



JUNIOR LEAGUE OF
COLORADO SPRINGS

2019-2020 ANNUAL REPORT

CELEBRATING 96 YEARS

The Junior League of Colorado Springs is an organization of women committed to promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women and improving communities through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. Its purpose is exclusively educational and charitable.





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MEMBERSHIP



On March 30, 2020, the Junior League of Colorado Springs celebrated its 96th anniversary. This League year brought us tremendous membership growth and an opportunity to refine our community impact. Our organization is **entirely volunteer-driven**, comprised of more than 300 women ages 21 to over 100 years of age.



MEMBERSHIP



In the summer of 2019, leadership determined that to make JLCS membership as accessible as possible, we would change our New Member onboarding process from once yearly to, now, twice yearly. This simple change has resulted in more than a **260% increase in new membership** over the previous League year as we welcomed 56 New Members.



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MEMBERSHIP



As we grow in membership, we evolve in our strategy for training those members. Conscious efforts to create a more member-centric model of participation led to improved **new membership retention by more than 20%**.



FUNDRAISING



This year, we celebrated the 10th anniversary of our signature family event, El Paso County's Touch-A-Truck weekend. Our largest event certainly didn't disappoint as we hosted more and varied vendors than ever before. The committee was able to achieve **more than \$25,000 in new sponsorships, over a 200% increase year over year**, leading to one of our most successful fundraisers to date.



FUNDRAISING



In 2020, we launched a brand-new fundraiser in January: The Little Black Dress Initiative Gala. The Little Black Dress Initiative, or LBDI, is an awareness project that helps illustrate our focus area, Fostering Change, to the public by encouraging participants to wear the same black outfit every day for a week. The visionary LBDI Gala committee not only rallied the public around our focus area but also **raised more than \$18,000** as a result of the gala's debut.



COMMUNITY



Our signature community outreach event, Fantasy Flight, celebrated its 13th year flying children to the "North Pole" with the help of SkyWest Airlines and the Colorado Springs Municipal Airport. **Twenty-six children in foster care** and 29 total took a magical journey sponsored by the Junior League and **eight new community sponsors**, including AMOS Associates in Maxillofacial and Oral Surgery and Arcadis.



COMMUNITY



As we enter year three of our Fostering Change Initiative, efforts to reduce the risk factors associated with aging out of the foster care system in El Paso county, we continue to establish partnerships with community organizations and agencies that provide membership with opportunities to enact change firsthand.



COMMUNITY



During this League year, members organized a **career fair** for youth aging out of the foster care system, sorted and organized donations for The Hanger, a clothing store designed specifically for teens in foster care, and **curated a fall crafting activity** for the El Paso County Family Visitation Center, to name a few.



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COMMUNITY

VIRTUAL SUPPLIES DRIVE
 in support of
 the**PLACE**
 a former affiliate of Urban Peak



JUNIOR LEAGUE OF
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 PRESENTS

**Give \$8,
 Send a Plate**

Feeding the frontlines one \$8 meal at a time.

In partnership with

uhealth

#Give8SendAPlate #GivingTuesdayNow

Most recently, members have pivoted their impact to a virtual venue by organizing a goods drive for The Place and presenting the Give \$8 campaign. By combining forces with community partners, the women of the JLCS have designed a way to both support the community and respond to our focus area while engaging donors. JLCS members facilitated the donation of 43 meals to healthcare workers and over 160 personal care items to The Place.



GRANTING



Bethany is a bright, hard-working young woman who loves to write poetry. With her gift of words, she once offered one of the most accurate descriptions of what it means to age out of foster care when she called it an “existential crisis.” You go through your childhood and teens being labeled a “foster kid” and then one day you’re not, she said.

Since aging out, she’s had her ups and downs but has been able to successfully maintain employment and housing, and at one point even took some college classes. Bethany and her son moved away from Colorado Springs, but she was working and navigating motherhood and seemed to be managing this new challenge.

*Name changed to protect confidentiality.



GRANTING



About a year later, Bethany's life took a sharp turn. She lost her job, and with no safety net, housing soon followed. She sent her son to temporarily live with someone else, and now she was expecting another child. When volunteers from Fostering Hope reconnected with her, she was at The Place (formerly Urban Peak). Fostering Hope found a trusted and reliable friend and co-worker who was willing to rent out part of her home to Bethany and her son and help her through the pregnancy and newborn period. It was a safe, stable and positive environment at a critical time.

The Junior League of Colorado Springs's Fostering Change Fund grant allowed Bethany to cover rent and utilities for 3 months. It became even more critical when not long after she moved in, COVID-19 came to our community. To be expecting a child during the pandemic without employment, support, or stable housing is a situation difficult to imagine, and the JLCS Fostering Change Fund grant provided the security of safe housing at a most crucial time.



GRANTING

The Fostering Change Fund granting program is designed to help meet short term financial needs, just like Bethany's, for teens and young adults who have aged out of the foster care system. As we continue to educate ourselves on these important needs, the trajectory of our impact has rapidly become more responsive, more pointed, and more impactful.

The JLCS has granted more than \$4,300 to several deserving applicants for a variety of purposes, including

- \$150 to Julia for new work clothes
- \$1500 to Bethany for three months of transitional housing assistance
- \$800 to Tyler for enrollment in Pickens Technical College
- \$400 to Alex for rental assistance
- \$400 to Tyson for emergency food assistance
- \$250 to Tamika for medical bills payments

This year, Finance Committee wrote into policy the guarantee of at least \$5,000 allocated each fiscal year to the Fostering Change Fund. Community members are encouraged to donate directly to the Fund to increase granting capacity.

*Names have been changed to protect confidentiality.





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PARTNERS

The work of the Junior League of Colorado Springs wouldn't be possible without the generous support of our community sponsors and partners.

