



# JUNIOR LEAGUE OF **LONG BEACH**



## **COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER**

### **2022-2023 LEAGUE YEAR**

# A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Supporters of the Junior League of Long Beach,

Since 1931, the Junior League of Long Beach has built a legacy of serving critical needs in our community and empowering women. Our league shines bright through the impact we have made on our members and in our community. We continue to evolve to meet the changing needs of our members and those of the community.

Our Especially Me! program, focused on increasing confidence and self-awareness among youth has expanded their overall impact with additional events, the inclusion of boys, homeless youth, and a broader range of age groups. The program content has evolved as well, now incorporating education to help youth manage their mental health.

Our Kids in the Kitchen program, focused on addressing childhood obesity has also joined forces with our community partners to assist in combating food insecurity. While our Advocacy work is making great strides at the Capital with their leadership and involvement with drafting state legislation. We are proud of the ripples of impact we are making and we are grateful for our community partners that support and join in with us.

As our community programs evolve so do the benefits, we provide to our members to become more inclusive and diverse. There are many ways in which our members can grow in Leadership skills, be empowered, and connect with each other. In addition, to learning through coordination of our community events, the number of speaker and skill-based workshops available for members to attend has increased due to virtual options and partnerships with other Junior League chapters. Our members connect with each other through the many events and forums we provide. As we look to our future, we have made investments in technology that have streamlined our processes and set a foundation for us to continue to meet the needs of our members and community. Our more than 300 trained volunteers are ready to serve the community.

It has taken the commitment and dedication of each one of our members, the support of our donors, sponsors, and community partners to achieve all we have this year. We couldn't do it without you!

Keep shining your light and inspire others to do the same.

With gratitude,

Francine Odee  
President 2022-2023  
Junior League of Long Beach

# 2023 HELEN D. NEWCOMB AWARD RECIPIENT

Junior League of Long Beach Sustainer, Kirsten Larsen has been selected by a committee of her peers to receive the JLLB's highest honor: The Helen D. Newcomb Award.

Since 1996, the prestigious award has been presented in the name of Helen Dutton Newcomb who, in 1931, served as the first president of the JLLB, originally known as the Junior Charity League. The award recognizes a longtime member who embodies the organization's mission to promote voluntarism, develop the potential of women and improve the community through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers.



Kirsten has been volunteering with the Junior League of Long Beach for more than 33 years and has chaired numerous committees including Research and Evaluation, Administrative Council, Ways & Means, High Tidings Newsletter, and was a member on many other committees. She served on the Board of Directors as the Community Vice President and as a Sustainer, she served on a multi-year Membership task force, is currently on the New Member Onboarding ad hoc committee, and has mentored many Junior League emerging leaders.

Not only does Kirsten continue to be an extremely active Sustaining member, currently the Sustainer Council Chair, but her life outside of the Junior League of Long Beach is incredibly rich and committed as well. As an entrepreneur, for the last 30 years she applied her Junior League training to build and strategically grow Diversified Technical Systems, a high-tech international company. She is a strategic development advisor for The Women's Symposium of Southern California (WSSC), has served on the Board of Directors for the Alamitos Heights Improvement Association since 2018, is a wife, mother of three. Additionally she's incredibly involved in the Boy Scouts program as an Assistant Scoutmaster, Patrol Advisor, and sits on the Council Board of Directors amongst other many responsibilities, and continues to give back to the Long Beach community in many ways. We are excited to be able to recognize her incredible contributions.



# COMMUNITY IMPACT

This year, the Junior League of Long Beach gave back in a big way – not only through our signature programs and offerings, but by working with community partners to provide support and woman power to help support other community events.

## Community Events

This year the Junior League of Long Beach saw volunteering and support of a variety of community partners including Food Finders, Justin Rudd's Beach Clean Up and Operation Easter Basket, Long Beach Public Library Foundation, 4GIRLS, Long Beach Unified School District Office of Equity, Engagement, and Partnership.



## Community Forum

The Community Forum was hosted in March 2023 at the Long Beach Yacht Club. Multiple members of the community were in attendance and discussed the needs of the Long Beach communities, and opportunities for partnerships.



## Self-Esteem

This year there were three Especially Me! Self Esteem Workshops for 9 - 12 year olds, which provided the opportunity to connect with 85 children in the Long Beach area. The Junior League of Long Beach also hosted a brand new event - the Especially Me! Say Yes to the Prom Dress event. This event brought 20 - 25 students from the Bethune Homeless Education Program the opportunity to select a full outfit for prom, including hair and makeup lessons, and on-site tailoring services to ensure the perfect fit!

### Kids in the Kitchen

In September, the Kids in the Kitchen Committee hosted a special cooking class at Casa Youth Shelter with three shelter youth in the newly designed kitchen which was helped funded by the Junior League of Long Beach! Kids in the Kitchen also supported Run Like It's Recess, a community event that offers 1k and 5k races which provide kids the opportunity to get outside and get active at El Dorado Park, and check out our interactive nutritional education booth!



## DEVELOPING THE POTENTIAL OF WOMEN



### Advocacy - CalSpac

CalSpac had a busy year, attending a fall and winter conference, as well as hosting Legislations and Libations with speakers Megan Kerr, the Fifth District Councilwoman and retired Assemblyman Patrick O'Donnell.

Summer Smith has also dedicated time to researching and developing Bill SB 848 Reproductive Loss Leave with Senator Rubio this year. Due to her dedication and outstanding work, she was recognized with the Above and Beyond Award! Junior League CalSpac also celebrated 50 years of Public Affairs service, so wins all around.

### Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging

In its second year as an official Junior League of Long Beach Committee, the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging committee authored and conducted a focused survey of our members. Of the general membership surveyed, 80% responded. Those survey results are being used to identify Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging conversations and trainings for the future.

# FUND DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Thanks to the generous support of our community partners, family, friends and members, JLLB raised more than \$50,000 this year! Funds raised support the League's important programs and services that advances JLLB's mission in the Long Beach community.

## Long Beach Gives

Fundraising efforts for this league year began with a successful campaign with Long Beach Gives, the city's annual online giving program that provides a fun and easy way for the community to come together to support local nonprofits. Junior League of Long Beach Members raised more than \$3,900 during the one-day fundraising event!



## LATHER Lends a Hand

In April 2023, LATHER at 2nd & PCH hosted a LATHER Lends a Hand shopping event, where they generously donated 20% of proceeds from that evening's sale to the League.

## Grants

The Grants Committee worked hard this League year to secure \$15,000 from the City of Long Beach, \$3,000 from Bess Hodges Foundation, and \$500 from the Wonderful Company!

## 12th Annual LUNAFEST

The 12th Annual LUNAFEST was the first hybrid LUNAFEST, with over 150 attendees both in-person and online! LUNAFEST also featured all of the things guests love like the wine wall, hybrid silent auction, and opportunity basket drawings. The event was held at the historic Art Theater of Long Beach, with back of lot parking provided by the LGBTQ Center of Long Beach and food by Luxe Bites of LA. We wouldn't have raised over \$20,000 for the League without member and community support!

## THANK YOU TO OUR LUNAFEST HOST AND BLUE MOON SPONSORS



Port of  
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THE PORT OF CHOICE

2022-2023  
JLLB Board of  
Directors

2022-2023  
JLLB Sustainer  
Council

Holly Carpenter



# SUSTAINER UPDATE



This year we focused on strengthening our connections with each other and our community. Sustaining members shared their stories, dedicated themselves to supporting others, and championed change. We also had a lot of fun! The Sustainer Council organized several events that allowed members to reconnect and engage with one another. Laughter, joy, jubilation, and revelation filled the air often. Our signature events linked the young and old, the new with the experienced and our membership with our community. We also developed and strengthened our special interest groups providing unique opportunities to socialize. Our experience was welcomed on three ad hoc committees this year including the Strategic Plan that defines our League's goals and objectives for the next three years.

We made several affirmations. The most captivating being to utilize our energy and share our wisdom to create possibilities, opportunities and successes. In our gatherings, we celebrated our history, legacy and memories. We were reminded that for decades we have been changing lives, transforming our communities, and developing future leaders.

Leaders just don't do things, they change things. Our dedicated mentors and advisors provided tools used to build a stronger foundation for the future and give new leadership a sturdy platform from which to lead. Our generous members continued to support the work of the League through financial sponsorships and donations as well as giving time. Together we achieved great things, and we continue to be excited about being a contributing advocating member. League of One. Members for Life!

# MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

We are thrilled to introduce the 26 wonderful ladies of the JLLB's 2022-2023 Fall and Spring New Member Classes!

Esperanza Aceves, Elizabeth Bradley Mehlin, Amber Braun, Ruthanne Bruch, Catherine Carew, Michele Cody, Liz Crozer, Claire Draghi, Jessica Henderson, Elizabeth Horin, Nisha Joseph, Melanie Larsen, Amber Lasher, Colleen LaSalle, Emily LaSalle, Kathleen Licas, Tatiana Logan, Noelle Longmeyer, Alma Nanez, Erin O'Brien, Samantha Penney, Holly Prole, Kathy Ramos-Jeang, Martiza Recinos, Erica Wadas, and Wendy Wei

## THANK YOU, 2022-2023 LEADERS AND CONGRATULATIONS 2023-2024 LEADERS!



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