



# JUNIOR LEAGUE

## THE LEHIGH VALLEY

# LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

THE JUNIOR LEAGUE OF THE LEHIGH VALLEY IS AN ORGANIZATION OF WOMEN WHOSE MISSION IS TO **ADVANCE WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP FOR MEANINGFUL COMMUNITY IMPACT** THROUGH VOLUNTEER ACTION, COLLABORATION, AND TRAINING.



**DEVELOPING WOMEN TO DO A WORLD OF GOOD**  
**YEAR IN REVIEW: 2023-2024**

2023-24



# RECAP

31

VOLUNTEERS

\$15K

RAISED

11

CONFERENCE  
ATTENDEES

95+

THANKSGIVING  
BASKETS

500+

BACKPACKS

\$20K

SCHOLARSHIPS

500+

SUMMER ACTIVITY  
BAGS

4

PARTNER  
COLLABORATIONS

1

SUSTAINER/NEW  
MEMBER PROJECT



**JUNIOR LEAGUE**  
THE LEHIGH VALLEY

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# President Letter

**Kathleen Talarico**  
2023-2024 JLLV President

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Dear Members and Friends of the Junior League of the Lehigh Valley,

It has truly been an honor to serve as the President of the Junior League of the Lehigh Valley during the 2023-2024 League year. We've had a year of great achievements and valuable lessons, marked by resilience, leadership, and a shared commitment to our mission. I am incredibly proud of all that we've accomplished together.

Over the course of the 2023-24 League year, we made significant strides in strengthening our leadership pipeline, enhancing recruitment, and deepening member engagement—all while continuing to sustain the important community projects that define our work.

This past year we launched two new initiatives to implement in the 2024-25 League year: Rolling Admissions, which will allow new members to join year-round, and Project Proposals, giving members the opportunity to lead member-driven projects. These programs were designed to allow flexibility for members, empowerment, and collaboration. We hope both of these programs will grow our membership and build our leadership pipeline across all member classifications—actives, provisionals, and sustainers alike.

As we look to the future, I invite our community and all members—whether sustaining or active—to come together to make a meaningful impact. By dedicating your time, energy, and talents to a few key areas each year, we will continue to strengthen and grow this remarkable organization. Your involvement is vital to ensuring we create lasting change, and together, we can amplify the positive influence we have on our community.

Thank you for your dedication, your passion, and for being part of this journey. Let's work hand in hand to shape the future we envision for the Lehigh Valley.

With heartfelt gratitude,  
Kathleen Talarico  
Past-President, Junior League of the Lehigh Valley (2023-2024)



# BACKPACK GIVEBACK

In August 2023, our Operation 'Backpack Giveback' initiative delivered 550 backpacks filled with essential school supplies to Pre-K and Kindergarten students, along with additional supplies for teachers at Central, Freemansburg, Sheridan, Union Terrace, and William Penn Elementary Schools in Allentown and Bethlehem. With invaluable insights from our partnership with Communities in Schools and their School Coordinators, we ensured these resources reached the students and educators who needed them most. Supplies like pencils, folders, glue sticks, notebooks, markers, crayons, scissors, and erasers helped provide a strong start to the school year for both students and teachers.



# FIND THE GOOD DAY™

SEPTEMBER 14, 2023

## 1ST ANNUAL FIND THE GOOD DAY

In 2023, the Association of Junior Leagues International (AJLI) created a day dedicated to finding the good in yourself and your community. The Junior League of the Lehigh Valley (JLLVPA) was proud to take part in this day of celebrating along with Leagues across the world.

Find the Good Day was held on September 14, 2023. JLLVPA launched a social media campaign to showcase how the League positively impacts our community, highlighting the work of our members and partners.

As part of Find the Good Day, JLLVPA reconnected with former partner The Perfect Fit and hosted a celebration drive. We also kicked off the first-ever Sustainer & New Member Project, collaborating with The Perfect Fit to remodel a self-care pantry for women in need.



Celebrating Find the Good Day at The Perfect Fit in Allentown  
Pictured left to right: Chelsea Strzempek, Annie Lanscek, Melissa Casey, and Tiffany Judge



Hearing about The Perfect Fit and the history with the Junior League of the Lehigh Valley from Sarah Barrett, Executive Director of The Perfect Fit for Working Women

# Sustainer & New Member Project

in Partnership with

# The Perfect Fit for Working Women

## Sustainers and New Members Collaborate for Community Impact

Our sustaining League members recently launched an exciting new initiative: a collaboration between incoming new members and sustainers. This project not only taps into the skills and community knowledge of our experienced members but also fosters connections with our newest members, building friendships and expanding our impact in the Lehigh Valley. The initiative debuted during the first *Find the Good Day*.

For this inaugural project, we partnered with The Perfect Fit for Working Women, a community initiative in downtown Allentown, started by JLLVPA, and now under the YWCA's direction. During the pandemic, The Perfect Fit identified a new need among the women they serve, access to personal care items. However, the small space allocated for these essentials lacked the polished, boutique feel synonymous with The Perfect Fit.

Our team stepped in to transform the room into a warm, welcoming, and functional space. Through a painting day and a building day, we created a refreshed area that now aligns with The Perfect Fit's mission.

In September, an open house and ribbon cutting celebrated the completion of this project, held alongside *Find the Good Day*.

The team was led by Sustainers; Jenn McGrath, Mary Ellen Hausman, and Amy Scalici along with New Members; Amy Wastler, Emma Fitzgibbon, Crystal Goodwin, and Breanna Perdue.

### BEFORE



### DURING



### AFTER



# Partner with the Junior League

*Together, we make a difference*

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*We've been shaping the Lehigh Valley for over 100 years through impactful partnerships and community-driven initiatives. Let's collaborate to address the evolving needs of our community.*

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## Our Legacy

### Historic Partners:

- *Turning Point*
- *Monocacy Nature Center*
- *Head Start*
- *PA Youth Ballet*
- *St. Luke's*
- *Volunteer Center*
- *3rd Street Alliance*
- *Marvine Elementary*
- *PBS*
- *Lehigh Valley Reads*
- *Brain Injury Association*
- *Weller Center*
- *Da Vinci Science Center*
- *Allentown Art Museum*
- *Weller Center for Health Education*
- *Second Harvest*
- *Well Baby Clinic*
- *Children's Theatre of Bethlehem*
- *Bethlehem Library*
- *The Perfect Fit for Working Women*
- *United Way (formerly Community Chest)*
- *American Red Cross*



We are proud to have played a role in supporting and even creating many of the nonprofits listed here, which continue to make a lasting impact in the Lehigh Valley. Are you interested in partnering with us? Reach out to us at [vpcommunity@jllvpa.org](mailto:vpcommunity@jllvpa.org) to learn more about how we can work together to serve our community.

# THANKSGIVING BASKETS



In November 2023, the Community Impact Committee led the League's annual Thanksgiving Basket Project to support families during the holiday and Fall school break. With the help of our members, we served 85 families by delivering food baskets to five schools: William Penn, Freemansburg, Central Elementary Schools, and Harrison Morton and South Mountain Middle Schools.

Each basket included a Giant gift card, traditional Thanksgiving staples, mac and cheese, spaghetti with sauce, rolls, fresh fruits, and more, thoughtfully chosen to meet families' needs.

Members packed and delivered the baskets, and the feedback from Communities in Schools coordinators and staff showed how much the baskets meant to the families served.

Thank you to the Community Impact Committee for organizing and to our members for making this project possible!

# SUMMER SLIDE BAGS

The Junior League of the Lehigh Valley partnered with Community Services for Children to distribute over 500 bags filled with educational tools to help prevent summer learning loss for Pre-K and Kindergarten students in the Head Start program.

Summer learning loss, or “summer slide,” occurs when students lose academic skills and knowledge during summer break, particularly in reading and math. This can result in up to three months of lost progress, affecting academic growth and confidence.

By staying active in learning over the summer, students can return to school more confident, better prepared, and ready to learn!



Designed to keep students engaged and learning throughout the summer, each bag included activity books, crayons, scissors, games, and reading materials.



# Support the Junior League

*Invest in Women. Develop Leaders. Strengthen the Lehigh Valley.*

## The Value of Sponsorship

**Be Part of a Legacy:** Partner with a historic organization shaping women leaders and driving transformative community improvement for over 80 years.

**Empower Women, Change Communities:** Your sponsorship fuels the growth of strong, capable leaders creating measurable, lasting change.

**Elevate Your Brand with Purpose:** Align with a mission-driven nonprofit recognized for empowering women and solving local challenges.

Explore  
Sponsorship  
Packages



## Sponsorship Benefits

**Exclusive Event Visibility:** Spotlight your brand as a champion of women's leadership at celebrated community events.

**Prestigious Recognition:** Gain exposure through JLLV platforms and connect with an engaged network of leaders and advocates.

**Tangible Community Impact:** Showcase your role in advancing equity, literacy, and food security where it's needed most.

## Your Support Matters

Every gift, big or small, fuels programs that empower women and strengthen our community. While partnerships are vital, individual contributions are just as essential to fund our League's mission and projects.

Donate Today  
& Invest in a  
Better  
Tomorrow



**Contact: [FundDevelopment@jllvpa.org](mailto:FundDevelopment@jllvpa.org) | [JLLVPA.org](http://JLLVPA.org)**

# Scholarships Update

The Junior League of the Lehigh Valley is proud to expand its support for local women through its scholarship programs with two local community colleges. We have committed to endowed scholarships with both Lehigh Carbon Community College (LCCC) and Northampton Community College (NCC) to assist female students on their educational journeys. These scholarships will cover expenses such as tuition, books, fees, housing, transportation, and basic needs, making a crucial difference for students striving to attend classes.

## Announcing....

JLLVPA has pledged \$10,000 annually to both Lehigh Carbon County and Northampton Community Colleges!

An endowment will be built over 4 years to fund one female student at each college with a full semester of tuition, sponsored by the JLLVPA



These initiatives not only support local women in pursuing their education but also aligns with our mission to advance women's leadership for meaningful community impact through volunteer action, collaboration, and training.

Supporting community college students is particularly impactful, as data shows that over 80% of community college graduates remain in their local communities to live and work, contributing directly to the economic and social vitality of their areas. **By investing in the education of local women at LCCC and NCC, we are not just supporting their individual journey, we are also investing in the future of our community as a whole.** These endowments ensure that our legacy of empowering women and strengthening the Lehigh Valley will continue for years to come.



# THE IMPACT FUND:

## *A Year of Achievements, A Future of Possibilities*

This year, the League's Impact Fund campaign demonstrated the power of collective effort. Through the dedication of our active members, sustainers, and community partners, we raised \$5,000 to support the League's projects and initiatives.

### What Did These Dollars Accomplish?

- Deliver Operation **Backpack Giveback** to support Pre-K and Kindergarten students.
- Provide families with Thanksgiving essentials through the **Thanksgiving Basket** Project.
- Combat summer learning loss with our **Summer Slide** Bags program.
- Build a self-care pantry at **The Perfect Fit** for women in need.
- Fund **scholarships** for local women at Lehigh Carbon County and Northampton Community Colleges.
- Invest in **leadership development** by supporting member participation in AJLI conferences and internal training programs.
- **Strengthen** our impact through **collaborations** with community partners such as Communities in Schools and Community Services for Children.

### *Together, We Make the Difference*

*The Impact Fund is more than a fundraising effort—it's a chance to come together, share our story, and showcase the power of the League to inspire and create change. Every gift fuels our programs and leadership development, strengthening the Lehigh Valley and beyond.*



***- The 2025 Impact Fund is on the horizon -  
We can't wait to share the next chapter with you***

In March 2025, we'll launch a ten day campaign to celebrate the Junior League's legacy and raise funds to support the JLLVPA's work. The campaign will culminate in Party with a Purpose on March 15th—an evening of food, drinks, a silent auction, and connection. Join us to celebrate our achievements and kick-off another year of transformative work.

# Save the Date



*Party with a Purpose*

15 March 2025

-Da Vinci Science Center-

6:30-9:00pm

Join us for the revitalized Party with a Purpose,  
hosted by the **Junior League of the Lehigh Valley!**

This exciting event supports our Impact Fund campaign, raising critical funds to fuel our community projects and strengthen women's leadership in the Lehigh Valley.

Mark your calendars and invite your friends! Ticket sales begin Feb

# MEMBERS AT AJLI CONFERENCES

**“The people I meet and the sessions I attend give me fresh ideas, a great sounding board, and practical tools to bring back to our League.” - Michelle Resto-Carlson**

## Small Leagues, Big Impact

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS



Attendees: Laura Eichman, Taryn Kennedy, Kathleen Talarico, Christine Guzman

Laura Eichman says, “SLBI was a great opportunity to meet other women leaders from across the country and share best practices to address the unique challenges and benefits of being a smaller Junior League.”

## Organizational Development Institute

WASHINGTON D.C.



Attendees: Chelsea Strzempek, Kathleen Talarico, Michelle Resto-Carlson

In the words of Chelsea Strzempek “The ODT conference was a motivational and informative training experience bringing together hundreds of likeminded change-makers from across the country!”

## Winter Leadership Conference

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS



Attendees: Michelle Resto-Carlson and Annie Lanscek

According to Annie Lanscek, “It was an incredible opportunity to connect with passionate women from across the country, share experiences, and learn new strategies. I felt empowered to bring fresh ideas and stronger connection to my own community here in the Lehigh Valley.”

## AJLI Annual Conference

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA



Attendees: Michelle Resto-Carlson-Carlson, Kathleen Talarico

Kathleen Talarico expresses, “The energy from all the women exchanging ideas and experiences at the Annual Conference is truly contagious. It was also an honor to represent the JLLVPA alongside so many other incredible Leagues.”

# The Annual dinner



At this year's Annual Dinner, we proudly celebrated the Junior League's accomplishments and recognized three outstanding honorees: Volunteer of the Year, Sustainer of the Year, and Committee of the Year.

## Volunteer of the Year: Tiffany Judge



Tiffany Judge exemplified leadership and dedication, taking the initiative to lead both the Marketing and Member Engagement committees. She also stepped in to support the New Member Committee during the chair's maternity leave. Tiffany empowered committee members by encouraging them to work on projects they were passionate about and to share ideas that enhanced their committees and the League as a whole. Congratulations Tiffany, on this well-deserved recognition!

## Sustainer of the Year: Mary Ellen Hausman

Mary Ellen Hausman has been a dedicated contributor to one of the League's most impactful projects. Her work with Perfect Fit for Working Women, now under the YWCA, has supported countless women in pursuing professional opportunities, evolving from its original focus on providing interview attire for women transitioning from welfare. This year, she helped expand Perfect Fit through the New Member/Sustainer project by creating a personal care pantry, transforming a space with new paint, furniture, and essential items for women in need. Thank you for your unwavering commitment, Mary Ellen!



## Community Impact Committee: Committee of the Year



The Community Impact Committee earned the President's Award for Committee of the Year thanks to their outstanding work throughout the 2023-2024 League Year. Tackling a variety of community projects, this committee found innovative ways to meet the needs of the Lehigh Valley while creating meaningful member and community impact. Members included Taryn Kennedy (Chair), Kim Carr, Amber Simchak, Kristen Burns, Breanna Perdue, Ruby Diaz, Frances Boshell, Kristin Menconi, Alex Meyer, Jessica Goedel, and Kelli Hapstack. Congratulations to the entire Committee for your incredible efforts!

# President-Elect Letter

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As I look back on my year as President-Elect of the Junior League of the Lehigh Valley, I am struck by the depth of the experiences and the growth I've witnessed within our organization. This year has been an incredible opportunity to learn, collaborate, and build upon the strong foundation already in place for the future of our League.

Serving under the Presidency of Kathleen Talarico has been an absolute privilege. Kathleen's profound knowledge, patience, and unwavering dedication have been instrumental in shaping my understanding of leadership within the Junior League. Her expertise is truly invaluable, and we are fortunate to have her as a guiding force in our organization.

One of the most rewarding aspects of this year has been witnessing the continued dedication of our members to our mission. From the enthusiasm shown during our leadership training sessions to the thoughtful contributions towards our community projects, it is clear that our League is driven by a collective desire to make a meaningful impact. I've had the pleasure of working closely with our members on various initiatives, including refining our leadership training materials, finalizing the DEIB strategic plan, and supporting the launch of our new project programs.

This year, we also focused on deepening our partnerships within the community. Whether through collaborative events with local organizations or through our increased visibility at chamber events and conferences, our League has worked hard to strengthen the ties that connect us to the broader Lehigh Valley community. These efforts are not just about increasing our reach; they are about creating lasting relationships that will help us better serve those in need.



**MICHELLE RESTO-CARLSON**  
2024-2025 JLLVPA PRESIDENT

Looking ahead, I am excited about the potential for our League to continue growing and evolving. This year, we have successfully adhered to our established plans, which has provided stability and direction. As I prepare to step into the role of President, I'm eager to build on this foundation by focusing on increasing member engagement, which will be key to our continued success. With a collective effort, I am confident that we can take on new initiatives that will further our mission.

It has been an honor to serve as President-Elect, and I am grateful for the support and camaraderie of our members. Together, we will continue to advance our mission, empower women, and continuously improve our Lehigh Valley community.

# Thank You

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Find out more about  
the Junior League of  
the Lehigh Valley!

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