around to five different group homes. The constant upheavals made him distant and angry, which led to fighting with other kids and staff members.

But life started to get better when Steven joined The Junior League of Tampa's *Ready to Achieve Project* through Connected by 25. With the assistance of staff members, Steven worked through his suppressed emotions and learned to communicate better. Through Junior League mentors, he also learned the life skills he needed to live independently when he aged out of foster care. What's more, Steven began to realize that pursuing a college degree, a career, and having a family were all attainable accomplishments. Today, Steven is a full time college student and is studying to be a nurse.





### TATIANO PALACIOS

After a childhood in the foster care system, Tatiano Palacios dropped out of school in the 8th grade, and was a frequent runaway. At 16, she joined The Junior League of Tampa's partner project, *Ready to Achieve*, which helps

ready foster care children to live independently.

"When you see people around you doing the bare minimum, you don't care to do anything more," recalled Tatiano. "Anyone can do the bare minimum, but I knew I didn't want that." Tatiano created a plan to earn her high school diploma, learned how to set goals and spent most evenings studying.

Today, Tatiano is a community college student, and with assistance from Junior League members, she's learned how to dress for a job interview, and knows there's a group of supporters cheering her to success.



### CHAVON

Chavon has been part of The Children's Board Heart Gallery of Tampa for over a year. Members of The Junior League of Tampa first met the teen through JLT's *Girl Power* Project at the Joshua House. Chavon admits she was shy.

and slightly unmotivated. But through *Girl Power*, she developed self-confidence and started to challenge herself to achieve short term and long term goals. Today, Chavon is an honor roll student who hopes to become a surgeon one day. The patience and leadership she has learned from League members has made her determined to someday give back to the community. Chavon now sees that she's in control of her own destiny and has gained confidence about her future. She admires how generous, kind, and loving the women of JLT have been to her and she's grateful to volunteers at the Heart Gallery who remind her that they truly care about her and are always on her side.

Children's Board Heart Gallery of Tampa Bay • Photo by Marissa Moss



# MAKING A DIFFERENCE

The members of The Junior League of Tampa are a diverse group. Our more than 1,800 members come from a variety of backgrounds: teachers, lawyers, social workers, pharmacists and small business owners. We're married moms and single professionals. We're twentysomethings succeeding in our first job and seasoned executives in our thirties, forties and beyond who balance career and family life. We're probably a lot like you.

What binds our membership is our shared desire to make Tampa a better place through volunteering. We actively work to improve the lives of children and families. As members, we also help empower other women to meet their full potential by developing them as leaders.

We're so proud of our members, who each and every day make a difference in the lives of others. Here are a few we'd like you to meet:



Lauren Bentz joined The Junior League of Tampa in 2013. For her, joining the League has been "the best choice I made here in Tampa so far." Her day job is serving as a teacher at St. Johns Episcopal School. "Education and children are two of my

passions and I absolutely love working with both on a daily basis." In her League career, she is currently doubleplaced as a provisional education mentor and member of the Community Outreach Committee.



An active member since 2006, The Junior League of Tampa is just one of Suzy Lopez's volunteer commitments. She's an Eucharistic reader at her church and the past chair of the board for Self Reliance, Center for Independent Living. By day, Suzy is the deputy chief of the narcotics division for

the Hillsborough County State Attorney's Office. Her steadfast support of the League's Mission is clear. "We are strong women who contribute so much to our community." For Suzy, the leadership and development training she has received through her League membership has helped her on the job and in her other volunteer opportunities.



For Selena Ward, The Junior League of Tampa is the place where women can "step out of their comfort zone, make mistakes and learn from them." After transferring into the Tampa League from Atlanta in 2011, Selena has served in a number of leadership roles, including

chairperson of Ready to Achieve, a member-at-large for the Leadership Council (formerly the Board) and her current placement as Advocacy Manager, where she liaises between the Abolish Movement to end Human Trafficking, the Public Affairs team and the Community Advisory Board. A former corporate event planner for a Fortune 500 company, Selena was once a contestant on the television game show, "Fear Factor" and spent some time in Hollywood as a TV extra. Being an outstanding organizer with the ability to improvise serves her well as both a military spouse and a stay-at-home mom to her three children who range in age from 6, 11, and 12.



As an assistant state attorney and deputy chief of the sex offender division, Jennifer Palacios Johnson is a tireless advocate for children, prosecuting some of the most difficult cases involving sexual assault and child abuse and neglect. It's not an easy job, but "it's fulfilling to get to know my victims and assist them through the criminal process... Some days are harder than others but the victims and their

families are so appreciative of the work I do." A ten-year member of the League, Jennifer's desire to be a positive change for children extends to her placement last year, where she volunteered as the assistant chair of *Love Bundles*. The program collects toiletries, pajamas, baby formula, books and toys to fill more than 2,000 backpacks each year. The backpacks are given to children in child protective services who have been removed from their homes, and are often transferred into the foster care system.



Kristin Ingram relocated to Tampa from the D.C. area a year ago and couldn't wait to get involved with the Junior League. "I was so impressed with the impact of The Junior League of Tampa, especially with our work in human trafficking." Volunteering has been nearly a lifelong pursuit for Kristin. In 2006, she was crowned Miss Virginia, and placed third runner-up in the Miss America scholarship pageant. As part of

her year of service, Kristin traveled the state teaching life skills to young people who were incarcerated in juvenile detention centers and lobbied for better juvenile justice policies. These days, Kristin is a registered nurse who specializes in labor and delivery and is completing her Doctor of Nursing Practice degree with a concentration in Public Health. Her goal is to empower women as leaders and change-makers, and believes membership in the League is important to fulfill that goal.



Clara Reynolds used her eleven years in the League to help co-found the non-profit agency Success 4 Kids & Families, which provides services to women and children. A Tampa native, she spent three years helping to spearhead Trinkets and Treasures, which was the League's primary fundraiser for 40 years prior to the establishment of the Holiday Gift Market. Clara has also been involved in researching and

selecting deserving organizations who receive Junior League grants. "I helped create some valuable projects and was involved in researching many community agencies. But the best part of my placements was meeting and learning from talented, creative, and caring women."

Clara was recently appointed as president of Crisis Center of Tampa Bay where she continues to use her League skills to run this vital community organization.



# FROM THE LEAGUE TO THE BOARDROOM.

The Junior League of Tampa is an organization that encourages women to develop their potential as leaders. Empowered with a structure that provides training and mentoring, many League members find that their voluntarism has a far-reaching impact on their careers, as well.

## MELISSA KNIGHT NODHTURFT

Junior League of Tampa member Melissa Nodhturft never imagined that her law degree would lead her to consider a second career in non-profits. "There's no way it would have happened without the League."

Joining The Junior League of Tampa back in 2009 was a way for Melissa to put down roots of her own in her new hometown. "The women had so much passion and believed so much in the organization," she recalled.

A former Peace Corps volunteer, Melissa has always dedicated time to community service, especially to young people in the foster care system. But a grueling schedule as an attorney, first in private practice and then in the government sector, often made it difficult to volunteer. "There was a big part of me missing, and I needed to fulfill that."

A fellow League member encouraged Melissa to get involved with a local children's non-profit. The years that Melissa spent volunteering with the organization made her realize that working with young people was one of the best ways to utilize her talents. Through membership in the League, Melissa has also learned valuable leadership skills that will assist her throughout her career. In 2015, Melissa successfully co-chaired the League's newest and second largest fundraiser, The Luminaries, which honors local inspiring leaders who have made a lasting impact on the Tampa community. Melissa admits the task was challenging but it provided a boost in her confidence. From setting a budget, to choosing nominees, to attending to the details of the awards luncheon, Melissa realized that running a large League project was a lot like running a non-profit organization. Whatever her future career ambitions. Melissa knows the skills she has honed in the League will lead her to success.

"In the last five to six years, the League has pushed and developed every step of my professional path." Through her League membership, Melissa has found her true calling. Her advice for current and potential members is simple: "Making more time for the League can open more doors than you ever imagined."



2015-16 League Secretary







### CINDY CONEY

Cindy Coney practically grew up in The Junior League of Tampa. Her mother, a long-time member and current Sustainer, would take young Cindy to the volunteer placements she fulfilled for the League. Those trips, along with her family culture of serving others, had a monumental impact.

"There was no doubt that I wanted to be in The Junior League of Tampa," Cindy recalled. "It's not that it was expected. I wanted to join."

During her 41 years of membership, Cindy has served in nearly every leadership capacity. The pinnacle of her service was as League President in 1992. All of those experiences helped shape Cindy's career in the non-profit sector, first as executive director of the Mendez Foundation, a nationwide drug and violence prevention program; then as an author, speaker and health care advocate.

"The skills I learned in the League blended seamlessly into non-profits. I grew up seeing the outstanding work that went on in non-profits." Skills such as public speaking, time management, problem solving and leadership were necessary to run League projects and also aided Cindy in all of her career pursuits.

Cindy has been a mentor to many during her years in the League, and it's clear that she has earned the admiration of fellow League members who recently recognized her as Sustainer of the Year, an award presented to a member over age 40 who has shown outstanding volunteer service to the community. What made the award perhaps even more special for Cindy is that her 87-year-old mom was by her side as she accepted the honor.

After 40 years of service, Cindy has witnessed countless changes. But the Mission of the League to help break the cycle of poverty through education and improved child welfare; to promote voluntarism; and to develop the leadership skills of women has remained constant. "It's still amazing what we do. Tampa would be a very different place without the Junior League."





# TRANSFORMING LIVES ACROSS TAMPA BAY

## 1,700 Love Bundles

backpacks distributed

# \$25,000

grants awarded to nonprofit organizations large and small

# 1,525

people served at the **10** events hosted by our Community Action committee

# 50,000+

volunteer hours to nonprofit organizations we serve

# 7,396

Food 4 Kids bags filled with groceries donated to **384** children each week

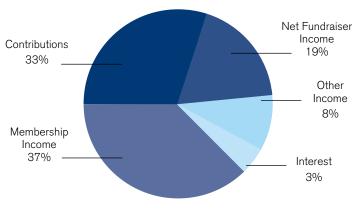
2000 education resource packets distributed as part of *Scholastic Success* 

# 160

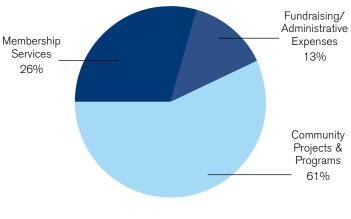
children learned healthy cooking skills through *Kids in the Kitchen* each week at **7** sites

## FINANCES

Statement of Activities for 2014 - 2015



TOTAL REVENUE: \$806,387



TOTAL EXPENSES: \$708,660

Revenues may not equal expenses in a given year based on our budgeting practices.

**15** Family Literacy Nights held with **600** 

kids each month and 9,127 distributed books

\$208,403

net revenue earned at Holiday Gift Market with **14,000** attendees



## THANK YOU TO 2014-2015 JUNIOR LEAGUE OF TAMPA DONORS

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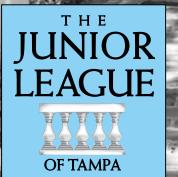
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Thank you to our inaugural member of the 1926 Society, Martha Sale Ferman.

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