

THE

# COLLIER

WINTER 2013

JUNIOR LEAGUE OF CHARLOTTE  
MAGAZINE

## 25 YEARS OF THE LEARNING COLLABORATIVE

Cornerstone Campaign  
Forges Ahead

Leading Beyond  
the League:  
Mary Sherrill Ware

MARCH MONEY  
MADNESS





# MARCH MONEY MADNESS

March 13 | 6:30 P.M. | Dilworth Neighborhood Grille



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**Amie Hutchison**

2013-2014 JLC President

**Mission Statement**

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

**Reaching Out Statement**

The Junior League of Charlotte, Inc. and The Association of Junior Leagues International, Inc. reach out to women of all races, religions and national origins who demonstrate an interest in and commitment to voluntarism.

**The Junior League  
of Charlotte, Inc.**

**President's Letter**



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**N**ow, it is time for us to add another name to our list of the Junior League of Charlotte Inc.'s (JLC) celebrated history of addressing an unmet need in our community, to serving the underserved and to seeing the unseen. The JLC Cornerstone Project at Reid Park Academy is a very unique project unlike anything we've ever done before. The goal is build foundations of lives, not buildings. Our goal is to raise \$500,00 to fund wrap-around services and service programming that will directly benefit the students of Reid Park Academy, a K-8 school serving the children who live in West Charlotte neighborhoods Arbor Glen, Boulevard Homes, Capitol Drive, Clanton Park/Roseland, Eagle Park, Pinecrest, Ponderosa/Wingate, and Reid Park. The JLC's active leadership has created programming to pair our financial support with meaningful volunteer work that will enhance the lives of children in an area where our collective contributions are much needed, and are certain to be very impactful to our community at large. For example, this project will make a real impact on the issue of hunger through the backpack program with the Second Harvest Food Bank, and Family Dinner Nights, where our Kids in the Kitchen volunteers cook healthy dinners to both train and feed students and their families.

Make a difference for Reid Park Academy. Make a difference for The West Charlotte Neighborhoods. Make a difference for the Charlotte community! Please join me in making a contribution to the JLC Cornerstone Project at Reid Park Academy. Together, we will help the league make a big difference in improving the education and health of the children at Reid Park Academy, and will further the Junior League legacy of seeing the unseen.

Best,

Amie Hutchison  
2013-2014 JLC President

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**Alyson Vaughan**

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**Vision Statement**

The Junior League of Charlotte, Inc. will be a leading force in improving the lives of children and families in this community.

**Diversity Statement**

The Junior League of Charlotte, Inc. will maximize its potential and enhance its effectiveness by integrating diversity into every aspect of its organization.

## Editor's Letter

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You know the year's been busy when you look at the calendar and realize, "Oh my goodness, it's December!" I feel like I just got used to typing "2013" and now it's almost over. It's interesting to see how priorities change at the end of the year. For me, work slows down as people use up what's left of their vacation days. But life speeds up as plans are made for school parties, visiting family, shopping and cooking. Life is as busy as ever for members of the Junior League of Charlotte, Inc. (JLC), as the articles in this issue show.

In our fall issue of *The CRIER*, we discussed JLC President Amie Hutchison's theme for 2013-2014: "Promote, Develop, Improve". In this winter issue, I think the "develop" theme rings loud and clear. The JLC develops the potential of women and in turn, women develop the Charlotte community. This can be seen with the JLC's volunteer placements. Please read about how JLC volunteers are positively impacted as they help children and families deal with the topic of grief as they work with KinderMourn, and as they act as camp counselors at Chameleon's Journey. Don't forget to read about JLC member Mary Sherrill Ware, who is a personal testament of how one individual's development through the JLC can in turn cause a ripple effect in the community.

The JLC also develops the city of Charlotte by raising money, in so many different ways, to support our community partners. In this issue, we recap our signature fall event, Lights! Camera! Fashion!, and we promote our upcoming spring event March Money Madness. While attendees have a great time learning about the latest fashions, or watching college hoops, the JLC mission is furthered with funds raised in ticket sales.

Additionally, this issue discusses three crucial fund raising efforts — the Annual Campaign, the Cornerstone Campaign, and planned giving. The Annual Campaign is the JLC's source for raising unrestricted funds to funnel back into our volunteer projects. The Cornerstone Campaign is a push to directly fund the JLC's Cornerstone Project, allowing Reid Park Academy a chance to grow into a model community school. Through JLC sponsored education on planned giving and estate planning, JLC members can continue to develop the community with monetary support after their time serving in the JLC has ended.

Thank you for reading. *The CRIER* staff wishes everybody a happy and healthy 2014, and looks forward to continuing its coverage of JLC people, partners and events in the year ahead.

Alyson Vaughan

2013-2014 *The CRIER* Editor

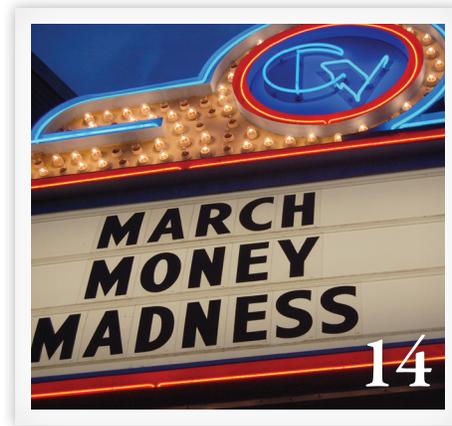
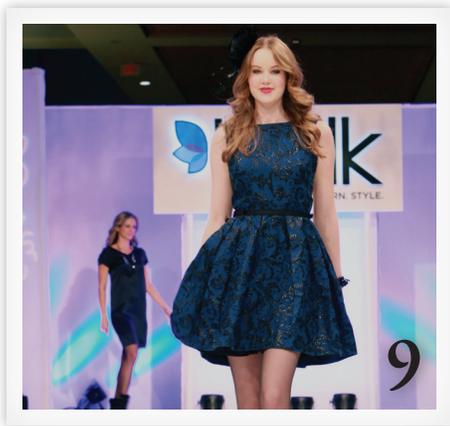
**The Junior League  
of Charlotte, Inc.**



# Winter

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Mary Sherrill Ware credits JLC for giving her tools to take on new leadership roles. Page 25.

Photo by Crystal Heilig

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“Belk did a phenomenal job putting on the fashion show, and Tai Beauchamp’s creative input really took the fashion show to the next level.”

— Whitney Sturge, Chair of the LCF committee

## ‘Lights! Camera! Fashion!’ Takes Center Stage

Fashion, fun and style are main themes of signature fall event

By Allison Gnilka

This year’s Lights! Camera! Fashion! (LCF) event marked the fourth annual fashion show and private shopping opportunity benefiting the Junior League of Charlotte, Inc. (JLC). The event was held on October 13 at Belk in South Park Mall and featured a special guest appearance and style commentary by InStyle Style Ambassador Tai Beauchamp.

Whitney Sturge, Chair of the LCF committee, shared, “This year’s event was incredible! We were thrilled to see such a great turnout, and we loved seeing everyone leave with Belk bags! Belk did a phenomenal job putting on the fashion show, and Tai Beauchamp’s creative input really took the fashion show to the next level.”

The LCF event attracted both JLC members and

non-members alike, enjoying fabulous prizes, giveaways, raffles and silent auction opportunities. Attendees received a Belk gift card as well as a 20 percent discount to enjoy during the event.

As one of the JLC’s largest fundraisers, the 2013 LCF event attracted more than 700 attendees and raised nearly \$40,000. Money raised in fundraisers such as LCF contribute to the JLC’s mission, including supporting community partners as well as developing civic leadership in its members.

Sturge was also pleased by the spirit of the attendees.

“People seemed to really enjoy themselves and have so much fun shopping around with friends. The overall mood and feel of the event was fabulous! Thanks to everyone who came to support Lights! Camera! Fashion!” she said.

Next year’s event will mark the five-year anniversary of LCF. The JLC looks forward to planning and preparing for this milestone. 

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The Junior League of Charlotte, Inc. would like to thank the following sponsors for making Lights! Camera! Fashion! 2013 a huge success.

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# March Money Madness: Tipping Off Soon!

Annual event offers a fun night out in support of the JLC mission

By Brandi Riggins

The Junior League of Charlotte, Inc. (JLC) combines fellowship, basketball and raffle prizes to raise money in support of the JLC and its community programs with the third annual March Money Madness event. The event will take place at 6:30 p.m. on March 13 at Dilworth Neighborhood Grille. March Money Madness is one of the JLC's two major yearly fundraisers, and is thereby an important piece of the League's overall Fund Development plan for revenue generation.

March Money Madness celebrates the first night of the ACC, Big Ten, Big 12 and SEC men's basketball tournaments — but basketball isn't the only chance to have fun of the evening. Event supporters also have a chance to win a raffle grand prize of up to \$5,000 plus other prizes including catering packages, sports tickets and much more.

## Increased community involvement

The JLC's signature spring fundraiser is gaining momentum with the community along with JLC members. Last spring, more than 300 attendees cheered on their favorite basketball teams while raising more than \$21,500 to further the mission of the JLC. Dilworth Neighborhood Grille serves as a great location for the fundraiser, and the JLC has received wonderful support from restaurant owner Norm Randall. The restaurant offers 36 televisions for game-viewing, and it has added 12 college alumni associations to its roster of customers who regularly watch basketball games there.

JLC Committee Chair Alexis "Lexi" Parisi is excited about the continued partnership with Randall.

"He really gets involved and wants to make sure the event is a success. Those alumni supporters are potential spring fundraiser customers, and Norm plans to market to his customers early."

This fall, Parisi and Vice Chair Lauren Dayton met with committee members to kick off the planning process. Both women are returning committee members and were excited to see many repeat committee members back to make the event successful once again.

"We have an advantage due to a lot of returning committee members. Our committee members are passionate about the cause and want to see the



Dilworth Neighborhood Grill will again play host to the event. PHOTO BY LAUREN GULAK

event become a success with more community involvement."

Parisi explained that last year 20 percent of March Money Madness attendees were not JLC members. "We hope to increase that number this time with extra marketing initiatives," said Parisi.

## New changes ahead

To improve event operations, Parisi and Dayton developed three sub-committees focusing on event logistics, social media and marketing and ticket sales.

The Event Logistics sub-committee is tasked with such things as implementation of the event details, conduct market studies and coordinate other fundraising drivers such as a possible silent auction.

The Social Media and Marketing sub-committee will promote the event through various social media outlets, yard signs, t-shirt marketing campaigns and possibly using broad-reaching market vehicles such as Groupon.

"Groupon could also take us into another realm of visibility and awareness with the Charlotte community," Parisi said.

The committee is also considering changes to the way tickets are sold in order to maximize

## Save the date

MARCH  
13

6:30 P.M.

**March Money  
Madness** at Dilworth  
Neighborhood Grille

attendance and raffle sales. Heavy appetizers and two drink tickets are included in the event ticket price.

In addition to the ticket price drop, the committee will offer a donation option on the website for JLC members and supporters of the JLC. All proceeds from March Money Madness will benefit the JLC and help support the Healthy Family Initiative.

In order to make the event a success, JLC member participation and support is crucial. For information about volunteering at the event, or event suggestions, please contact a member of the March Money Madness committee. Please look out for more information about how to buy tickets. In the meantime, save the date and get ready for a night of basketball and fundraising festivities! 

# JLC Members' Generosity Drives Annual Campaign Success

Donations make a lasting community impact

By Connie Henderson

There are many ways to make a difference through to The Junior League of Charlotte, Inc. (JLC). Many women give the gift of their time and skills, allowing the JLC to make positive change in the community. However, the JLC also relies on monetary donations from members to support all aspects of its mission of promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women and improving the community through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers.

The Annual Campaign is a critical fundraiser for the JLC — and an excellent opportunity for members to support the JLC's mission. This year, the Annual Campaign is designed to support the JLC's Cornerstone Campaign to benefit the Reid Park Academy Community School.

"Even though the Annual Campaign and the Cornerstone Campaign have different targeted usages of funds raised, they are equally important to supporting the mission of the League," said Makayla Thrower, chair of the Annual Campaign committee. "This year, we are thanking you for your loyal support. Because of the Annual Campaign, the League has been able to continue to support our mission."

With member donations through the Annual Campaign, the JLC has been able to provide children in the community with dental care kits, meals to pregnant teenagers living in group homes, and opportunities for JLC members to take part in leadership trainings, and personal and professional development.

This December, the Annual Campaign committee will mail a holiday card to JLC members to show appreciation for their support and to ask for continued support this year. Members may donate through the JLC website ([jlcharlotte.org](http://jlcharlotte.org)) or they may mail donations directly to the JLC. 



Active Erica Frazier captivates her eager young audience. PHOTO BY TRICIA WILLIAMS

**"Because of the Annual Campaign, the League has been able to continue to support our mission."**

— Makayla Thrower, chair of the Annual Campaign committee



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# From the JLC Kitchen

Shake up your holiday season sideboard

By Breana C Jeter

The holiday season is upon us once again! To help make your season merry and bright, try this easy Breakfast Pizza recipe that will fuel your family for a busy day of holiday shopping. Prepare to impress your holiday guests and satisfy your sweet tooth with Chocolate Peppermint Soufflés.



## Breakfast Pizza

From Junior Leagues' Kids in the Kitchen  
[kidsinthekitchen.ajli.org](http://kidsinthekitchen.ajli.org)

Time: 45 minutes  
Difficulty: Medium  
Serves: 8

### Directions

- Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Prepare crust by opening the tube of crescent roll dough and arranging it on a work surface. Separate the dough into triangles along the perforated lines. Arrange the triangles on a round pizza pan with the points toward the center. Press edges together lightly to form the pizza crust.
- Add toppings. Sprinkle the sausage, hash browns and cheese evenly over the crust. Top with onions, bell peppers and hot sauce.
- Placing the eggs and milk in a mixing bowl and beat until smooth. Pour mixture evenly over the pizza. Sprinkle with salt and pepper.
- Bake for 30 minutes or until the eggs are set and the crust is golden brown. Remove from oven and cut into wedges with a pizza cutter.

### Ingredients

1 tube reduced-fat refrigerated crescent rolls  
1 cup crumbled cooked breakfast sausage  
1 cup frozen hash browns, thawed  
1 cup (4 ounces) shredded Cheddar cheese  
Chopped onions and/or bell peppers (optional)  
Hot sauce (optional)  
5 eggs  
1/4 cup milk  
Salt and pepper to taste

## Chocolate Peppermint Soufflés

From Austin Entertains by the Junior League of Austin

*Normally soufflés are reserved for master chefs, but this recipe makes them easy and accessible to all cooks — perfect for wowing your holiday guests. The recipe can be made a day in advance.*

### Sauce Ingredients:

1 cup whipping cream  
1 cup crushed peppermint candy canes or other hard peppermint candy  
1/4 cup water  
6 ounces semisweet chocolate, chopped  
2/3 cup of sugar  
1/2 cup of water  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
5 egg yolks beaten  
6 egg whites  
1/4 teaspoon cream of tartar

### Chocolate Soufflé Ingredients:

3 tablespoons unsalted butter  
3 tablespoons flour  
1 cup 2% milk  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1/3 cup of crushed peppermint candy or other crushed peppermint candy



### Sauce Directions:

- Combine the whipping cream, candy and water in a heavy saucepan. Cook over medium heat until candy melts, stirring frequently. Remove from heat. Add the chocolate, stirring until

blended. Serve warm or at room temperature. (You may prepare up to 1 day in advance, if necessary. Store covered in the refrigerator. Reheat over low heat.)

**Continued on Page 10**

# Fall Into Leadership

JLC's Leaders Attend 2013 ALJI Fall Leadership Conference

By Breana C. Jeter

When the kids headed back to school this fall, Junior League of Charlotte Inc. (JLC), President Amie Hutchinson and President-Elect Beverley Shull headed to the annual Association of Junior Leagues International, Inc. (AJLI) Fall Leadership Conference to learn some lessons of their own. AJLI is a membership corporation, jointly owned by the almost 300 Junior League chapters across the world, that provides training and other services to the chapters. Every year in the fall, the JLC's current president and president-elect attend the conference to learn new techniques and to see what other chapters are doing that's new and exciting.

This year's conference was held in Detroit, Michigan from Sept. 19-21. The format of the conference opened with a plenary session and featured a series of breakout sessions and training events designed to assist incoming Junior League leadership.

As Hutchinson explained, "The conference is such a neat thing because of all of the training that is provided in one place. If the League was to try and send members to the number of trainings all provided in one weekend by AJLI, it would be tremendously expensive, so it's a great opportunity for us."

When asked about her favorite session Shull replied, "I really enjoyed learning about outcome measurement while volunteering, which is such a hot topic right now, and how to measure the impact of what we do as volunteers in terms of



JLC President Amie Hutchinson and President Elect Beverley Shull at the AJLI conference in Detroit. PHOTO PROVIDED BY BEVERLY SHULL

the people we help." Shull also enjoyed attending sessions on successful strategies for maintaining and encouraging membership involvement and initiating organization renewal.

"As an organization, what we do internally as leaders of the League really has to be about the opportunities we provide and giving members the best experience possible."

At this year's conference, for the first time, in addition to attending, the JLC hosted an exhibit table to showcase the wonderful work completed by the Mental Health Committee. The table included a photo display and handouts regarding the JLC's work in creating the Emmy award-winning mental

"It is a great chance to get training and a wonderful networking opportunity to hear from other Leagues."

— President-Elect Beverley Shull

health awareness documentary entitled *From the Heart: Transforming Bullying into Caring*.

Hutchison and Shull worked at the table for some of the conference, and received positive feedback from other Leagues wanting to do the same thing for their communities. The feedback was so positive, in fact, that JLC Staff is now working on providing the MHA video series for sale via the JLC's website as well as at future AJLI conferences.

All in all, Shull's impression of the Fall Leadership Conference was very positive. "It is a great chance to get training and a wonderful networking opportunity to hear from other Leagues about what's going on, what's working, and to share information."

AJLI conferences, both those for the President and President-Elect, as well as others such as AJLI's Organizational Development Institute (ODI) Series provided for other emerging League leaders, are a wonderful opportunity for our leaders to glean knowledge and ideas that can be applied towards continued improvement of the JLC's programs and structure. 

From Page 9

## Chocolate Peppermint Soufflés

### Soufflé Directions:

- Butter eight 1¼ cup soufflé dishes or custard cups. Sprinkle with sugar to taste. Arrange the dishes on a large baking sheet. Heat 3 tablespoons of butter in a saucepan over medium heat until melted. Whisk in the flour. Cook for 2 minutes or until the mixture is bubbly and smooth, whisking constantly. Increase the heat to medium-high. Add the 2% milk gradually, whisking constantly.

Cook for 1 minute or until the mixture comes to a boil and is thick and smooth, whisking constantly. Whisk in the salt. Remove the heat. Add the chocolate and whisk until blended. Whisk in 1/3 cup of the sugar, water and vanilla. Let stand for 25 minutes or until room temperature.

- Whisk the egg yolks in to the chocolate mixture. Beat the egg whites and cream of tartar in a

mixing bowl until soft peaks form. Add the remaining 1/3 cup sugar gradually, beating constantly until stiff and glossy. Fold ¼ of the beaten egg whites in 3 additions. Spoon into the prepared dishes. Sprinkle with the candy.

- Bake the soufflés at 400 degrees for 30 minutes or until puffed and almost firm to the touch but still soft in the center. Bake frozen soufflés for 40 minutes. Serve immediately with the sauce. 

# What Women Want

Association of Junior Leagues International gains momentum with Action Learning Teams Initiative

By Allison Gnilka

The Junior League of Charlotte, Inc. (JLC) is part of a broad-reaching strategic partnership spearheaded by the Association of Junior Leagues International (AJLI) to address common areas for improvement that were identified through a years-long process of research, evaluation and information gathering across leagues and including examination of other non-profit models and initiatives.

According to Beverley Shull, JLC Action Learning Team (ALT) Lead Representative and JLC President-Elect, the focus of the Action Learning Teams initiative is to modernize The Junior League model, understanding that the needs of members have changed since Junior League origination.

“Junior Leagues nationally are not retaining membership like we used to,” explained Shull. “We have to make changes to the Junior League model in order to stay effective and sustainable. The needs of the members over the past 100 years do not necessarily match up with the needs of current membership demographics, so leagues across the country are working together to find innovative solutions!”

The AJLI model for accomplishing this work included the creation of 13 Action Learning Teams (ALT) from 79 Junior Leagues. The teams were based on the three primary areas of opportunity surrounding past AJLI membership survey results and the AJLI strategic roadmap. Shull describes the ALT as “a method of inquiry and discovery the AJLI adopted to brainstorm solutions around each identified area of focus.” Each ALT group (the JLC is a member of the Membership ALT B for Large Leagues) has an AJLI staff member on their team who serves as a facilitator, as well as a trained League-member coach, both of whom guide the process and serve as a resource to the group’s threefold approach to this problem-solving practice. Each ALT group is responsible for discussing opportunities and solutions as well as the development of deliverables, such as potential pilot programs and toolkits that can be shared with other Junior Leagues.

The three broad areas of focus within the program include evaluation of the membership model; Issue



Action Learning Teams workteam members Beverley Shull, Allison Stacey, Megan Anderson, Amber Jenkins and Kelley Cobb. (Not pictured: Lauren Wall). PHOTO BY ALLISON STACEY

Based Governance; and the evaluation of the governance model that includes Junior League board and management structure. In 2010, the JLC was accepted for placement on the national ALT for membership satisfaction. This placement offered the JLC an opportunity to collaborate both with the national team of seven leagues around the US, as well as more broadly with all 79 Junior Leagues participating in the program to brainstorm solutions.

During the initial months of the ALT process, the team on which the JLC is a participant began to narrow down the membership satisfaction discussion down specifically to sustainer satisfaction and retention. Through additional months of probing and discussion, the team also identified that for most members, future sustainer connection can actually begin during a member’s active years with her league.

Shull explained that the goal of the JLC’s participation in this AJLI project is to “find a way to provide members with a league experience allowing for powerful volunteer opportunities in the community, as well and leadership development, in order to create lifelong civic leaders in our communities. And as an added bonus, we can provide the chance through the work we are doing for all leagues, not just the JLC, to utilize the tools and programming developed within the ALTs in order to create lasting and positive change.”

## Knowing AJLI Members

Statistics from the 1999 and 2005 AJLI polls indicated:

- Nearly 8 in 10 active members want levels adapted to life stage.
- 66% of members want flexibility in placements
- 69% would like flexibility in meeting requirements.
- 70% of members want a long-term sponsor or mentor
- 65% want to be a sponsor or mentor.
- 56% of members want more attention to their life stage needs.

At this point in the process, the national ALT B - Large League workgroup is finalizing details for two pilot programs, one which provides additional opportunities for league engagement for any sustainer member who so chooses, as well as a new membership program providing more flexibility and fewer requirements as in the existing model. Additionally, the JLC work team is hoping to develop a more comprehensive Membership Satisfaction program incorporating more far-reaching ideas and lessons learned from other ALT teams and league initiatives throughout the Association of Junior Leagues International. 



1. Standing (left to right): JLC Member Dawn Freeland, JLC Member Cassandra Morris, JLC Member Leslie West. PHOTO BY LESLIE BING

2. Light! Camera! Fashion! Committee members prepare swag bags for the event. PHOTO BY CASSANDRA B. MORRIS

3. Fall Provisionals take time to pose for the camera during their bus tour. PHOTO BY JILL SMITH



4. Lila Brown displays a sampling of the items available at The Buttercup Gifts and Stationary at the Sustainers Showcase. PHOTO BY CARMEN ECHOLS

5. Arrangements Committee members Sara Reed and Jeanae Perry prepare for the Community Advisory Board Luncheon. PHOTO BY CRYSTAL HEILIG

6. JLC transfers take time out for a gathering at Reids. PHOTO BY CRYSTAL HEILIG



7. Big Shots Chair Sabrina Tucker (far left) and committee member Lauren Willams (far right) survey the line of parents and children at the final Big Shots Saturday with Janine Williams of the Mecklenburg County Health Department, and JLC Community Impact Manager, Beth Bechhold. PHOTO BY CRYSTAL HEILIG



8. Christine Nelson poses with the beautiful pumpkin she carved to decorate the JLC lobby. PHOTO BY WOOZIE DELL

9. The Membership Development Committee Welcoming Fall Provisionals. PHOTO BY JLC PHOTO COMMITTEE



10. Past Presidents Meredith Sherrill, Elizabeth Kovacs, Martha Alexander, Lisa Tomlinson, Katherine Fuller, Rocky Trenkelbach, Mary Tinkey, Mary Monatgue and Jan Stedman, with current JLC President Amie Hutchison, and President Elect Beverly Shull at the Past Presidents Luncheon. PHOTO BY CARMEN ECHOLS

11. Kimberly Williams and Elenor Norman at the Cornerstone Campaign Kickoff. PHOTO BY CRYSTAL HEILIG

12. Magen Murray, Wearhouse Special Events Chair, and guest speaker Jodi Hubner-Margues pictured at October's Breast Cancer Awareness Training. PHOTO BY LESLIE BING

**SHARE YOUR MOMENTS**

Email your photos to [jlcrier@yahoo.com](mailto:jlcrier@yahoo.com)





# A Passion for Serving

JLC member brings leadership to the community

By Connie Henderson

**M**ary Sherrill Ware takes her love of helping others to new heights every day. A member of the Junior League of Charlotte, Inc. (JLC) for seven years, Ware's commitment to service and voluntarism shines through in every move she makes.

Ware, a Charlotte native, joined the JLC based on a friend's recommendation. She was interested in meeting women with similar passions and she wanted to connect with an organization that addresses the needs of the community in a significant way.

We, as members of the Junior League of Charlotte, have an incredible opportunity to be part of a collective voice that stands up for women, children and families in our community," Ware said.

Ware started her time with the JLC as a member of Mistletoe Market (the JLC's fall fundraiser prior to Lights! Camera! Fashion!) followed by Charlotte Shops where she helped with internal fundraising. She then worked with The Alexander Youth Network for two years, enjoying weekly lunches, Halloween festivities and other holiday parties with the four kids she served.

Quality public education is at the heart of what drives Ware's passion. She believes lack of quality public education is the root issue in poverty. This belief drove her to found KIPP (Knowledge Is Power Program) Charlotte Girl's Leadership Program, a JLC placement. KIPP Charlotte is a free school for students in fifth through eighth grades. The school's mission is to prepare students in



Charlotte native Mary Sherrill Ware lends her time and talent to both the JLC and the Charlotte community.

PHOTO BY CRYSTAL HEILIG

underserved communities to be successful in high school, college and life while helping to shape and develop future leaders.

Ware is proud that she was able to provide structure for building a JLC committee that remains so close to her passion. Through her involvement with KIPP Charlotte, she has empowered other women to become leaders while shaping their perspectives. The opportunity allowed her to provide seventh and eighth grade students at KIPP Charlotte with valuable training to help them gain life skills.

Ware's involvement in the Charlotte community extends beyond the JLC. She is a member of Forest

“We ... have an incredible opportunity to be part of a collective voice that stands up for women, children and families in our community.”

— Mary Sherrill Ware

Hill Church, the University of North Carolina Alumni Association and East Mecklenburg Alumni Association. She also sits on the the Board of Directors for KIPP Charlotte.

Additionally, Ware has been involved in the World Economic Forum Global Shapers of Charlotte (Charlotte Shapers) for the last two years. Charlotte Shapers is a group of young professionals under the age of 35 who join together to work on global issues, with a goal of creating a local project that can be replicated on a global scale.

Ware credits the JLC with giving her training that she considers invaluable. She is a graduate from the JLC Leadership Development Institute and the JLC Public Institute, which she says have helped her to find her voice. Now she is able to speak up and speak out on issues in which she believed. The JLC offered her an opportunity to gain leadership skills in a safe environment where people wanted to do well and see others succeed. 



# Women Work to Choose Charlotte Leaders

JLC partners with League of Women Voters and WTVI in Mayoral Forum

By Kristin Steele

On October 31, the Junior League of Charlotte, Inc. (JLC) hosted its first mayoral forum in conjunction with WTVI and the League of Women Voters. Connie Springs, 2013-2014 chair of the JLC Public Policy Institute (PPI), brought forth the concept with the idea that the mayoral forum would be an opportune time for women in the Charlotte community to make their voices heard on issues that concerned them — fighting homelessness, human trafficking, the state of the economy, transportation, and job creation — to name a few. As Springs conveyed, “There is power in numbers. Women can come together to say, ‘The League supports this issue; what is your stance on it?’”

After learning that there would be an interim mayoral election in Charlotte due to the appointment of former Mayor Anthony Foxx as the Obama Administration’s Secretary of Transportation, Springs set her sights on creating an opportunity around the mayoral race, as it would provide the ideal platform for JLC members to bring forth issues that most concerned them. She reached out to several members and committees of the JLC as well as other Leagues across the Southeast to gather their insight and knowledge around putting on a debate-style event.

Springs also contacted the League of Women Voters to garner support, and then contacted WTVI through an existing CPCC connection in regards to creating a partnership. With broad support from JLC leadership, committee members and the proposed partners, Springs and committee were able to proceed with execution of the event. As she put it “This is definitely an all-League event, as there was the need to gain the support of many JLC committees to make the event a success.”

This wasn’t the first time that the JLC has partnered with WTVI. Over the past 5 years, WTVI has been on the team producing the JLC’s Mental Health Awareness DVD series, which itself has garnered widespread support and awards. Springs was thrilled to learn that WTVI was interested in continuing its partnership with the JLC by providing a venue for the mayoral forum as well as broadcasting the



Public Policy Committee Co-Chairs. Connie Springs and Eleanor Norman take a moment with candidates Patrick Cannon, and Edwin Peacock following the debates. PHOTO BY TRICIA WILLIAMS

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“There is power in numbers. Women can come together to say, ‘The League supports this issue; what is your stance on it?’”

— Connie Springs, chair of the JLC Public Policy Institute

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forum on October 31, November 2 and November 3. Making the event even that much more impactful was the opportunity for women from the JLC and the League of Women Voters to participate in the forum by being part of the guest audience.

During the forum broadcast, which was presented as a Special Edition of WTVI’s Carolina Impact series, newswoman Amy Burkett led both mayoral candidates, Republican Edwin Peacock and Democrat Patrick Cannon, through a series of questions that women from both the JLC and the League of Women Voters prepared in advance.

The questions touched on many topics including: the candidates’ capital improvement plan, the street car project, the future of the Eastland Mall shopping center, a variety of social issues shaping a changing demographic in Charlotte, education and the role of local government, handling the human trafficking issue, job creation, and how to improve affordable housing.

The candidates were also able to ask each other three questions each where one of the opponents was seeking a direct answer. There was no social or economic topic affecting the city of Charlotte that was overlooked during the forum.

The JLC sponsored forum was the last opportunity prior to the November 5 election. Women from the JLC and the League of Women Voters utilized this forum as a platform to ask the candidates questions about issues that most concerned them. The resulting event provided JLC members and public viewers across Charlotte the capacity to make an informed decision on Election Day. 

*NOTE: “Patrick Cannon won the election on November 5 with 53% of the vote, and was sworn into office in early December. The JLC is looking forward to working with Mayor Cannon and the City Council in the future.”*

# New KinderMourn Placement Shines a Light

Caring for Children and Families During Times of Grief

By Connie Henderson

The Junior League of Charlotte, Inc. (JLC) offers a variety of volunteer opportunities for its members, allowing them to choose from working within the JLC or volunteering their time out in the community. KinderMourn is one of the new placements offered this year, and it directly supports the JLC's Healthy Family Initiative.

KinderMourn offers support and counseling services to grieving parents, children and teens. The death of a loved one can be extremely hard, and KinderMourn helps parents and children to grieve in a healthy way and at their own pace, and leading them through a process with the ultimate goal of healing.

The non-profit offers a variety of services to parents including support groups, individual counseling and workshops. The service also provides support groups for children and teens so that they may connect with others in their own age group and discover healthy ways of grieving while adapting to changes in their lives.

"While the families who receive services from KinderMourn vary demographically and socioeconomically, they all have suffered the unimaginable. The support of the JLC is hopefully a relief for these families," said Heidi Giffin, chair of the JLC's KinderMourn placement.

The JLC will support KinderMourn this year by offering four Parents' Night Out evenings in October, December, February and April. "KinderMourn has wanted to provide Parents' Nights Out for a while, and we are honored that the JLC gets to partner with KinderMourn to help this idea come to fruition," said Giffin.

JLC committee members will help plan and staff each event which includes dinner, an activity and a movie. Volunteers will supervise the children and facilitate each event.

"Our events will not be grief-focused, but instead will be fun events for the children while hopefully providing some much-needed time away for their parents," explained Giffin. "It is our hope that we can contribute to the families by hosting fun, safe events for the children and give the parents peace of mind that their children are in a good place for a few hours."

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**"JLC committee members will have the ability to immediately impact the families that benefit from KinderMourn."**

— Kara Brown, vice chair of the KinderMourn placement

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KinderMourn committee member Evelyn Hagood volunteers at Parent's Night Out. PHOTO PROVIDED BY KINDERMOURN

Children who currently receive services through KinderMourn can sign up for these events at no extra cost to the family.

"The Parents' Night Out events will provide the perfect opportunity for children to escape their grief, through a series of guided arts and crafts activities, cooking demonstrations and movie nights," said Kara Brown, vice chair of the KinderMourn placement.

This new placement opportunity for JLC members is a perfect match for those who want to have a positive influence on families in the Charlotte community.

"JLC committee members will have the ability to immediately impact the families that benefit from KinderMourn. Our volunteers are committed to helping families in the Charlotte community, particularly children," said Brown.

The KinderMourn placement aims to connect with other placements from within the JLC.

"It is our goal to partner with other JLC committees such as Kids in the Kitchen or the JLC puppets to provide fun and educational activities," explained Brown.

KinderMourn offers the chance for JLC members to work together and build something new while creating and implementing new ideas for the organization. Members can develop new relationships to have a lasting impact on the Charlotte community.

"Each member of the committee plays an integral role in building this placement from square one," said Brown. "We have the unique opportunity to create a brand new program for each of the four events throughout the year."

Giffin looks forward to building this new relationship as she knows how important this organization is to the community,

"I am so glad to serve as the chair of this new placement for the Junior League of Charlotte," she said. "As a parent, as a teacher who has had students benefit from KinderMourn, and as a friend to too many who have lost children, I am grateful for an organization like KinderMourn. I am excited to partner with KinderMourn this year." 

# Season Your Holidays

Winter is upon us, and our focus turns to those in need. Consider the following volunteer opportunities to make spirits bright.

By Allison Gnilka

## Hospice & Palliative Care, Charlotte Region hpccr.org

Throughout the year, the Levine & Dickson Hospice House at Southminster and Levine & Dickson Hospice House Huntersville seek volunteers to provide meals for families of patients living at these inpatient facilities. During the holiday season, the patients and families served by Hospice & Palliative Care Charlotte Region often do not have the energy or resources to prepare special meals for celebration. Individuals and groups can help by preparing holiday meals or gathering groceries for these families. Providing a meal requires no training and is a great way to support patients and their families.

Hospice & Palliative Care Charlotte Region also seeks community volunteers to hold snack drives for individually packaged snacks to donate to these families. The meals and the snacks allow families to stay with their loved ones and make them feel like they are in the comfort of their own home.

Contact **Mary** at (704) 905-6686 or mary@navarac.com.



## Classroom Central classroomcentral.org

Classroom Central serves high-poverty schools in six Charlotte-area school districts offering teachers the opportunity to “shop” for free school supplies. Classroom Central also equips students living in poverty to effectively learn by collecting and distributing the supplies.

Volunteer needs include stocking the store, straightening shelves, assisting teachers with “shopping,” preparing die-cut shapes for teachers to use in their classrooms, greeting guests, and knitting or crocheting items for students to wear during winter months. Volunteers may also “Adopt-a-Shift” and earn one free shopping trip certificate for a teacher for every six hours of volunteering at Classroom Central. This is a wonderful way to give back to a teacher or school of your choice.

Contact **Risa** at risa@classroomcentral.org or call (704) 377-1740 extension 421.



## Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina secondharvestmetrolina.org

The Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina is a regional distribution warehouse that supplies food and grocery items to charitable agencies that assist people in need. This agency partners with more than 600 agencies in a 19-county area including soup kitchens, emergency pantries, emergency shelters, low-income day cares, senior programs and group homes. Volunteers sort, inspect, box and stock donations for the agencies. Other activities may include packing food boxes and food backpacks for kids, and sorting through non-food products and pet food.

Contact **Shay Merritt** at (704) 375-9639 extension 29 or smerritt@secondharvest.org.



## Hospitality House of Charlotte hospitalityhouseofcharlotte.org

The Hospitality House of Charlotte’s 22-bedroom facility provides shelter for out-of-town families while their loved ones receive treatment at nearby hospitals. Guests are invited to sleep, wash laundry, prepare meals, access the internet, watch TV or spend some time alone in quiet reflection. The Hospitality House of Charlotte also offers a safe play area for children and a separate room for day guests. Volunteer opportunities include working at the front desk, assisting with administrative tasks, providing a listening ear to guests, performing light housekeeping, providing refreshments for guests, food shopping, providing minor house repairs, maintaining landscaping around the house and picking up donations from around the community.

Contact **Derek Marcos** at volunteer@hhocharlotte.org or (704) 376-0060, extension 8.



# 25 YEARS OF SERVING CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Partnership between The Learning Collaborative and the JLC achieves milestone

By Savannah Greer

**C**arolyn Robertson, a sustainer of the Junior League of Charlotte, Inc. (JLC), is passionate about the JLC's partnership with The Learning Collaborative (TLC) — and it is no surprise considering her involvement with the organization. Carolyn served as the chairman of the JLC committee that started the Seigle Avenue Preschool Cooperative, one of the two preschools that subsequently merged to form TLC.

Carolyn also served as Chairman of the Board of Directors for the preschool for the first two years of its existence. Carolyn stated that “the only way to break the cycle of poverty is through education;” therefore, the creation of an organization that educates children, as well as their parents, was of utmost importance.

## The Early Years

**T**LC's legacy began with the creation of the Seigle Avenue Preschool Cooperative in 1986. According to TLC's website, this preschool served the families in the Piedmont Courts public housing project, located at Seigle Avenue and 10th Street. When the Seigle Avenue

Presbyterian Church (SAPC) surveyed its programs in 1986, church leaders recognized the need to add services for preschool-aged children. The vision of a preschool where children and parents learn and grow together emerged.

The SAPC leaders approached Jan Swetenburg, at the time an active JLC member, and other Myers Park Presbyterian Church (MPPC) leaders to help launch this dream. Together, this group obtained funding and dedicated volunteers from the Junior League of Charlotte to launch the Seigle Avenue Preschool Cooperative.

Just a few miles away from the Seigle Avenue Preschool Cooperative was the Community Weekday School, formerly known as Chapel of Christ the King, founded in 1984. These two preschools shared a number of similarities. Both preschools served children at-risk for academic failure from fragile, low income families and neighborhoods.

Both preschools held a five star license and NAEYC accreditation, major achievements for any preschool program. In March 2010, the preschools merged and changed names to The Learning Collaborative.

This merger supports the strategic goals of both organizations and aligns with the community's desire to support innovative collaborations, best practice service models, and creative partnerships.

## The Learning Collaborative Today

**R**ebecca Grant, the current Development Director of TLC, stated that, “The importance of beginning that education early — well before a child's formal education begins — was certainly modeled for me. Not everyone is so lucky.”

Today, The Learning Collaborative continues to serve the needs of those children who are not fortunate enough to have access to education prior to enrollment in formal education.

Daily transportation is provided for nearly all students who need it. Students are warmly greeted at the door by the executive director and family involvement specialist, then welcomed into classrooms by teachers.

TLC provides a healthy breakfast, a hearty lunch and a late afternoon snack. From 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Monday to Friday, the children are engaged in singing songs, sorting shapes, playing make-believe, reading stories, building towers and knocking them down — all activities that encourage cognitive growth.

The Learning Collaborative now has four classrooms, two preschool classrooms and two Pre-K classrooms. Enrollment in each classroom is 16 children with one teacher and one assistant teacher. Swetenburg, JLC sustainer and now a TLC board member, stated,



Carolyn Robertson shares a smile with a child in the early days of preschool. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CRIER ARCHIVES

said that she “watched TLC grow from a one room classroom with two staff members into the premier school and family center that it is today, and although there have been changes, we have remained committed to the original mission of serving at-risk families through partnerships.

This mission has been the guiding principle over the last 25 years. Faithfulness to it has allowed TLC to serve so many so well and to make a real difference not only in individual lives but also in our community and city.”

TLC’s main focus is on the education of children, though the organization simultaneously places an emphasis on educating parents.

Ariana Shahinfar, TLC’s current Board Chair, attests to this fact by stating, “supporting the parent is critical to supporting the child.” TLC’s Family School Readiness Program, for example, merges concern for the child with concern for the family.

TLC parents must also volunteer to assist in the classroom, lending library or as needed for a minimum of seven hours a month, per enrolled child. Being at the preschool allows the teachers and staff to model behaviors that increase learning potential. Parents are coached through parent-teacher conferences, which guide them through the partnership that should exist between a parent and the child’s teacher.

## “The only way to break the cycle of poverty is through education.”

— Carolyn Robertson, JLC sustainer

### The JLC’s Partnership

Through a partnership with The Junior League of Charlotte, The Learning Collaborative also offers parents evening classes, and the entire family is welcome. JLC volunteers provide a meal for TLC families. Children make crafts with JLC volunteers while their parents are in class. Parent topics for 2013 include mental health, a puppet show with the theme “You are what you Eat”, dental health, healthy living, and career building skills. Through these efforts, parents become active participants in the school and are stronger first teachers to their children.

Alston Robertson, a JLC member and Carolyn Robertson’s daughter, currently serves on the Board of Directors for TLC and exemplifies the League’s continuous presence and involvement with TLC. Robertson stated that “TLC does such great things for children and families in our community and

everyone involved has been an inspiration to me, from my mother Carolyn Robertson when she served on the Seigle Avenue Board 25 years ago to my friend and fellow TLC Board Member Jan Swetenburg, who also was a part of the organization from the beginning and still is today.”

In addition to Alston Robertson, Kimberly Williams is also a JLC active member who is on the Board of Directors for TLC, further demonstrating the alignment between these two organizations.

On Oct. 17, TLC celebrated over 25 years of service to children and their families with a luncheon held at the First Presbyterian Church. Many JLC members and sustainers were present to celebrate this achievement.

The Learning Collaborative’s mission has remained the same throughout the years even though the schools merged, moved, tripled in size and expanded its scope. The Junior League of Charlotte plays a significant role in TLC’s legacy, from funding the initial Seigle Avenue Preschool Cooperative in 1986 to providing volunteers through a current placement that continues to support the growth of parents and families.

The collaborative effort of The Learning Collaborative and The Junior League of Charlotte truly illustrates the benefit of combining efforts for the greater cause. 

# Cornerstone Project Forges Ahead

Continuing the JLC's partnership and making a difference

By Kari Kessell

As the Junior League of Charlotte, Inc. (JLC) shifts focus from the Healthy Child Initiative to the Healthy Family Initiative, the Cornerstone Project is the perfect way to come together to benefit an entire community. The system of care community school at Reid Park Academy is at the heart of the JLC Cornerstone Project, demonstrating the importance of both a strong community and family in making a difference in children's lives.

The JLC has committed to a \$1 million investment in Reid Park Academy. Half of the pledge is a \$500,000 commitment and the other half is in the form of JLC member volunteer time. Traditionally, the Cornerstone Project has focused on a physical goal (such as building a facility); however, this Cornerstone Project focuses on building human capital.

## Wrap-around model connects families to needed services

Several lead agencies have agreed to provide family case management:

- Communities in Schools
- M $\acute{e}$ lange Health Solutions
- Charlotte Housing Authority
- Mecklenburg County Department of Social Services — Community Services Division
- Mecklenburg County Department of Social Services — Youth and Family Services

The lead agencies will work collaboratively with each other, support providers, school staff, and families to develop individualized, comprehensive plans for each child. In all, 20-30 agencies and groups have committed to participate in the system



Whitney Jackson and Angela Scholl at the Cornerstone Kickoff. PHOTO BY CRYSTAL HEILIG

of care framework of support focused around four key areas — human and social services, physical and mental health, family involvement, and early childhood education.

The system of care model provides families the opportunity to receive coordinated services — everything from physical and mental health care to human and social services to educational assistance — that they likely would not seek out or have the ability to coordinate on their own, with the goal of helping improve children's school attendance, behavior and academic performance. Research indicates that children are not primed to learn when they are not sleeping or eating well at home, for instance.

Impacts of the collaborative system of care model will be monitored by an external evaluation team using key metrics and outcome measures revolving around attendance, behavior and academic performance.

## Care coordinators serve families

All lead community partners work as a team coordinated by the program's Care Coordinator, who helps families address issues such as housing, health-care, employment and social needs.

By giving families coordinated, easy access to these providers, the hope is that families are more likely to take advantage of services that they would otherwise struggle to secure. For example, there are families in the Reid Park community who would have to take three different buses to get from their homes to an uptown office to visit just one of these community partners. Now that they are located within the Reid Park community, families can easily access them.

The Amay James Annex, located on the property of Reid Park Academy Community School, houses offices for each care coordinator plus the new Community School Coordinator. This facility — which is on a bus line — was unused for several years, but the community partners saw an opportunity to use it to provide a one-stop shop for services for the families.

According to Whitney Jackson, the Reid Park Academy coordinator, "Families are excited to use the facility because coming to the school to talk about their children or family issues often has a bad connotation. Parents often associate coming to the school with their child requiring disciplinary action or they bring bad memories of their own time in school with them. Being able to meet off site of the school campus but still within the community is the perfect solution."

Jackson is responsible for coordinating services for the families of the Reid Park Academy Community School. She meets with at-risk families to assist with their needs and develop streamlined plans for effectively using the services. Jackson is also assisted by the Reid Park Volunteer Coordinator, who is responsible for coordinating volunteers from the JLC and the other community partners, and is the second position funded by JLC donations.

## New leadership at Reid Park Academy

Reid Park Academy welcomed a new principal, James T. Garvin, this school year. He set a goal to significantly raise scores, and is focused on solving issues that students have in the classroom.

Many of the challenges that families at Reid Park Academy face make simple tasks very difficult. Test

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**Families are excited to use the facility because coming to the school to talk about their children or family issues often has a bad connotation.**

— Whitney Jackson, Reid Park Academy  
Community School Coordinator

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# Transforming Reid Park Academy

scores demonstrate this, with 50 percent of children on grade level in math and 35 percent on grade level for reading.

Garvin also committed to hosting “Curriculum Nights” for students and families throughout the school year. These evenings will allow parents to learn about the new standards that the state of North Carolina is implementing and what that means for their children. These nights will also include an arts and music component. School leaders and parents are also in the process of revitalizing the Parent Teacher Organization.

## Supporting the Cornerstone Project

There are many JLC placements that allow JLC members to volunteer Reid Park Academy, such as the new Second Harvest Food Bank placement.

Since Oct. 1, this program has given 50 children per week a book bag filled with healthy, non-perishable food to feed their families for the whole weekend. The students who receive the book bags will rotate, allowing a variety of families to benefit from this project.

The JLC’s fundraising campaign to raise \$500,000 over the next three years began with two leadership events held in early October, followed by the fall General Membership Meeting.

The \$500,000 monetary commitment provides \$400,000 funding for the Community School Coordinator, Volunteer Coordinator, and evaluation of program success, and \$100,000 for JLC volunteer programming. This financial investment is matched with \$500,000 in value of JLC trained volunteer hours committed to Reid Park Academy over five years.

Parlor meetings in January will help JLC members learn even more about the Cornerstone Project and how to support it. The success of the programs and the staffing support that the JLC has committed to providing for the Reid Park Academy Community School depends on the generosity of JLC members, friends, and partners.

Visit [jlcharlotte.org](http://jlcharlotte.org) to learn more and donate to make a difference. Your donations will make a positive impact in the lives of the children of Reid Park Academy Community School, and amplify the impact of the efforts of the JLC’s trained volunteers and community partners at Reid Park Academy. 

If you look up the word transformation, you will find that this noun means *a marked change, as in appearance or character, usually for the better*. It’s no secret that there’s a major transformation underway



**WHITNEY JACKSON**  
Reid Park Academy  
Community School  
Coordinator

in Charlotte’s West Corridor, and Reid Park Academy is at the center of it. Thanks to the West Learning Community’s school beautification day on August 23 and Habitat for Humanity Charlotte’s Community Day on

Sept. 28, the exterior of the school is looking more inviting than ever, but the real changes are taking place inside the school’s walls.

With 23 years of CMS experience under his belt, Principal (James T.) Garvin is fully committed to his school, and priority number one is boosting the academic proficiency of his scholars. His vision for the school is that “Reid Park will dramatically reduce the achievement and attainment gaps for all students, increase graduation rates, and prepare students for high school.” While Mr. Garvin continues to refine and implement his plans for actualizing this vision, the opportunity for the Junior League of Charlotte, Inc. (JLC) to make a positive impact on Reid Park’s scholars is clearer than ever.

While JLC placements such as the Girl Scouts and Second Harvest Food Bank are underway and address a critical need for access to social support services, there is a great opportunity for all Junior League members to immerse themselves in the new theme for the school: “Transforming our Minds, Actions, and Academics to be Career and College Ready.” Being promoted from

8<sup>th</sup> grade at Reid Park Academy and prepared for high school means being a student who is at or above grade-level and embracing a path towards graduation that ultimately leads to entering college or a career vocation.

With this heightened focus on college and career preparation, Junior League members can capitalize on their own experiences with the college search process and strengths as career-savvy women to positively impact the new culture at Reid Park Academy. Outside of placements, volunteers are encouraged to serve as literacy tutors, math buddies, career mentors, and classroom assistants to refocus our scholars on being ready, willing, and able to learn on a daily basis.

For League members who may need a refresher on tutorial skills, in partnership with UNC-Charlotte, the United Way of Central Carolinas regularly offers a free literacy training based on the PALS (Partners Achieving Literacy Success) curriculum. For those who are unable to make an on-going commitment, talking to a class about the path towards your profession is a wonderful way to expose the scholars to options they may have never known existed.

We understand that with demanding careers and busy personal lives, it may be difficult for many JLC members to volunteer at the school during the day, but as the school leaders continue to evaluate out-of-school time providers and opportunities, we are excited that the JLC will be at the forefront of the positive transformation happening at Reid Park Academy.

Without a doubt, the Cornerstone Project’s impact is a key ingredient in the school’s recipe for excellence, and with the Junior League’s womanpower, we can’t help but create a community school that will touch the lives of every child, every day, for a better tomorrow. 

# Leaving A Legacy

## WITH THE JUNIOR LEAGUE OF CHARLOTTE

Story by **Brandi Riggins** | Illustrations by **Susannah Brinkley**

*A*s part of the Junior League of Charlotte, Inc. (JLC), each member donates her time and service to the JLC's mission while also providing annual financial support. Through membership legacies and support, the JLC has made a difference in the lives of families and children for more than 87 years.

With estate planning and planned giving, your contributions to the JLC doesn't have to end. Members may continue to support the JLC even after they relocate, have time constraints impacting their ability to volunteer, or in their passing.

Whether one is a newlywed, raising a family, single or planning for retirement, it is important to consider the kind of legacy one wants to leave for their family, community, and future generations. With thoughtful estate planning and established planned giving designation, a JLC member's contributions can extend far beyond yearly or capital giving to the organization.

### **The purpose of planned giving**

The JLC Legacy Foundation was established to ensure the long-term financial sustainability of the JLC, while still supporting annual financial needs aligned to the JLC's mission.

In 2010, the Planned Giving Campaign was launched by the JLC Legacy Foundation, allowing members to continue to support the JLC with estate gifts. As a result of the support from JLC members, more than \$800,000 has been contributed to the JLC and the endowment is now valued at more than \$1 million.

As a placement, the Planned Giving Committee creates and executes the Legacy Society event for

planned giving donors. The committee helps set financial goals, gain approval and implement the committee plan.

Chair Laura Pokojni Young explained one of the primary functions of the committee.

"The Planned Giving Committee is focused on educating our membership on the subject of wills and estates and how members can include the JLC in their estate planning," she said.

This league year's Planned Giving Education Event is scheduled for Feb. 27 at 6:30 p.m. in the JLC Building Community Room. Members can sign up via the JLC calendar on [jlcharlotte.org](http://jlcharlotte.org). The purpose of the event is to educate JLC members on the importance of having a will, and including charitable giving in their estate planning.

Three guest speakers will present at the event, including Jim Kelley, an expert on charitable giving to non-profits through wills and estates; Christian Cherry, an attorney specializing in wills; and Phillips Bragg, a financial planning professional. Members who attend the event will receive one membership credit.

According to Young, "We have planned an event for members of all ages, providing new information to those that have attended the event in the past, as well as those who are new to the subject. There

is a common misconception that many believe they are not at a point in their life where they can or need to have a will. We hope to break through that barrier and educate our membership on the importance of having a will at any age."

### **How to help**

Through Charitable giving, JLC members can donate gifts of real estate, cash or stocks, and can also designate the JLC as a beneficiary of their personal or company-sponsored 401k plan.

Charitable giving can be utilized as a benefit to donors. It can reduce estate taxes for gifts given at death; reduce income taxes for gifts given over one's lifetime; help avoid capital gains taxes; and redirect wealth from the IRS to charities.

Once a donor has elected to support the JLC Legacy Foundation, the Letter of Intent for Estate Gift can be downloaded on the JLC website. Participants may also choose to publish their names in the lists of Legacy Society members as a motivation for others to leave future gifts.

If one would like to be contacted by a JLC representative to discuss the opportunities and options for making a planned gift, please reach out to a Planned Giving Committee member.

"We're always available to answer any questions members have on including the JLC in their estate and how their gifts ensure the continuation of the JLC mission," said Young.

In addition to Young, Planned Giving committee members include Vice Chair Tonya Burch, Nancy Betler, Lauren Tedder, Kate Ferguson, Sarah Litke and Bethany Wheeler. Visit [jlcharlotte.org](http://jlcharlotte.org) to learn more. 

# PROVIDE A LASTING GIFT THROUGH PLANNED GIVING

Support of the JLC Legacy Foundation comes in many forms to continue long-term sustainment, including:

## Save the Date

FEBRUARY

6:30 P.M.

27

**Planned Giving Education Event\*** in the JLC Building Community Room.

\*Attendees receive one membership credit



### Gift of cash or appreciated assets

Make a donation of cash, publicly traded or closely held securities.



### Gifts from your donor-advised fund

Recommend that the JLC Legacy Foundation receive a grant from your established fund.



### Gifts from your charitable trust

Designate the JLC Legacy Foundation as an income beneficiary or remainder beneficiary of the trust.



### Gifts of real property or tangible personal property

Make a gift of real estate, jewelry, art work or other personal property. Please contact the JLC Development Office for more information about the JLC's gift acceptance policy.



### Life insurance policy beneficiary designation

Name the JLC Legacy Foundation as a beneficiary or contingent beneficiary of an existing life insurance policy.



### Retirement plan beneficiary designation

**designation:** Name the JLC Legacy Foundation as a beneficiary of a retirement plan.



**Bequests in your will or living trust:** Include the JLC Legacy Foundation as a beneficiary in your will or trust through a simple codicil.



**Residuary bequest:** Designate all or part of remaining estate assets to the JLC Legacy Foundation after debts, expenses and specific bequests have been paid. Suggested language: I give \_\_\_% of my residuary estate to the Junior League of Charlotte Legacy Foundation, Inc., Charlotte, North Carolina, to be used for its general purposes.



**General or specific bequest:** Designate a dollar amount, percentage or specific item to the JLC Legacy Foundation. Suggested language: I give \$X (or X% or X item) to the Junior League of Charlotte Legacy Foundation, Inc., Charlotte, North Carolina, to be used for its general purposes.



## OFF TO CAMP

Chameleon's Journey offers a weekend of fun for children dealing with grief.

By Kari Kessell

Chameleon's Journey is a program run by Hospice & Palliative Care Charlotte Region (HPCCR). It offers children who have suffered the loss of a family member the opportunity to attend a weekend camp. The camp is held at Camp Thunderbird at Lake Wiley in early October. Campers from ages 7-16 are invited to spend the weekend having fun while working through their grief. The Junior League of Charlotte, Inc. (JLC) has participated in Chameleon's Journey for years, providing volunteers who serve as counselors for the weekend.

Most of the children who attend the camp have been referred through HPCCR but the program is open to outside referrals. Many of the children return to camp year after year, a testament to the positive mark it leaves on those who participate. This year, Chameleon's Journey took place on October 12-13, and marked its 14th anniversary. Nearly 100 campers attended.

The weekend starts on Friday afternoon for camp counselors including the JLC volunteers, as they prepare to make a memorable weekend for each camper. There were about 20 women from the JLC among the volunteers this year. HPCCR provides these volunteers with support through the year and

makes sure they are trained and prepared for the emotional weekend. Thanks to this preparation, the volunteers ensure that the camp is filled with fun and laughter, and packed full of activities.

Counselors get together Friday night and prepare many of the activities the campers will participate in the next day. They put together care packages for each child. To mentally prepare, counselors spend Friday evening thinking of a family member they themselves have lost. This activity allows them the opportunity to work through their emotions before the campers come and also enables them to empathize with the campers. While these volunteers are at the camp to listen to the campers, they are really there to make sure they have a great weekend enjoying all of the activities offered. The volunteers are supported by trained grief counselors that attend the camp and lead sessions in the learning cabins.

When the campers arrive Saturday morning they are excited for a weekend of enjoying all that Camp Thunderbird has to offer. They arrive ready to zip-line, rock climb, enjoy the lake view, complete art projects and eat lots of delicious food. Campers have two teaching sessions on Saturday with volunteers and counselors in the learning cabins. At the first session they write a letter to the family member they lost. Saturday night they have a memorial service and burn the letters in a bonfire. The smoke from the letters symbolizes their messages being

carried to the sky to reach their loved ones. At the memorial service the older kids read poetry they wrote to express their loss.

All of the campers make a "baby boat" with a lighted candle and send them off into the lake. This is a beautiful moment for everybody involved, as 100 boats float out into the lake and out of view.

Following the memorial service, the younger children are invited to attend a carnival while older children continue to dig into dealing with their emotions before the groups reconvene for movies and fun in the recreation center. Saturday is a day packed with fun and learning.

Chameleon's Journey knows that grief is a family affair. Sunday morning the parents and guardians join the group to hear all about what the campers have learned. The campers write one more note to their loved ones and tie it to a balloon and the families join them in releasing the balloons to the sky. They perform skits for their families at a closing ceremony, and share a slide show of images from the weekend. The campers leave learning how to express their grief, but also embracing joy and community.

The JLC volunteers who participate in Chameleon's Journey return home feeling a sense of love and accomplishment, as they think back on the children they met over the weekend. As plans are underway for next year's camp, the JLC plans to be there to continue its support. 

# How will you leave your legacy?

Planned Giving Education Event\*

February 27, 2014 at 6:30 p.m.

JLC Building Community Room



\*Attendees receive one  
membership credit.



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# Upcoming Events

**January 21:** Spring 2014 Provisional Kickoff

**February 27:** Planned Giving Education Event

**March 13:** March Money Madness

**March 17:** General Membership Meeting