



*Linked in Friendship, Connected in Service*

# MEMBERSHIP ORIENTATION MANUAL



APRIL 2023

ETHEL ISAACS WILLIAMS, J.D.  
NATIONAL PRESIDENT

SHUANA TUCKER-SIMS, PH.D.  
NATIONAL VICE PRESIDENT

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# FOREWORD

This Membership Orientation Manual is intended to provide candidates for membership with fundamental information about the history, tenets, organizational structure, culture, mission and programmatic focus that are key to The Links, Incorporated reaching and sustaining our goal of being the premier service organization rooted in friendship and service globally.

For our Links members, it is a repository of information that you are all too familiar with, but worthy of remembrance as you guide and assist those who have been invited to join a circle of friends. May your reflection on these pages rekindle the abiding love and dedication you have for our beloved organization.

To the candidates for membership, one of the finest privileges and richest rewards of membership in our organization is the opportunity offered for building friendship. This is what sets us apart from other organizations. As such, the successful incorporation of new members into our *Circle of Friends* through our Chapters is central to our progress and sustainability.

For those who have accepted the invitation to join our illustrious organization and have begun this journey as a Candidate for Membership, we extend to you the hand of friendship and sisterly support to assist you in understanding membership expectations and responsibilities by orientation and example.

The material compiled within this *Membership Orientation Manual* reflects the structure and guidelines of the organization. Additionally, the following pages contain information which allows for the participation of all members to be informed, purposeful, and engaged. It is our hope that every Link will re-affirm her commitment to the twin pillars of *friendship and service* and re-familiarize herself with the operational and programmatic focus of the organization. In order to keep this *Membership Orientation Manual* current, it will be updated periodically, in order to keep the policies and practices exposed herein relevant and accurate.

# Message from the National Membership Committee

On behalf of the National Membership Committee, we are pleased to present this updated and revised Membership Orientation Manual. We hope that the information provided will assist you in learning about the rich history and culture of The Links, Incorporated as you begin your journey in our illustrious organization.

May your learning experience be both rewarding and inspiring. We look forward to building bonds of friendship, and to serving with you as you continue to grow in understanding and appreciation for the legacy of this organization.

Special thanks are extended to the following contributors to the current revision of the manual:

**National President**

Ethel Isaacs Williams, JD  
West Palm Beach (FL) Chapter

**National Vice President**

Shuana Tucker-Sims, PhD  
Waterbury (CT) Chapter

**National Membership Committee**

**Eastern Area Vice Director**

Kellee Ewing, MBA  
Morris County (NJ) Chapter

**Southern Vice Area Director**

Vanessa Falls  
Birmingham (AL) Chapter

**Central Vice Area Director**

Sheila R. Brown, DDS  
Lake Shore (IL) Chapter

**Western Vice Area Director**

Karen Cole, MD  
Beverly Hills West (CA) Chapter

**National Officers and  
Members of The National Executive Council**

**Executive Director of The Links, Incorporated**

Kristie Patton Foster  
Affiliate Eastern Area

**Executive Director of The Links Foundation, Incorporated**

Gwendolyn E. Boyd, Ph.D.  
Affiliate Eastern Area

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# Expectations of Candidates during the Membership Orientation Process

The orientation is the beginning of your journey into Linkdom. Attendance at **all** sessions is expected. If conflict with attending a session occurs, it is the Candidate's responsibility to notify the membership chair to schedule a review of the missed material.

Additionally, it is the expectation that each Candidate:

- Is knowledgeable about the National Constitution and Bylaws; Manual of Procedures; Chapter Bylaws; organization policies; rules and regulations; Membership Orientation Manual; Membership Manual; Rituals Manual; Protocol Manual and Financial Handbook. Each candidate should have a personal copy (electronic or hard copy) of each document at the conclusion of the orientation and induction process.
- Is knowledgeable about the history, origin and formation of the organization, its co-founders, early chapters, past officers, etc.
- Participates in the required community service project.
- Understands the relationships and interdependencies between Chapters, Area and National.
- Can recite the Links Pledge and Links Song from memory.
- Can identify and explain the Links symbols.
- Knows current leadership/governance structure and knows the names of the current National and Area Officers.
- Understands Chapter service expectations and committee participation requirements.
- Understands her obligations and responsibilities as a Links member to:
  - Perform 48 hours of service annually
  - Attend chapter meetings
  - Meet her 1 in 5 obligation to attend National Assembly/Area Conference
  - Serve on a program facet and at least one standing committee in her chapter
  - Live within the boundaries of her chapter
  - Pay chapter and national dues and assessments timely
  - Complete ethics and standards training and acknowledge annually.
- Knows Chapter accomplishments in service to the community.
- Knows the current Chapter Officers and members by name.
- Clearly understands present and possible future financial obligations.
- Has a Chapter "mentor" other than her sponsor, designated for the first year of membership to acclimate her to the Links' culture, processes and obligations.
- Knows expectations for induction ceremony, i.e., dress, participation, traditions.
- Has a copy of the Handbook for the Chapter in which she is to be inducted.
- Clearly understands that her social media presence must be in keeping with the standards and values of the organization at all times.



**Margaret Rosell Hawkins**



**Sarah Strickland Scott**

## THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE LINKS, INCORPORATED

The year was 1946. In the wake of World War II, Philadelphia native, **Margaret Rosell Hawkins**, first conceived the idea to create a “club that would spread the warmth of real friendship....[an] organization made up of friends with a cultural and civic aim.” She shared that idea with her friend and fellow Philadelphia native, **Sarah Strickland Scott**, who hailed the concept as “a grand idea.” They then called together seven friends in hopes of starting a new type of organization, a chain of women’s clubs composed of friends along the Eastern seaboard who would respond to the needs and aspirations of African American women (then Negro women) and women of African descent. There were many other groups already in existence, including church auxiliaries, professional societies, social clubs, cultural guilds, political action groups, sororities and mothers’ groups and all were needed. But the two women envisioned a service-oriented organization that would have a three-fold purpose—to promote civic, educational, and cultural concerns. In addition to Co-Founders Hawkins and Scott, the original nine members included Frances Atkinson, Katie Green, Margaret Hawkins, Marion Minton, Myrtle Manigault, Sarah Scott, Lillian Stanford, Lillian Wall, and Dorothy Wright.

During a 1954 interview with the *Philadelphia Courier*, when speaking about the vision for what she had set in motion, Co-Founder Hawkins stated, “This aim was, and is, three-fold: to do some good to help less fortunate citizens, to raise the cultural level of our race and to enjoy the social company of our friends.” Seventy-six years later, those who carry the banner of



Linkdom remain committed to the proposition that we are *friends who serve*, as we continue to strive to do some good for those who need our aid in our communities and beyond.

At that founding meeting on November 9, 1946, the “Philadelphia Club” was formed that launched what is now The Links, Incorporated, an international women’s service organization that is among the most prestigious associations of Black women in the world.

On June 4, 1949, The Links became a national organization when 53 members, representing 14 independent “Clubs,” convened the first National Assembly in Philadelphia, PA and were merged into a national chain of chapters. Ten months later, on April 8, 1950, the group reconvened in Atlantic City, NJ and approved what was called the 1950 Business Conference. The governance authority set out in 1950, has remained unchanged. :the National Assembly shall be the delegate body with jurisdiction over all members, Chapters and Areas.” The organization was incorporated on March 29, 1951.

The first National Officers were: President, Margaret Rosell Hawkins; Vice President, Sarah Strickland Scott; Recording Secretary, Myrtle Manigault, Corresponding Secretary, Frances Atkinson, and Treasurer, Dorothy B. Wright.

During the early years, the first Constitution set forth membership requirements that included: a commitment to duty required; ten monthly meetings mandated, one-year tenure for officers, dues were \$0.50 (yes, 50 cents); and a membership cap of 14 members. We all owe a debt of gratitude for the vision and passion of those who blazed the trails before us. “Hawkins had the idea, she and Scott formulated a design, and with seven friends, they fueled the launch.”

From the initial first meeting of nine women in 1946, the organization has expanded and refined its mission, elevated its impact, and has remained committed to friendship and service for over seven decades. Today, our membership has grown to over 17,000 women of African descent in 299 Chapters located in 41 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of the Bahamas, and the United Kingdom. The members of The Links, Incorporated are physicians, dentists, judges, attorneys, engineers, educators, entrepreneurs, elected officials, non-profit executives, authors, corporate executives, and homemakers. More importantly, they are firmly committed to sharing their time, talent and resources to improve the quality of life of others.

Finally, we all owe a debt of gratitude for the steadfast leadership of the seventeen Past National Presidents and their respective officers and administration teams which served alongside them at the National and Area levels. Because of them, we are!

## PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENTS



**Sarah Strickland Scott**  
Co-Founder  
1<sup>st</sup> National President  
1949-1953



**Margaret Rosell Hawkins**  
Co-Founder  
2<sup>nd</sup> National President  
1953-1957



**Pauline Weeden Maloney**  
3<sup>rd</sup> National President  
1957-1961



**Vivian J. Beamon**  
4<sup>th</sup> National President  
1962-1970



**Helen Gray Edmonds**  
5<sup>th</sup> National President  
1970-1974



**Pauline Ellison**  
6<sup>th</sup> National President  
1974-1978



**Julia Brogdon Purnell**  
7<sup>th</sup> National President  
1978-1982



**Dolly Desselle Adams**  
8<sup>th</sup> National President  
1982-1986



**Regina Jollivette Frazier**  
9<sup>th</sup> National President  
1986-1990



## PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENTS



**Marion Elizabeth Shultz  
Sutherland**  
10<sup>th</sup> National President  
1990-1994



**Patricia Russell-McCloud**  
11<sup>th</sup> National President  
1994-1998



**Barbara Dixon Simpkins**  
12<sup>th</sup> National President  
1998-2002



**Gladys Gary Vaughn**  
13<sup>th</sup> National President  
2002-2006



**Gwendolyn B. Lee**  
14<sup>th</sup> National President  
2006-2010



**Margot James Copeland**  
15<sup>th</sup> National President  
2010-2014



**Glenda Newell-Harris**  
16<sup>th</sup> National President  
2014-2018



**Kimberly Jeffries Leonard**  
17<sup>th</sup> National President  
2018-2022

## OUR VISION STATEMENT:

*“Enrich communities and improve the quality of life to people of African descent through friendship and service”*

## OUR MISSION STATEMENT :

*“Friends transforming communities through service”*

The Links, Incorporated is a volunteer service organization of concerned, committed, and talented women who, linked in friendship, enhance the quality of life in the larger community. The organization is concerned primarily with enriching, sustaining, and ensuring the identities, culture, and economic survival of African Americans and persons of African descent.

To contribute to the formulation of a positive, productive, and culturally diverse society, The Links, Incorporated also focuses on education, cultural enrichment, health and wellness, and civic involvement. This focus is implemented through strategies in public information and education, economic development, and public policy.

## OUR VALUES

The Links, Incorporated is based upon key values, beliefs and attitudes that are translated into “core values” which undergird the organization and include the following:

**Friendship, Integrity, Honesty, Service, Commitment, Family Relationships, Courage, and Respect for Others and Self.**

## OUR NATIONAL PRIORITIES

1. Promote a culture of friendship and engagement
2. Promote a culture of transformational community service
3. Promote a culture of fiscal sustainability
4. Promote a culture of organizational excellence and alignment
5. Promote a culture of brand awareness

# PUBLIC POLICY GOVERNING THE LINKS, INCORPORATED

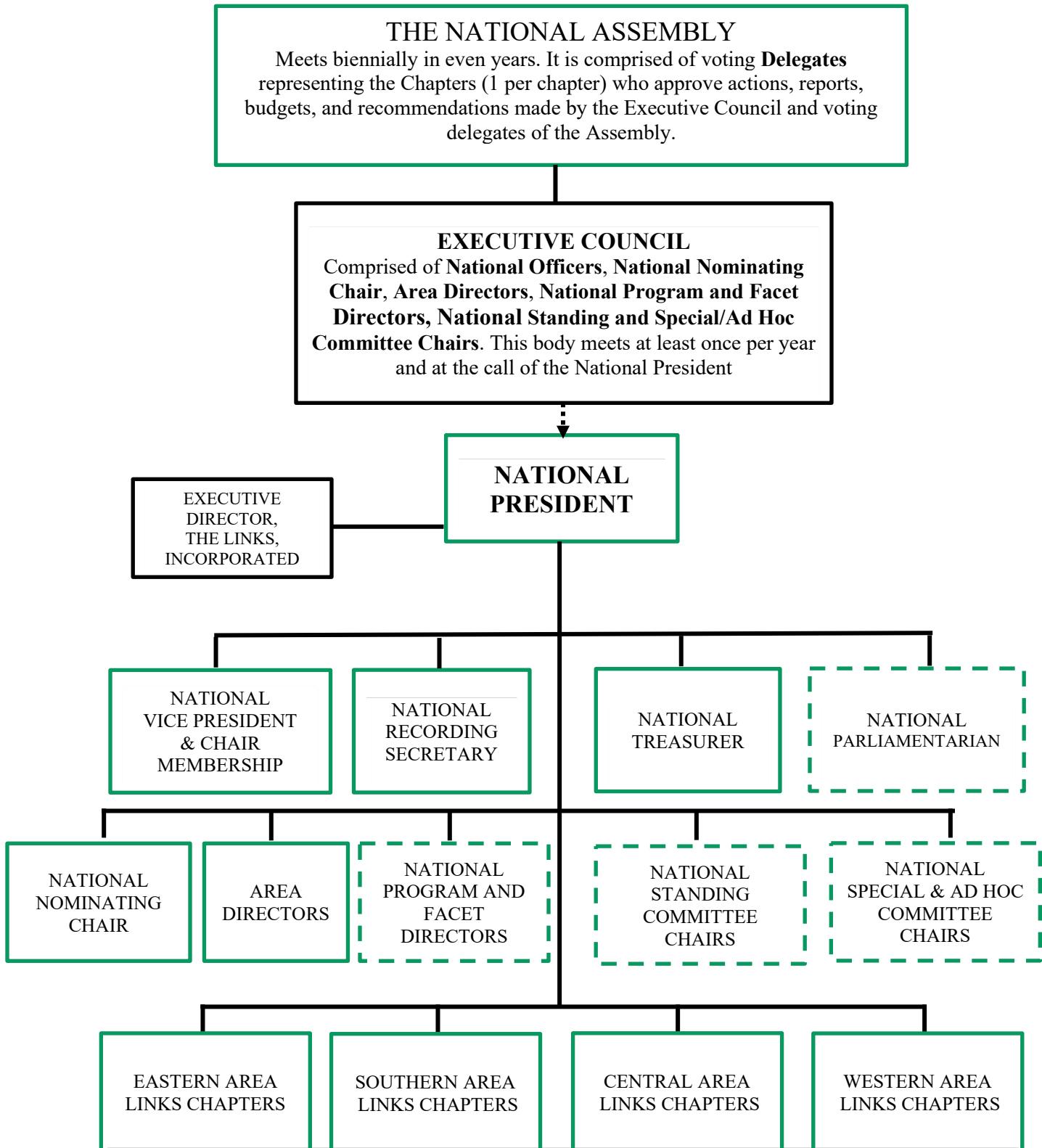
The Links, Incorporated is a public service, non-partisan, volunteer organization. As such, it is a tax-exempt organization because of its purposes and pursuit of charitable endeavors.

Because of its mission, goals, objectives, and tax-exempt status, The Links, Incorporated does not support or crusade for political causes under the banner of any one political party. However, all Links should vote, encourage others to vote, and support basic legislation that affects home and family life. Furthermore, Links are encouraged and should seek public office.

The Links, Incorporated recognizes every Link is concerned with local, state, national, and international issues and each Link has an undeniable right to express her personal opinion on such matters. However, no individual member, Chapter or Area, may make issuances on public policy in the name of The Links, Incorporated.

Equally important is the recognition that The Links, Incorporated, is an inclusive organization that conforms to the global tenets of diversity and multiculturalism.

# THE LINKS, INCORPORATED ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



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# GOVERNING DOCUMENTS OF THE LINKS, INCORPORATED

Documents are listed in order of precedence. All manuals in italics are on the same level of hierarchy.

<b>Name of Document</b>	<b>Responsible Person/Committee</b>	<b>Adopted by</b>	<b>Vote Required to Amend</b>
Constitution of The Links, Incorporated	National Parliamentarian & Constitution and Bylaws Committee	National Assembly	4/5
Bylaws of The Links, Incorporated	National Parliamentarian & Constitution and Bylaws Committee	National Assembly	2/3
Bylaws of The Links Foundation, Incorporated*	National Parliamentarian & Constitution and Bylaws Committee	General Membership (at Annual Meeting in even-numbered years)	Majority
Manual of Procedures (MOP)	National Parliamentarian & Constitution and Bylaws Committee	Executive Council	2/3 ballot
Financial Handbook	National Treasurer & Finance Committee	Executive Council	Majority
<i>Chapter Establishment</i>	Chapter Establishment	Executive Council	Majority
<i>Code of Ethics and Standards</i>	Ethics and Standards Committee	Executive Council	Majority
<i>Employee Handbook</i>	Human Resources Committee	Executive Council	Majority
<i>Membership Manual</i>	National Vice President and Membership Committee	Executive Council	Majority
<i>National Programs Toolkits</i>	Program Facets	Executive Council	Majority
<i>Nominating Procedures Manual</i>	Nominating Committee	Executive Council	Majority
<i>One Voice – Communication Manual</i>	Communication Committee	Executive Council	Majority
<i>Protocol Manual</i>	Protocol Committee	Executive Council	Majority
<i>Rituals Manual</i>	Rituals Committee	Executive Council	Majority
<i>Strategic Planning Manual</i>	Strategic Planning Committee	Executive Council	Majority
<b>*Not in the Order of Precedence with the other manuals</b>			

# Symbols of The Links, Incorporated

NAME: The Links, Incorporated

COLORS: Emerald Green (PMS347) and White

FLOWER: White Rose

LOGO: Insignia – a world globe encircled by a chain with the tag line “Linked in Friendship, Connected in Service”



The Links, Incorporated logo is patented and may be copied and used for Link activities but *cannot be altered in any way.*

The National Pledge and National Song should be a part of each Chapter meeting, Area Conference, and National Assembly ceremonies.

## The National Pledge of The Links, Incorporated

I do solemnly pledge myself to all the ideals, purposes, and true meaning of the word friendship as embodied in the name Links. I shall earnestly endeavor to uphold these standards and do my share towards serving my community and my chapter to the best of my ability. And this I promise.

*Authored by: Sarah Strickland Scott  
Co-founder and First National President*

## The National Song of The Links, Incorporated

We strive to do some good each year  
For those who need our aid;  
It binds us close and brings us joy,  
And so we feel repaid.

We're each a link in friendship's chain,  
And loyal to our creed  
Of doing good through work and play,  
Together we'll succeed.

*Lyrics by: Frances Atkinson  
Music by: Marietta Hall-Cephas*

# GENERAL PROTOCOLS AND POLICIES

## **WHO SPEAKS FOR THE LINKS**

The National President is the highest elected official of The Links, Incorporated. It is the policy of The Links, Incorporated that the National President speaks for the organization. Persons other than the official spokesperson should not make positions on issues or respond to inquiries on statements of policy to the public for the organization. The National President may designate individuals to represent her for specific events or to represent the organization before other bodies or the media.

The Area Director speaks for the Area. The Area Director may designate individuals to represent her for specific events or to represent the Area before other bodies or the media within the Area. The Area Director may not speak on behalf of the organization without approval of the National President.

## **MEDIA RELATIONS**

Press releases for The Links, Incorporated are prepared by the National Communications Committee with oversight of the Executive Director or the National Communications Chair. Final approval by the National President is necessary prior to the release.

## **USE OF NAME**

The proper listing of the organization is the complete name: The Links, Incorporated (with no abbreviation of the word “Incorporated”, i.e. “Inc.”).

## **LINKS STATIONERY**

For consistency and clarity, National, Area and Chapter stationery should have the same format. The official printing color of The Links, Incorporated is PMS347. Please refer to The Links, Incorporated’s style guide.

# THE BASIC TRADITIONS FOR OUR RITUALS

Our rituals are purposeful gatherings through which we communicate our values and our purpose. They are a preservation of our approved customs and sacred traditions which honor our history and strengthen the bonds of our sisterhood. When we recall our rituals and ceremonies, we are in essence remembering the moments that we shared in friendship and in service. When we tell our Links story, it is in essence of a cherished encounter. When we celebrate our Links life, we are in essence celebrating a life filled with treasured moments, cherished stories, and celebrations of our lives in Linkdom.

## Rituals and Ceremonies Attendance and Attire Requirements

Ceremony	Attendance & Attire Requirements
Induction – New Members	Links Only – Uninterrupted White
Induction – New Chapter	Links Only – Uninterrupted White
Induction – Honorary Members	Links Only – Uninterrupted White
Installation of Officers	No Specific Requirements
Memorial Service – National Assembly/Area Conference	Uninterrupted White
Memorial Service Chapter – Links, Connecting Links, Heir-o-Links	Uninterrupted White
Memorial Service – National Officers, Current and Past	Uninterrupted White
Ceremony of Friendship	No Specific Requirements
Closing Ceremony and Candle Light Service	Links Only
Founders’ Day Ceremony	No Specific Requirements
White Rose Ceremony	No Specific Requirements
Alumna Ceremony	No Specific Requirements
25 and 40-Year Member Ceremony	Links Only – See Ceremonial Preparation
Platinum and 50-Year Member Ceremony	Links Only – See Ceremonial Preparation
Dedication Ceremony	No Specific Requirements
Chapter Anniversary Ceremony	No Specific Requirements

**\*Uninterrupted White – no other color introduced other than white**

# 2022-2024 NATIONAL OFFICERS



**Ethel Isaacs Williams, JD**  
National President  
West Palm Beach (FL) Chapter



**Shuana Tucker-Sims, PhD**  
National Vice President  
Waterbury (CT) Chapter



**Sharon Dixon Gentry, EdD**  
National Recording Secretary  
Music City (TN) Chapter



**Marcia L. Page**  
National Treasurer  
Mid-Cities (TX) Chapter



**Tyna D. Davis, EdD**  
National Parliamentarian  
Montgomery (AL) Chapter



# NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

The National Headquarters of both The Links, Incorporated and The Links Foundation, Incorporated are located at 1200 Massachusetts Avenue, NW in Washington, D.C.

The first central office was approved in 1974 at the 19<sup>th</sup> National Assembly, under the leadership of the 5<sup>th</sup> National President, Helen Gray Edmonds.

The organization entered into a two-year lease for office space located at 16<sup>th</sup> and P Streets, NW, Washington, DC.



The 6<sup>th</sup> National President, Pauline Ellison, oversaw establishment of the first headquarters location including staffing, equipment, and organization management. Following the vision of her predecessors, the 7<sup>th</sup> National President, Julia Brogdon Purnell, understood the need to continue the expansion of our headquarters, and at the 23<sup>rd</sup> National Assembly the recommendation to purchase our own headquarters building was set in motion “with all deliberate speed.” She also steered ratification of the Bylaws of The Links Foundation, completing the final step of its establishment.

The mandate to purchase a headquarters building was carried out by the 8<sup>th</sup> National President, Dr. Dolly Desselle Adams who developed a plan of action to identify, finance and purchase the building we enjoy today. President Adams also had the foresight to garner a commitment from our neighbor at 1204 Massachusetts Avenue to give The Links, Incorporated “first right of refusal” should the owner decide to sell. That offer came in 2007 during the tenure of our 14<sup>th</sup> National President, Dr. Gwendolyn B. Lee.

In 2008, the 36<sup>th</sup> National Assembly ratified the purchase of the adjacent property. By the end of President Lee’s tenure, the renovations were well underway. It was under the leadership of 15<sup>th</sup> National President, Margot James Copeland, that the renovations were completed and celebrated with a ribbon cutting in concert with the 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary events of The Links’ founding. Through the boundless energy and skillful leadership team of Dr. Glenda Newell-Harris, the 16<sup>th</sup> National President of The Links, Incorporated, the building is now paid in full. President Newell-Harris, as well as our 17<sup>th</sup> National President, Kimberly Jeffries Leonard, continued the commitment to fund an endowment to protect its future.

The Links, Incorporated and The Links Foundation, Incorporated, are each led by an Executive Director. Along with their respective staffs, they are responsible for accomplishing the overall objectives and specific goals of each entity within the framework of the organizational structure. The Executive Directors report to the National President.



**Kristie Patton Foster**  
Executive Director  
*The Links, Incorporated*



**Dr. Gwendolyn E. Boyd**  
Executive Director  
*The Links Foundation,  
Incorporated*

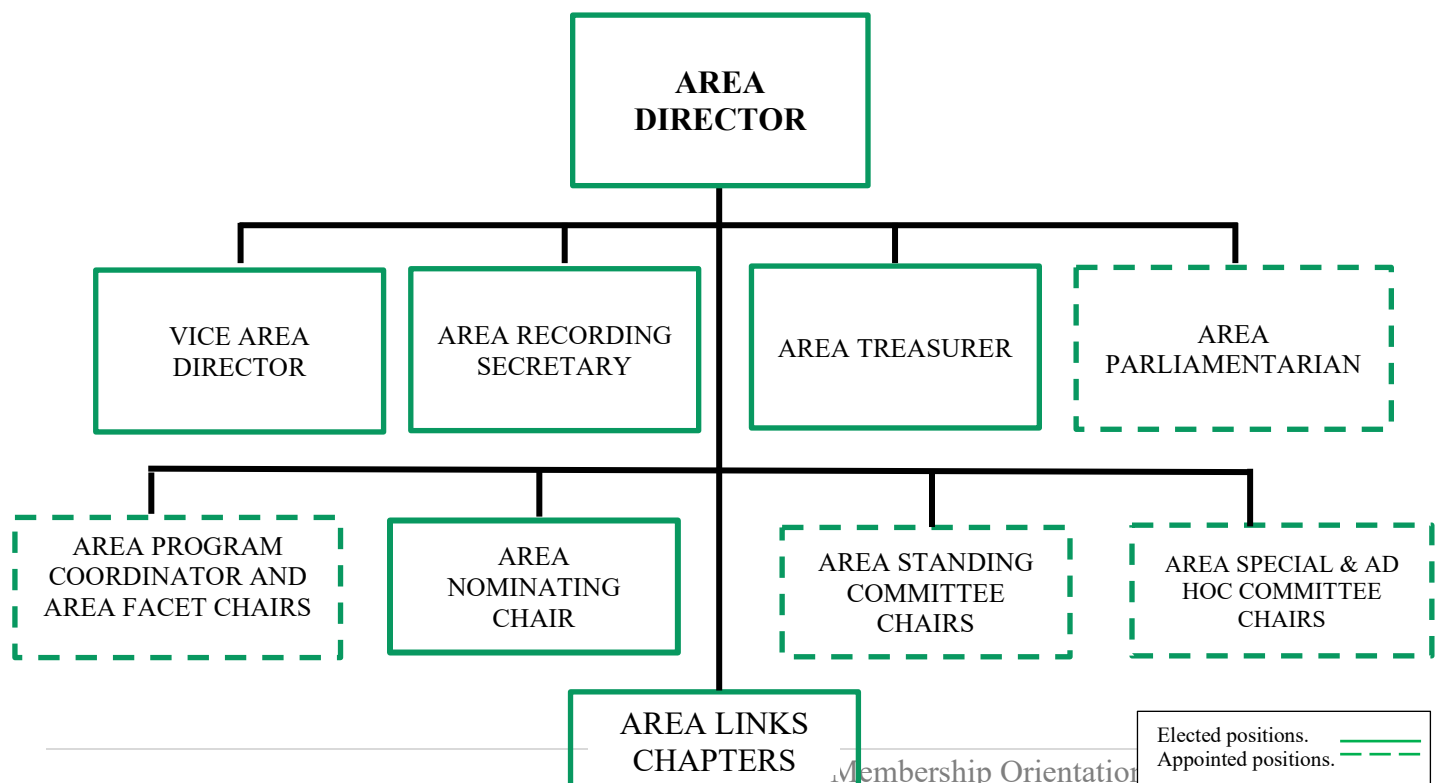
# Area Structure

In 1954, The Links, Incorporated, decentralized into four geographical areas. The Areas of the organization and the states that are included in each are:

<b>Eastern Area of The Links, Incorporated</b>	Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, United Kingdom, Vermont, and Virginia
<b>Southern Area of The Links, Incorporated</b>	Alabama, Commonwealth of the Bahamas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, and South Carolina
<b>Central Area of The Links, Incorporated</b>	Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Tennessee, West Virginia, and Wisconsin
<b>Western Area of The Links, Incorporated</b>	Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Texas, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming

The purpose of the Area structure is to convey the intent and implement the National programs to the individual chapters. The Area Directors sit on the Executive Council of The Links, Incorporated and participate in the development and promotion of the policies and programs of the organization. Strategies and resources developed at the Area level assist chapters in promoting civic, educational, and intercultural activities to enrich their communities.

The **Area Conferences** convene **biennially in odd years**. It is comprised of voting Delegates representing chapters in each respective Area. It is where chapters come together to exchange ideas, methods, and techniques to implement the National program.



## 2021-2023 AREA DIRECTORS



**Lisa Loury Lomas, PhD**  
Eastern Area Director  
Columbia (MD) Chapter



**Sylvia Carter Perry**  
Southern Area Director  
Bold City (FL) Chapter



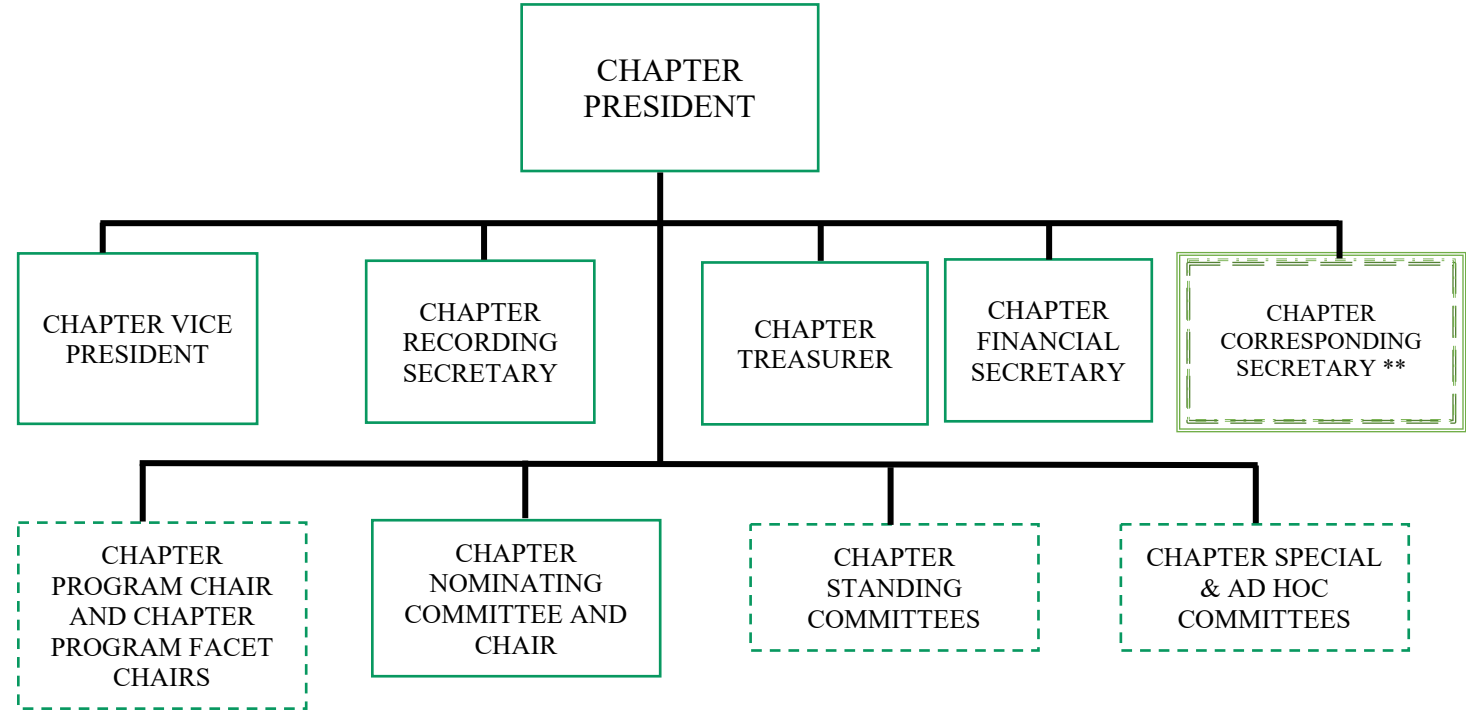
**Monica Boone Allen**  
Central Area Director  
Windy City (IL) Chapter



**Lorna C. Hankins**  
Western Area Director  
Gulf Coast Apollo (TX)  
Chapter

# CHAPTER STRUCTURE

Chapters are chartered for the purpose of serving a geographic area. They do so by developing and executing programs that support the National programs. It is through the planning and execution of programs that the bonds of friendship are sewn and strengthened. There are currently 299 chapters across the four Areas of the organization. These chapters are located in 41 states, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of the Bahamas, and the United Kingdom.



Elected positions

Appointed positions

Elected or appointed in congruence with chapter bylaws



# CURRENT CHAPTER LISTING

## Eastern

Albany District (NY)  
Annapolis (MD)  
Arlington (VA)  
Atlantic City (NJ)  
Baltimore (MD)  
Bergen County (NJ)  
Boston (MA)  
Brooklyn (NY)  
Bucks County (PA)  
Buffalo (NY)  
Capital City (DC)  
Central Massachusetts (MA)  
Central New Jersey (NJ)  
Charlottesville (VA)  
Chesapeake/Virginia Beach (VA)  
Columbia (MD)  
Commonwealth (VA)  
Danville (VA)  
Delaware Valley (PA)  
Dover (DE)  
Eastern Shore (NY)  
Erie County (NY)  
Essex County (NJ)  
Fairfield County (CT)  
Farmington Valley (CT)  
Greater Bronx (NY)  
Greater Hartford (CT)  
Greater Hudson Valley (NY)  
Greater New York (NY)  
Greater Providence (RI)  
Greater Queens (NY)  
Greater Rappahannock (VA)  
Greater Springfield (MA)  
Hampton (VA)  
Harbor City (MD)  
Harrisburg (PA)  
James River Valley (VA)  
Jersey Shore (NJ)  
London (UK)  
Long Island (NY)  
Loudoun Country (VA)  
Lynchburg (VA)  
Metro-Manhattan (NY)  
Metropolitan (DC)  
Middlesex County (MA)  
Milford (CT)  
Montgomery County (PA)  
Morris County (NJ)  
Mount Rose (MD)  
New Haven (CT)  
Newport News (VA)  
Niagara Falls (NY)

## Southern

Aiken (SC)  
Albany (GA)  
Alexandria (LA)  
Altamonte Springs (FL)  
Asheville (NC)  
Athens (GA)  
Atlanta (GA)  
Augusta (GA)  
Azalea City (GA)  
Baton Rouge (LA)  
Birmingham (AL)  
Bold City (FL)  
Bradenton/Sarasota (FL)  
Brevard County (FL)  
Brunswick (GA)  
Buckhead/Cascade City (GA)  
Camellia Rose (GA)  
Carolina Pines (NC)  
Charleston (SC)  
Charlotte (NC)  
Columbia (SC)  
Columbus (GA)  
Crescent City (LA)  
Crown Jewels (NC)  
Dade County (FL)  
Daytona Beach (FL)  
Dogwood City (GA)  
Durham (NC)  
Elizabeth City (NC)  
Fayetteville (NC)  
Fort Lauderdale (FL)  
Fort Valley (GA)  
Gainesville (FL)  
Golden Crest (MS)  
Grandiflora (NC)  
Greater Broward County (FL)  
Greater Huntsville (AL)  
Greater Miami (FL)  
Greater Mobile (AL)  
Greensboro (SC)  
Greenville (SC)  
Gulf Coast (MS)  
Hilton Head (SC)  
Jackson (MS)  
Jacksonville (FL)  
La Capitale (LA)  
LaGrange (GA)  
Lake Gaston Area (NC)  
LeFleur's Bluff (MS)  
Macon (GA)  
Magic City (AL)  
Magnolia (GA)  
Miami-Biscayne (FL)

## Central

Ann Arbor (MI)  
Archway (MO)  
Central Illinois (IL)  
Central Missouri (MO)  
Charleston-Institute (WV)  
Chattanooga (TN)  
Chicago (IL)  
Cincinnati (OH)  
Circle City (IN)  
Cleveland (OH)  
Columbus (OH)  
Cream City (WI)  
Dayton (OH)  
Des Moines (IA)  
Detroit (MI)  
Flint Area (MI)  
Fort Wayne (IN)  
Frankfort/Lexington (KY)  
Gateway (IL)  
Great Lakes (MI)  
Greater Kansas City (MO)  
Greater Twin Cities (MN)  
Greater Wayne Country (MI)  
Harbor Lites (IL)  
Hendersonville Area (TN)  
Hoffman Estates (IL)  
Huntington (WV)  
Indianapolis (IN)  
Jackson (TN)  
Jackson County (MO)  
Kalamazoo (MI)  
Kent Area (OH)  
Knoxville (TN)  
Lake Shore (IL)  
Lansing/East Lansing (MI)  
Little Rock (AR)  
Louisville (KY)  
Madison Metropolitan (WI)  
Memphis (TN)  
Milwaukee (WI)  
Minneapolis-St. Paul (MN)  
Music City (TN)  
Nashville (TN)  
North Shore (IL)  
Northern Indiana (IN)  
Northwest Arkansas (AR)  
Oakland County (MI)  
Oklahoma City (OK)  
Omaha (NE)  
Parthenon (TN)  
Pine Bluff (AR)  
Quad Cities (IL)

## Western

Alameda Contra Costa (CA)  
Albuquerque (NM)  
Anchorage (AK)  
Angel City (CA)  
Austin (TX)  
Bakersfield (CA)  
Beverly Hills West (CA)  
Channel Islands (CA)  
Claremont Area (CA)  
Colorado Springs (CO)  
Dallas (TX)  
Denver (CO)  
East Texas (TX)  
Eden Rose (CA)  
El Paso (TX)  
Fort Bend County (TX)  
Fort Worth (TX)  
Fresno (CA)  
Golden Triangle (TX)  
Greater Denton County (TX)  
Greater Pearland Area (TX)  
Greater Seattle (WA)  
Gulf Coast Apollo (TX)  
Harbor Area (CA)  
Hawaii (HI)  
Houston (TX)  
Inglewood-Pacific (CA)  
Katy-Richmond Area (TX)  
Las Vegas (NV)  
Lone Star (TX)  
Los Angeles (CA)  
Mid-Cities (TX)  
Missouri City (TX)  
Monterey Bay (CA)  
Oakland Bay Area (CA)  
Orange County (CA)  
Palos Verdes (CA)  
Pasadena-Altadena (CA)  
Peninsula Bay (CA)  
Phoenix (AZ)  
Plano North Metroplex (TX)  
Port City (TX)  
Portland (OR)  
Sacramento (CA)  
San Antonio (TX)  
San Bernardino Valley (CA)  
San Diego (CA)  
San Fernando Valley (CA)  
San Francisco (CA)  
San Jose (CA)  
Solano (CA)  
Southern Metroplex (TX)  
Spokane (WA)

## Eastern

Norfolk (VA)  
North Jersey (NJ)  
Old Dominion (VA)  
Passaic County (NJ)  
Patapsco River (MD)  
Patuxent River (MD)  
Penn Towne (PA)  
Petersburg (VA)  
Philadelphia (PA)  
Pittsburgh (PA)  
Portsmouth (VA)  
Potomac (VA)  
Prince George's County (MD)  
Princess Anne (MD)  
Rancocas Valley (NJ)  
Raritan Valley (NJ)  
Reston (VA)  
Richmond (VA)  
Roanoke (VA)  
Rochester (NY)  
Silver Spring (MD)  
South Jersey (NJ)  
Southern Maryland Chain (MD)  
Suffolk (VA)  
Syracuse (NY)  
Washington (DC)  
Waterbury (CT)  
West Chester County (NY)  
Willow Oak (MD)  
Wilmington (DE)

## Southern

Mississippi Delta (MS)  
Mississippi Roses (MS)  
Monroe-Grambling (LA)  
Montgomery (AL)  
Nassau (BF) Bahamas  
Natchez (MS)  
New Orleans (LA)  
North Broward County (FL)  
Orangeburg (SC)  
Orlando (FL)  
Pensacola (FL)  
Piedmont (NC)  
Pontchartrain (LA)  
Raleigh (NC)  
Savannah (GA)  
Selma (AL)  
Shreveport (LA)  
Spartanburg (SC)  
St. Petersburg (FL)  
Tallahassee (FL)  
Tampa (FL)  
Treasure Coast (FL)  
Tri-County (AL)  
Triangle Park (NC)  
Tuscaloosa (AL)  
Tuskegee (AL)  
West Georgia (GA)  
West Palm Beach (FL)  
Wilmington (NC)  
Wilson-Rocky Mount-Tarboro (NC)  
Winston-Salem (NC)

## Central

Queen City (OH)  
Renaissance (MI)  
River City (TN)  
Shelby County (TN)  
South Bend Area (IN)  
South Suburban Chicago (IL)  
Springfield (OH)  
St. Louis (MO)  
Toledo (OH)  
Topeka (KS)  
Tri-City (MI)  
Tri-County (IL)  
Tulsa (OK)  
Twin Rivers (OH)  
West Towns (IL)  
Western Reserve (OH)  
Wichita (KS)  
Wilberforce (OH)  
Windy City (IL)  
Youngstown (OH)

## Western

Stockton (CA)  
Tacoma (WA)  
Texas Spring Cypress (TX)  
Town Lake (TX)  
Tri-Cities (WA)  
Trinity (TX)  
Tucson (AZ)  
Waco Central Texas (TX)

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**82 Eastern Area  
Chapters**

**84 Southern Area  
Chapters**

**72 Central Area  
Chapters**

**61 Western Area  
Chapters**

# THE LINKS, INCORPORATED NATIONAL PROGRAMS

## National Programs Overview

In 1946, the first circle of nine friends who founded The Links, Incorporated set a standard of service that is reflected in our Mission Statement, “*Friends transforming communities through service*”. Under the National President’s direction, key responsibility for the “service pillar” is led by the National Director, Programs, who is appointed by the National President.

Today, more than 17,000 members commit to promoting and engaging in educational, civic, and intercultural activities in order to enrich, sustain and ensure the culture and economic survival of African Americans and other persons of African ancestry. Our goal is to deliver and sustain programs that transform the lives of children, families and communities that we serve and to measure the impact of such programming. We achieve this goal through our five program facets and utilization of The Links Service Delivery Model.

Our National President, Ethel Isaacs Williams, has charged us with *elevating our impactful service*, which can readily be done by focusing on: (1) the needs in your chapter’s service area; (2) the national programs we offer; (3) the support we have from our national and local partners; and (4) our chapters members’ areas of interest in which to serve. Consistent with our tagline, *Linked in Friendship ~ Connected in Service*, **connecting and collaboration** are key, not only within our chapters, but also across our chapters and with partners who share our goals and objectives.

# 2022-2024 NATIONAL PROGRAMS COMMITTEE



**Leslye Miller Fraser**  
National Director, Programs  
West Palm Beach (FL) Chapter



**Wendolyn Washington**  
National Director, Services to Youth  
Town Lake (TX) Chapter



**Caprice Bragg**  
National Director, The Arts  
Richmond (VA) Chapter



**Vanessa Carter**  
National Director  
National Trends & Services  
Greater Pearland Area (TX) Chapter



**Sharon Wilson, Esq.**  
National Director  
International Trends  
& Services  
Nassau, Bahamas Chapter



**Vanecia Kimbrow**  
National Assistant Director  
International Trends  
& Services  
River City (TN) Chapter



**Cherae Farmer Dixon, DDS**  
National Director  
Health & Human Services  
Nashville (TN) Chapter



**Anna Maria Bishop Harris**  
Eastern Area  
Program Coordinator  
Metro-Manhattan (NY) Chapter



**Deborah Thomas**  
Southern Area  
Program Coordinator  
Montgomery (AL) Chapter



**Janice Garnett**  
Central Area  
Program Coordinator  
Omaha (NE) Chapter



**Carla Penn-Hopson**  
Western Area  
Program Coordinator  
Portland (OR) Chapter

# 2022-2024 NATIONAL PROGRAMS COMMITTEE



**Pamela Prier**  
Committee Member  
Bold City (FL) Chapter



**Jean Moody-Williams**  
Committee Member  
Potomac (VA) Chapter



**Dr. Angela Lucas-Mumford**  
Committee Member  
North Broward County (FL) Chapter



**Kalisha Holland**  
Committee Member  
Fort Worth (TX) Chapter



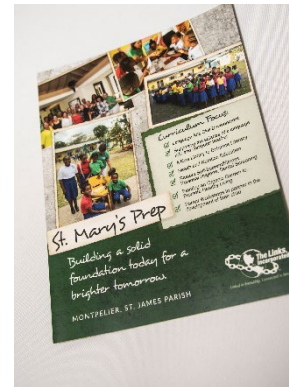
## The Links, Incorporated's Program Facets

The Links, Incorporated has five programmatic focus areas that we call “Facets”, which were established by the voting delegates at a National Assembly. Each is listed below, along with its *connected* descriptor that states the Facet’s area of focus:

- **Services to Youth (STY) Facet - established in 1962** to equip black youth to use their intellect and spirit of achievement to become successful and productive citizens. **Under this Facet, Links members are *connected* to prepare our youth for success.**
- **The Arts Facet - established in 1964** to increase and expand art activity throughout our communities, including creating and supporting art-related educational opportunities and supporting performances for our youth and accomplished professional artists. **Under this Facet, Links members are *connected* to advance our artistic heritage.**
- **National Trends and Services (NTS) Facet - established in 1964** to effectively empower the communities and families with whom we work to eliminate disparities by reducing barriers to services through advocacy, education, and service. **Under this Facet, Links members are *connected* to advocate for our communities.**



- **International Trends and Services (ITS) Facet - established in 1978** to provide services and deliver transformational programs to people of African ancestry globally so that they may have a better quality of life, with a focus on women and their families. **Under this Facet, Links members are *connected* for global impact.**



- **Health and Human Services (HHS) Facet - established in 2010** to promote and facilitate programs that support the maintenance of good health and the elimination of chronic health disparities in communities of color through education, health advocacy, and optimal utilization of health resources. **Under this Facet, Links members are *connected* to promote black family wellness.**



Please note that as a matter of protocol, National Facet Directors, and Area and Chapter Facet Chairs are to be introduced in this order at meetings and other events – i.e., the order in which The Links, Incorporated established the Facets.

### **National Programs of The Links, Incorporated**

The Links defines a program as **a comprehensive approach to solving a problem or addressing a need or issue within a community**. A program is *not* a one-time event or single activity. A program is a series of related activities focused on achieving a predetermined set of goals or objectives.

The Links has four categories of national programs: Signature Programs; National Initiatives; National Pilot Programs; and National Supporting Programs and Areas of Concentration. Each is defined below.

- **Signature Programs** are national programs that epitomize the core values and mission of The Links, Incorporated. They are designed and implemented to be transformational and address current issues, concerns and needs that impact the lives of a target population within the global black community. **Its distinctive features** are action, collaboration, leadership, excellence, sustainability and authenticity. **The Executive Council approves Signature Programs, and The Links National Assembly's delegates must ratify** both the initiation and discontinuance

of a Signature Program. Currently, The Links, Incorporated has ten (10) Signature Programs, our highest level of programming.

- **National Initiatives** are programs **designed and implemented in response to critical national issues** that affect communities of color. Partnerships and participation opportunities are encouraged in all four geographical areas of The Links, Incorporated. National Initiatives are carefully **monitored for one to four years** allowing time for programs to develop and evolve and to assess their impact and sustainability, utilizing the Service Delivery Model (described further below). The National President approves, and the Executive Council ratifies, the establishment of National Initiatives.
- National Pilot Programs are newly established **programs created to address an emerging or current nationwide issue** that is in alignment with the goals and priorities of The Links, Incorporated. A National Pilot Program **must be successfully tested and implemented for at least two years**, utilizing the Service Delivery Model, and still be relevant in all four geographical areas before it can be **approved and voted on to become a National Initiative**.
- **National Supporting Programs and Areas of Concentration** support many of the national programs and initiatives. These supporting elements may include other distinguished programs, national partnerships, committees, and areas of focus.

**The Links, Incorporated currently has a total of 28 programs across these four categories**, as shown in the chart below. The programs are listed under the Facet that has the lead for that program, but collaboration across facets is strongly encouraged to implement any of our programs at the local level. A description of each program may be found in ***The Links, Incorporated's Elevating Our Impactful Service National Programs Guide, February 2023 Edition***, which may be obtained from your chapter's Program Chair as a downloadable pdf document

## The Links, Incorporated National Programs (28) by Lead Facet as of November 1, 2022

Lead Facet	National Signature Programs	National Initiatives	National Pilot Programs	National Supporting Programs and Areas of Concentration
Services to Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Links to Success</li> <li>LINKS-STEMREADY</li> <li>Links Love HBCUs – <b>New 2022 NA</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LINKED UP Mentoring Initiative</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Young Achievers</li> </ul>
The Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Classics Through the Ages</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transforming Communities Through Visual Arts</li> <li>Young Master Writers Project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Poster Art Competition</li> </ul>
National Trends and Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project LEAD High Expectations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dressing Her from the Inside Out (Dress for Success)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PEACE (Police Engagement and Community Education)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ally Wallet Wise Financial Literacy</li> <li>AARP Are You Ready?</li> </ul>
International Trends and Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Education Across the Miles (Liberia and Jamaica)</li> <li>LIFE (Links International Foreign Affairs and Business Empowerment for Youth Program) – <b>New 2022 NA</b></li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Links Help for Humanity               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Women's Survival Kits</li> <li>Toilets for Haiti</li> </ul> </li> <li>NGO</li> </ul>
Health and Human Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HeartLinks/ Walk for Healthy Living</li> <li>Linkages to Life</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National HIV/AIDS Initiative</li> <li>National Mental Health Initiative</li> <li>National Oral Health Initiative</li> <li>Black K.A.R.E. (Kidney Awareness Resources and Education)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health Equity Ambassador Program (American Cancer Society)</li> <li>L.A.M.B.S. (Links Aiding Moms to the Strong, in partnership with the March of Dimes)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Childhood Obesity Prevention</li> </ul>

Please note that this chart is a “menu” of programs that are available to chapters to implement. Chapters are not expected to implement everything on the menu; rather, as part of being in alignment with The Links’ national programming goals, each Links chapter should select those programs that best meet its community’s needs and its chapter members’ areas of interest in which to provide impactful service.

**In implementing a program(s), Links Chapters are strongly encouraged to connect and collaborate by moving toward integrated programming** (three facets involved in implementation) **or umbrella programming** (*all* five facets and *all* active chapter members involved in implementation) to increase efficiency, effectiveness and bonds of friendship!

### **National Partners and Collaborators of The Links, Incorporated**

Our national partners and collaborators, which are listed below, are passionate about their involvement with The Links, Incorporated and play a crucial role in helping to support the overall work and mission of our organization. Partnering for the betterment of our communities, our national partners and collaborators support us in executing, upholding and fulfilling the mission, vision and goals of our national programming. These relationships, with defined objectives and outcomes, help extend our reach and enhance our service to our communities.

## **National Partners and Collaborators of The Links, Incorporated (As of March 2023)**

- AARP
- Ally Financial
- Alzheimer’s Association
- American Cancer Society (ACS)
- American Heart Association (AHA)
- American Red Cross
- Baxter International
- Black Health Matters
- Colgate-Palmolive
- Donate Life America
- Dress for Success
- Dove
- Girls Inc.
- M Financial Group
- March of Dimes
- NAACP
- National Cares Mentoring Movement
- National Dental Association
- National Medical Association
- National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE)
- National Wildlife Federation (NWF)
- National Organization of Black Law Enforcement (NOBLE)
- St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital
- The Sullivan Alliance
- UNICEF
- When We All Vote

### **The Links Service Delivery Model (SDM)**

The Links has adopted a service model for our programs in order to build a common language for accountability and evaluation across the organization. The SDM is a useful tool for planning and evaluating programs, committee work and other collaborative projects. Our model was adapted from the University of Wisconsin-Extension and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation Logic Model. The Logic Model process is a tool that has been used for more than 20 years by program managers and evaluators to describe the effectiveness of their programs. Logic models represent a visual way of expressing the rationale or thought behind a program. The six SDM Planning Elements and accompanying S.M.A.R.T. goals that underlie them, are summarized in the two

graphics below.

## SDM Planning Elements

**Planning Elements:** Our Service Delivery Model contains six components with inputs, outputs and outcomes being central to the common basis of the model.

<b>Situation</b> Service models are built in response to an existing situation. We identify the problem or priority the program is responding to and the expected benefit to specific audiences	<b>Inputs</b> The inputs are the resources available to make your program work. Resources could include the people, the money or the community resources that are necessary to operate the program. Inputs lead to outputs.	<b>Outputs</b> The activities, products, methods, and services you use represent your outputs. Examples of program activities include research, training, technical assistance and other services. Outputs lead to outcomes.
<b>Outcomes</b> The results and benefits for groups, individuals or communities represent outcomes. They may include direct products, services or events delivered through planned activities.	<b>External Factors</b> These are the outside forces that affect the implementation and success of the program.	<b>Assumptions</b> Assumptions are the beliefs we have about why our program will work.



## Key to SDM are S.M.A.R.T. Goals

- Set **SMART goals** to clarify your ideas, focus your efforts, use your time and resources productively, and achieve what you want.



### **Specific:**

Define the goal in clear language



### **Measurable:**

Track progress to measure outcome



### **Attainable**

Can the goal be accomplished?



### **Realistic:**

Is the goal practical, visionary and can be applied to the task on hand?



### **Timely:**

Has a time limit been set (for better time management)?



### Measuring Our Impactful Service

Lastly, if we truly are to have impactful service, we need to evaluate our efforts. Program evaluation is the systematic process of studying a program or initiative to discover how well it is working or has worked to achieve the intended goals. When we **gather**, we **evaluate** and **analyze** information to serve three purposes:



- **Program Assessment**—verifying, documenting and quantifying program activities and their effects.
- **Program Improvement**—finding out where a program may be failing or need improvement.
- **Strategic Management**—providing information that can help your chapter make decisions about how resources should be applied in the future to better serve its mission or goals.

More detailed information is provided to Links chapters by the National Programs Committee annually on all elements of the Service Delivery Model, including how to assess our impactful service. In addition, all Links Chapters are required to submit a program report by February 1<sup>st</sup> each year, which summarizes the chapter's programming efforts for the prior two years. These reports are evaluated by program reviewers against the requirements of the Service Delivery Model, both to assist chapters in their efforts and to recognize our high-performing chapters at Area Conferences and at our National Assembly.

In sum, as established by our esteemed founders, **programming is at the heart of The Links, Incorporated** as we continue across the years to be *Linked in Friendship ~ Connected in Service!* As proud members of The Links, it is through our programming that we elevate our *impactful service* to our communities.

# MEMBERSHIP

Members of The Links, Incorporated are influential decision makers and opinion leaders representing the worlds of business, government, media, academia, philanthropy, the arts, and more. Membership in The Links, Incorporated is by invitation only. The Links, Incorporated has attracted many distinguished women who are individual achievers and have made a difference in their local communities and the world.

## NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE



**Shuana Tucker-Sims, PhD**  
National Vice President  
Waterbury (CT) Chapter



**Kellee Ewing, MBA**  
Eastern Area Vice Director  
Morris County (NJ) Chapter



**Vanessa Falls**  
Southern Area Vice Director  
Birmingham (AL) Chapter



**Sheila R. Brown, DDS**  
Central Area Vice Director  
Lake Shore (IL) Chapter



**Karen Cole, MD**  
Western Area Vice Director  
Beverly Hills West (CA)  
Chapter

## MEMBERSHIP CLASSIFICATIONS

**Active Member:** An Active Member is a member who has met all obligations and requirements as determined by her Chapter, Area, and The Links, Incorporated, except in the case of an Affiliate Member (See section on Affiliate Membership). Members meeting these requirements are active members in good standing. These requirements shall include finance, attendance, and service. Members shall pay all dues and assessments of her Chapter, Area, and the National Assembly. She is expected to participate in chapter activities and programs that implement the priorities of The Links, Incorporated.

An active member must remain active in the Chapter in which she was inducted to retain her membership in The Links, Incorporated, except when a member moves to another locality that is outside her chapter's boundaries and requests a transfer to a Chapter in her new locality. Any other exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Executive Council.

A member shall have active membership in only one Chapter (primary Chapter). However, in recognition of the growing number of members who have dual residences, and in the spirit of friendship, a member may establish visiting status in a second Chapter upon completion of the Dual Residence-Visiting Status Notification Form. She shall be responsible for providing advance notification to her primary Chapter President and the President of the secondary Chapter of her intention to participate in meetings and programs of the Chapter in the location of her secondary residence. All Chapter, Area, and National responsibilities and requirements (financial, attendance, and service hours) shall be recorded and reported through her primary Chapter. Service hours may be performed in the secondary Chapter; however, these hours must be certified by the secondary Chapter and reported through the Link member's primary Chapter.

### *Minimum Forty-Eight (48) Hours Service Requirement*

Active members of The Links, Incorporated are required to accumulate a minimum forty-eight (48) hours of service per fiscal year to the organization through service sanctioned by and a part of her Chapter's programmatic thrust. Service hours may also be earned by attending Chapter meetings, participation in Chapter activities, participation in certain Area meetings as may be designated by the Area Director, and participation in certain National meetings as may be designated by the National President. The one-year period mirrors the fiscal year of The Links, Incorporated i.e., May 1st through April 30th. Members may project an estimate of service hours that will be accumulated after the Chapter's submission of its Master Data Form and by April 30th if necessary. Chapter leadership is responsible for ensuring the integrity of the service hours reported.

### *National Attendance and Participation Requirement Except for active members with Platinum or Provisory Status*

Active members are required to attend and participate in a minimum of one (1) National Assembly or one (1) Area Conference in her Area every five-year period (One-in-Five) to maintain membership in The Links, Incorporated. The initial period began in 2002 for all who were members at that time. The initial five (5) year period for members inducted after 2002 shall begin the year of their induction. Alumna Members are not required to meet the One-in-Five attendance requirement.

In order to meet this requirement and receive credit for having attended, a member must register for the Assembly or Area Conference and attend a minimum of two (2) business meetings, one (1) program workshop, and one (1) operational workshop of the Assembly or Area Conference. In order to meet the registration and attendance requirement, documentation verifying attendance at a program workshop, an operational workshop and two business meetings at an Area Conference or National Assembly is required. A member who fails to attend either her Area Conference or a National Assembly within her currently applicable five (5) year period shall forfeit her membership in The Links, Incorporated. (See Appendix – One-in-Five Attendance Chart)

#### *Forfeiture of Membership*

A member shall forfeit her membership in The Links, Incorporated if all Chapter, Area, and/or National dues and assessments are not paid on or before May 1st of each year or the year it is due; if she does not meet the minimum forty-eight (48) hour service requirement; or if she does not meet the One-in-Five Attendance requirement.

**Active Member: Attendance Sabbatical** An Active Member may apply for and be granted Attendance Sabbatical if she demonstrates that she cannot fulfill her chapter's minimum attendance requirement and may be placed on a sabbatical from attending chapter meetings for one (1) year at the discretion of her chapter for these reasons: 1) Her employment or civic responsibilities prevent her from attending chapter meetings, or 2) She is enrolled in a college or university course that meets on the day and time of chapter meetings. At the discretion of her chapter, this Attendance Sabbatical may be extended. An active member on an Attendance Sabbatical shall be required to meet all other obligations of her Chapter, Area, and the National Assembly, i.e., dues and assessments, National attendance requirement for Assemblies or Area Conferences, and the minimum 48-hour service requirement. No chapter shall grant Attendance Sabbaticals that would prevent the chapter from obtaining a quorum at chapter meetings.

Active members may apply at any time for this status but preferably in January or February preceding the fiscal year the status is being requested. The request for Attendance Sabbatical must be made in writing to the Chapter Vice President of Membership and the Chapter President with supporting documentation. The supporting documentation can be from the member's employer, civic official representative, college or university documentation or member herself sharing itineraries or schedules. The Vice President of Membership then presents the request to the chapter and the chapter grants approval with a majority vote. The member may apply for this status for

two consecutive years. Attendance Sabbatical is not transferable to another Chapter and a member on this status may not hold office within The Links, Incorporated or serve as Chairperson of a Chapter, Area or National Committee.

**Active Member: Leave of Absence (LOA)** A member on Leave of Absence is an active member in good standing to whom the Chapter has granted a leave of absence for one year. An additional year may be granted at the discretion of the Chapter. Leave begins and ends in accordance with the fiscal year, May 1<sup>st</sup> - April 30<sup>th</sup>. If the member wishes to request an additional year of leave of absence, the request must be made in writing using a Leave of Absence Form prior to the expiration of the current leave. In extreme circumstances, proof of need for additional leave beyond two years must be submitted to the Chapter for approval and to the Area Director for concurrence.

The Chapter must give the member on leave written notice of the expiration date of the leave at least thirty (30) days in advance. At the expiration of the leave, she shall become an active member of her Chapter or her membership in The Links, Incorporated shall be automatically terminated. This does not preclude her from reinstating. A member on LOA must pay National dues and assessments through her Chapter and must meet the Area Conference and National Assembly attendance requirement (One-in-Five).

While on leave, a member is not responsible for the minimum forty-eight (48) hour service requirement or Chapter dues and has no Chapter responsibilities or privileges. A Chapter shall not grant leaves of absence in excess of 10% of its membership during any fiscal year. For example, a Chapter with 46 members can grant a leave of absence to no more than four (4) members. Ten percent (10%) of 46 is 4.6. Because a chapter cannot grant leave to six-tenths (.6) of a person and five is in excess of 10%, the Chapter can only grant leaves to four members. DOLs who are Active members of a Chapter are included in the total membership when determining the ten percent (10%).

**Active Member: Provisory Status** A member on Provisory Status is an active member who is medically unable to participate in any activity outside the home. This status may be granted by the Chapter upon written request from the member and a notarized certificate from her doctor. When the member can resume activities outside her home, her provisory status will end. The member will re-engage with her chapter and be required to meet all the requirements of active membership. False claims of provisory membership status by a member or Chapter shall cause that member or Chapter to be subject to disciplinary action.

**Active Member: Military Leave and Military One-in-Five Waiver** A member in good standing on active military duty who is deployed to a combat or high-risk zone or military installation shall be granted a special military leave upon submitting a copy of her orders to her chapter. While on military leave, and for the remainder of the year in which she returns, she is not responsible for the

minimum forty-eight (48) hour service requirement or any dues or assessments. Said member will also be granted an extension to complete the One-in-Five certification requirements if she cannot meet the requirement during her deployment and will be required to complete the requirement upon her return during the following five-year period. This extension does not exempt her from meeting the requirement of the next five-year period. This member is included when calculating a Chapter's ten percent (10%).

A member in good standing who is called to military training or duty during the time of a National Assembly or Area Conference that falls within the fifth year of a one-in-five period will be granted an extension to complete the National Assembly or Area Conference attendance requirement to complete the one-in-five requirement during the following five-year period. This extension does not exempt her from meeting the requirement of the next five-year period.

**Active Member: Affiliate Status** A member on Affiliate Status (Affiliate Member) is an active member in good standing who moves to a locality where there is no Chapter of The Links, Incorporated or a non-DOL where all existing Chapters have reached the maximum number of members. She must request a transfer from her Chapter to Affiliate Status no more than six (6) months after moving to a new location. (See the Transfer Process section of this document.) This request is made to National Headquarters. She must become an Affiliate Member to retain her membership. She shall be responsible for all National dues and assessments, the National attendance requirement (One-in-Five), and the minimum forty-eight (48) hour service requirement. Dues and assessments shall be paid directly to National Headquarters via cashier's check or money order. Dues and assessments shall be paid directly to National Headquarters via cashier's check or money order accompanied by documentation of her minimum 48 service hours. The Affiliate Member is responsible for informing National Headquarters of her new residence and requesting Affiliate Status.

**Alumna Member:** An Alumna Member is a member in good standing who has been an active member for at least thirty (30) years regardless of her current age or has at least ten (10) years of service and is age seventy (70) or more. It is not mandatory that she retire from active membership at age seventy (70). Members who meet the above requirements by June 30th of the next fiscal year and who notify the Chapter by or before the February 1<sup>st</sup> deadline shall be eligible for Alumna Status. She must request Alumna Status via the online portal in the MMS system. The Chapter President verifies that the member meets the qualifications for Alumna Status through the online portal (MMS).

A member who is granted Alumna Status is an Alumna of The Links, Incorporated (not her Chapter) and has no financial responsibilities to The Links, Incorporated; however, she may participate in Chapter, Area and National activities with the payment of any required fees. She shall be afforded all the rights and privileges of The Links, Incorporated except for participating



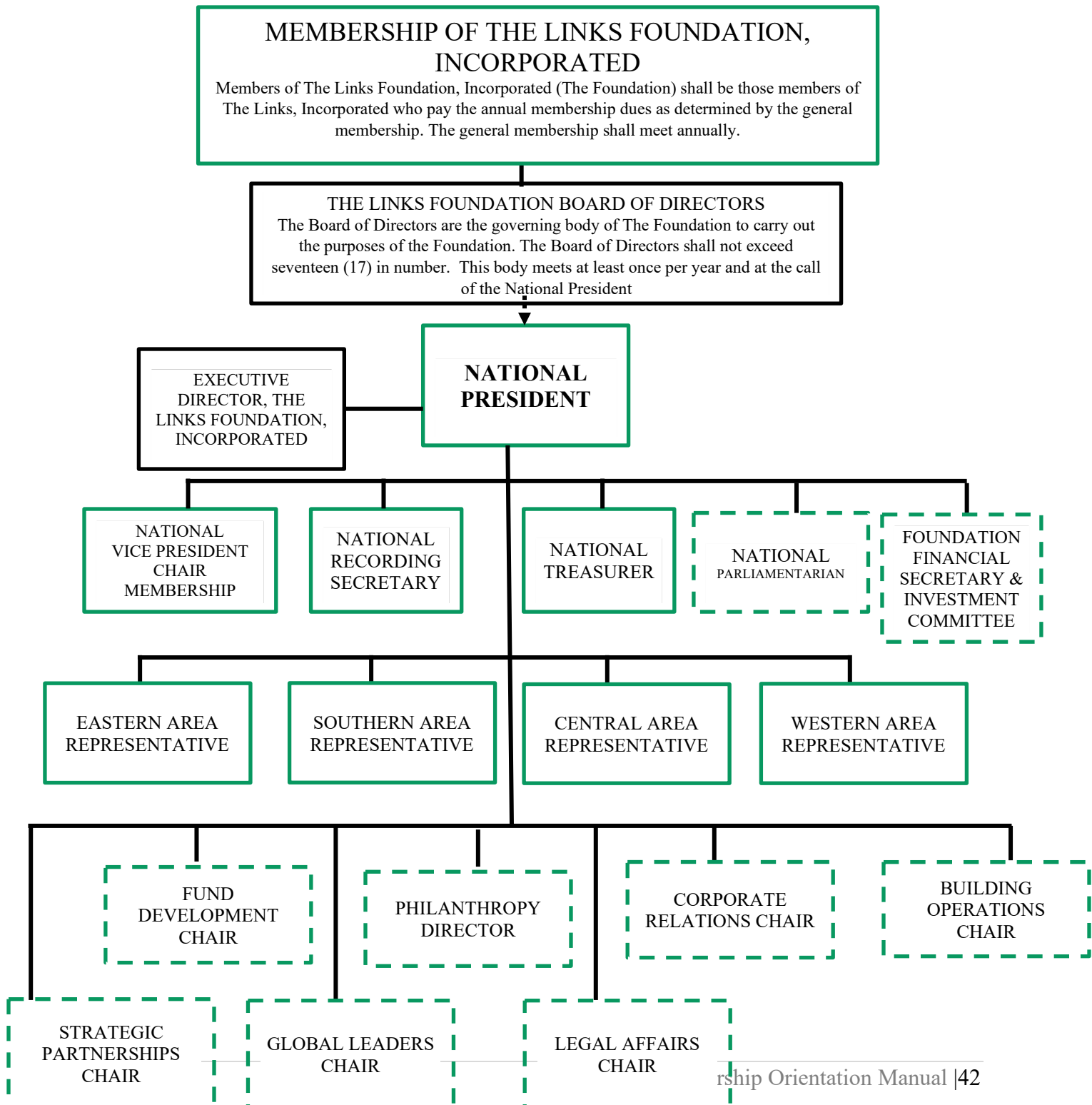
in parliamentary procedures including voting, chairing committees and holding office. Parliamentary procedures include, but are not limited to, debate and/or deliberation on all motions, discussion on new member candidates, constitution and bylaws amendments, budgets, dues and assessments and standing rules. Alumna members may not sponsor new member candidates, with one exception if the Alumna member is the mother or grandmother of a candidate. In such case, the Alumna member who is the mother or grandmother of a candidate must follow the provisions as set forth herein for Membership Intake Process

**Platinum Classification for Active and Alumna Members:** A Platinum member is an Active member in good standing or an Alumna Member who (1) has reached eighty (80) years of age or older and who has given thirty (30) years of service; or who has given at least (50) years of active service, or who, regardless of age, has given at least forty-five (45) years of active service and has served in an elected position in her Chapter and/or an elected or appointed position on the Area or National level. Members who meet the above requirements by June 30<sup>th</sup> of any given year and who submits the “Platinum Member Notification Form” by February 1<sup>st</sup> of the following year shall be granted Platinum Status in the year in which she becomes eligible.

This status is the highest honor afforded a member on the recommendation of a Chapter and the National Vice President, and approval by the Executive Council. The member must become eligible for Platinum Status between the previous National Assembly and June 30<sup>th</sup> of the year in which she will be honored. A non-Affiliate Member seeking Platinum Status must have her Chapter submit electronically the Platinum Membership Recommendation Form, signed by the President and containing information verifying that the member meets the qualifications for Platinum Status to National Headquarters, the National Vice President, and the respective Area Director not later than February 1<sup>st</sup> in order for the member to be honored as a Platinum member at the next National Assembly. An Affiliate Member meeting the requirements may complete the form herself and forward to National Headquarters for approval by the National Vice President and approval by the Executive Council. A Platinum member is not responsible for meeting the minimum forty-eight (48) hour service requirement or the One-in-Five Area Conference or National Assembly attendance requirement.

**Honorary Member:** An Honorary Member is a well-known public individual of high ethical standing of any race, nationality, or creed who has been cited nationally and/or internationally for her outstanding service to humanity. Criteria for Selection for Honorary Membership: the person shall have evidenced identifiable abilities, interests, and contributions in the areas of educational, civic, and intercultural activities with special emphasis on at least one of five dimensional program facets of The Links, Incorporated. No former member of The Links, Incorporated shall be considered for Honorary Membership.

# THE LINKS FOUNDATION, INCORPORATED ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



# THE LINKS FOUNDATION, INCORPORATED

## **BRIEF HISTORY OF THE FOUNDATION**

In 1968, The Links Foundation, Incorporated was conceived by some of its officers at the National Assembly in Berkeley, California. They believed that the organization needed 501(c)(3) tax status to enhance its philanthropic endeavors, using the advantages of the deductible tax position. The intent was to present a plan of action to that Assembly; however, Whitney Young, then Director of The National Urban League, presented The Links, Incorporated with a challenge to assist the League with its work. The Links were so moved by his appeal that they pledged \$100,000 to the Urban League, thus putting the idea of a Links' Foundation on hold.

The idea was revived in 1980 and was broached at the National Assembly held in Atlanta, Georgia. This time, preliminaries had been carried out and many of the legal papers had been prepared. The Assembly adopted the motion to create a Links' "Fund" withholding its grant-in-aid monies until Chapters had the opportunity to study the ramifications of having a Links' Foundation.

In 1984, at the National Assembly in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, The Links, Incorporated voted to pay its grants-in-aid monies to The Links Foundation, Incorporated, making the Foundation a viable entity.

During the past years, Project Discovery, funded by the Federal Government; Consultations I, II, III, and IV funded by the Lilly Foundation; Project Lead; High Expectations!, funded by the Federal Government; and Links to Success: Children Achieving Excellence, funded by the Kellogg, UPS and Exxon Foundations; have been program thrusts of The Links Foundation, Incorporated.

The Foundation's Headquarters, funded by members of The Links, Incorporated, became reality in 1985. The building, located in Washington, DC, also houses the offices of The Links, Incorporated.

Grants-In-Aid monies from The Links, Incorporated have made it possible for The Links Foundation, Incorporated to make grants of over one million dollars to various organizations which have programs compatible with the purposes of The Links, Incorporated and allowable under the 501(c)(3) federal tax laws.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

The Links Foundation, Incorporated is a 501(c)(3) organization exempt from federal taxation. It is the philanthropic arm of The Links, Incorporated. It provides a means for donating contributions to the charitable and educational programs of The Links, Incorporated and securing grants, sponsorships, donations, and underwriters in support of community service programs. Donations made to The Links Foundation, Incorporated are tax deductible as stated in the Internal Revenue Code.

**The Links Foundation, Incorporated is not to be used as a conduit or pass-through in order to obtain tax exemptions for donors.**

Chapters of The Links, Incorporated are encouraged to use The Links Foundation, Incorporated and **are prohibited from establishing chapter foundations**. The establishment of a chapter foundation competes with the goals, for which The Links Foundation, Incorporated was created.

**The bylaws of The Links, Incorporated do not cover the governance of chapter foundations, and as such they pose a potential liability to the organization.** The Links Foundation, Incorporated's 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status offers umbrella coverage to the chapter operating under its foundation.

Effective April 30, 1993, a Links chapter that has a foundation is strictly prohibited from using the word "Links" in its name. **A \$1,500.00 fine** will be imposed on any chapter in violation of this policy. The fine cannot be avoided if the wording in the establishment of a Foundation is basically the same as The Links, Incorporated and The Links Foundation, Incorporated, such as, providing the same purposes, programs, and other activities identified by our organization.

## HOW TO CONTACT THE FOUNDATION

For the purposes of submitting information to The Links Foundation, Incorporated please use the following contact information: The Links Foundation, Incorporated, 1200 Massachusetts Ave NW, Washington, DC 20005-4501, Phone: 202- 842-8686, [Foundation@linksinc.org](mailto:Foundation@linksinc.org).

## ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ABOUT THE LINKS FOUNDATION

*Who may be a member of The Links Foundation, Incorporated?*

All members of The Links, Incorporated, whose annual membership fees are current, are members of The Links, Foundation, Incorporated.

*When are membership dues paid?*

Annual dues for The Links Foundation, Incorporated shall be paid at the time that annual dues are paid to The Links, Incorporated.

*What is the difference between tax-exempt in The Links, Incorporated and tax-exempt/tax deductible in The Links, Foundation, Incorporated?*

Tax-exempt in The Links, Incorporated means that the organization is exempt from federal income taxes only. For example, if a Chapter holds a dinner-dance as a fundraiser, that Chapter is liable for all taxes except federal income taxes. No part of the cost of the tickets for activities sponsored by The Links, Incorporated is tax-deductible.

By contrast, The Links Foundation, Incorporated is usually exempt from any type of taxes. Moreover, the portion of the ticket price, not related to food costs in cases where food service is part of the activity), is fully tax-deductible. In some states, if a Chapter holds a dinner-dance as a fundraiser, partners with The Links Foundation, Incorporated as described in The Links Foundation, Incorporated Finance manual, the activity will be completely exempt from any taxes including entertainment taxes. Food taxes will be tax-deductible, within the guidelines established by the Internal Revenue Code.

**Guidelines on how to partner with The Links Foundation, Incorporated can be found in [The Links Foundation, Incorporated Financial Handbook](#).**

### MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

All members of The Links, Incorporated, pay annual membership dues to The Links Foundation, Incorporated. By virtue of their individual memberships in the Foundation, each Link has voting privileges at Foundation meetings which are held annually during the National Assembly in even years and during the Executive Council meeting in odd years.



# The Matter of Finance, Fines, and Fees

Every organization, profit or non-profit, must be fiscally sound if it is to operate properly. This section details the items of finance which directly relate to membership. Chapter Presidents and Treasurers are advised annually regarding the specific amounts of all dues and assessments and the procedures for submitting financial documents to The Links, Incorporated and The Links Foundation, Incorporated. The **Financial Handbook** should be consulted for a detailed and complete overview of all financial operations of The Links, Incorporated and The Links Foundation, Incorporated.

## NATIONAL DUES, ASSESSMENTS, FEES, AND FINES

*The following dues are payable to The Links, Incorporated:*

**Active Members and Members on Leave** Active members and members on leave are responsible for National dues and assessments payable through the local Chapters. Active members must meet their Chapter financial obligations and service requirements before National dues and assessments are sent to the National Headquarters. Members on leave are not required to perform service hours, therefore, dues for members on leave can be submitted without service hours. These fees include:

- The Links, Incorporated Dues
- Insurance Fee

**Affiliate Members** Affiliate members will complete required data online and are responsible for National dues and assessments directly to The Links, Incorporated. These fees include:

- The Links, Incorporated Dues
- Insurance Fee

**New Members** Chapter dues and assessments shall be as prescribed by the Chapter. Per the Bylaws (Article X, Section 5), “the total amount required at the Chapter level can be equal to but shall not exceed the amount required at the National level.”

*The following dues are payable to The Links Foundation, Incorporated*

**Active Members and Members on Leave** Active members and members on leave are responsible for Foundation dues and fees payable through the local Chapters.

**Affiliate Members** Affiliate Members will complete required data online and are responsible for Foundation dues and fees directly to The Links, Incorporated.

**New Members** The following Foundation dues, fees, and assessments shall be required for all new members:

- Capital Endowment
- Program Endowment
- Grant-in-Aid
- Links Foundation Dues
- Building Assessment\*

*\*All current and new members must pay the Building Assessment of \$600.00 contribution directly to The Links Foundation, Incorporated upon accepting the invitation to join the organization.*

#### **DUE DATE OF NATIONAL FEES AND ASSESSMENTS**

All dues and assessments for The Links, Incorporated and The Links Foundation, Incorporated must be received at National Headquarters no later than April 1<sup>st</sup> of each year as reported online.

# APPENDIX

- [National Constitution and Bylaws](#)
- [Manual of Procedures \(MOP\)](#)
- [1-in-5 Attendance Periods Chart](#)
- [National Financial Handbook](#)
- [National Program Guide](#)
- [Code of Ethics and Standards Manual](#)
- [National Protocol Manual](#)
- [National Rituals Manual](#)



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