



The Vision



Ladies, it is that time of year when the transition of a new region board will be taking place for the next biennium, 2022/2024 and we are looking for **YOU!**

Being a Sorooptimist is more than just fundraising and attending meetings, it about making a difference. While we all make a difference within our clubs, some of you may be thinking in bigger terms! The Midwestern Region Board is looking for YOU, a member who wants to make a larger impact within our region and at the club level. All positions are open, other than Governor. If you would like to take on a board position, please fill out the attached form and your application will be considered. An election will be held if the present position holder plans on retaining the position for a second term. If you are considering the Governor’s position, then Governor Elect is for YOU!

Positions Open are as follows:

Region Treasurer

Region Secretary

Governor Elect

All 4 District Secretary Positions

All 4 District Director Positions

Inside
July 2021
Edition are:

Articles
from your
Midwestern
Region
and
Board
Members,
Chairs
&
MUCH
MORE!



SOROPTIMIST
Best for Women®

Midwestern Region Bylaws state:

ARTICLE IV – BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 4.1 The elected officers shall be Governor, Governor-Elect, Secretary and Treasurer. These officers shall constitute the Region Board of Directors. The District Directors and District Secretaries elected by each District shall also serve on the Region Board of Directors.

Section 4.2 To be eligible for the office of District Director, the member must have served as a District Secretary or Club President. If no one meeting these requirements is willing to serve, eligibility shall be expanded to include any regular member.

Section 4.3 To be eligible for the offices of Governor and Governor-Elect, the member must have served as a member of the Region Board and have been a Club President. If no one meeting these requirements is willing to serve, eligibility shall be expanded in the following order:

- 1) Those having served as Region Board Members
- 2) Those having served as Club Presidents
- 3) Any regular member

Section 4.4 Elected officers shall hold offices for 2 years, beginning July 1 in even-numbered years, or until their successors are elected. They shall be eligible for no more than 2 consecutive terms in office.

Section 4.6 Duties

Region Treasurer: The Treasurer shall attend meetings of the Region Board; deposit and disburse all funds belonging to the Region under the direction of policies developed by the Region Board; provide financial reports at Board meetings and Region Conference; prepare a budget annually to be approved by the Board of Directors and delegates at Conference.

Region Secretary: The Secretary shall attend meetings of the Region Board; record the minutes of the board meetings and conference; coordinate with the Governor the issuance of minutes within 45 days after the close of the meetings; coordinate with the Governor the issuance of a Call to Conference at least 45 days prior to the date of the meeting.

Governor Elect: Governor-Elect. The Governor-Elect shall prepare for assuming the office of Governor by becoming familiar with all aspects of the Soroptimist organization; work closely with and under the direction of the Governor, assisting to the fullest extent possible; assume leadership in the absence of the Governor, and shall preside at meetings. She is empowered to appoint committees that serve in the next biennium after January 1 of the year in which her term commences.

District Secretary: District Secretaries shall attend District meetings; record the minutes of the district meetings; coordinate with the District Director to issue the Call to District Meetings and preside at District meetings in the absence of the District Director, and within 30 days of the District meeting send copies of the minutes to all clubs in the District, the District Director and the Region Board.

District Director: The District Directors shall plan and preside at district meetings; coordinate with the District Secretary the issuance of a Call to District meetings and keep in close communication with all clubs in the District, reporting upon conditions or problems with the District to the Region Governor. District Directors shall attempt to visit each club within the District at least once during the biennium for the purpose of providing Soroptimist education, leadership development, and recruitment and retention advice.

Applications should be returned to your district nominating committee representative listed below no later than **December 20th**.

Nominating Region Chair: Veronica Stemen

vstemen@cdeducation.org

District I: Kris Armstrong

krisquin@msn.com

District II: Barb Flory

Bflory2307@gmail.com

District III: Karrie Blankenship

karrieb40@gmail.com

District IV: Diana Oswald

diana1991us@yahoo.com

SI of Fond du Lac, WI

We are so excited to wrap up a fantastic year with a series of successes! We were happy to welcome four new members this year, and we involved them right away in activities. Among those was our new signature educational award, DreamCasters, the winners of which were announced just as the school year concluded. Needless to say, the three talented young women were thrilled with their awards, as well as the flow-through donations to their chosen designated charities (10% of their prizes of \$500, \$300, and \$200). Check out the contest and winners' videos at <https://fdlsoroptimists.wixsite.com/bestforwomen/dreamcasters>.



BRIGHT PAST
BRILLIANT FUTURE

A gift from
Sorooptimist International of Fond du
The World Belongs to Those Who Re



SI of Columbus and Franklin County

SI Columbus and Franklin County hold a successful Dream It, Be It Career Support for Girls Day

Executing a successful Dream It, Be It program in the middle of a global pandemic is no small feat! But members of SI Columbus and Franklin County met the challenge on February 20, 2021 via zoom when 44 young girls joined them. Leading up to the event, committee members worked tirelessly meeting weekly to make sure all their i's were dotted and their t's were crossed. They prepared the agenda for the day, put all handouts together in folders to be given to the girls or mailed out, coordinated with the five amazing career speakers, assembled gift cards to be given to all the girls (Chick Fil A) and some used for prizes (Amazon), and the list goes on and on of all the behind-the-scenes work done to make a successful event. On the day of the event, the participants enthusiastically responded as facilitator and recent member, Kelli Cannon, led them through the curriculum. Then they heard from five amazing career speakers, including an author, physician's assistant, chiropractor, radiologic technician, and a magistrate. Throughout the two-and-a-half-hour program, there were random drawings and the participants had opportunities to ask questions. To entice the participants to fill out the survey at the end, they were told they would get a Starbucks gift card if they did. What better way to motivate teenagers! Some of the comments from the girls about what they liked best about the day included:

"I really liked when each presenter talked about their careers and what they enjoy and dislike about them."

"My favorite part about the Dream It, Be it was the handouts that we did which allowed us to see the possible careers we may be interested in."

"Finding my values and some career plans that I've never thought out. Also, I really enjoyed listening to our guest speakers explain what their jobs are like and real-life experiences."

All in all, SI Columbus and Franklin County learned that "yes" anything is possible during a global pandemic even holding a successful Dream It, Be It event



SI of Grosse Pointe

SIGP benefits from nearly \$2 Million in Grants Awarded from Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Legacy Funds!

What a wonderful surprise to learn that Soroptimist International Grosse Pointe was one of the recipients of the Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Legacy Funds at the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan! This endowment fund was established to provide support to issue areas that were important to him during his lifetime: Caregiving, Design and Access, Youth Sports, and the Grosse Pointe Community.

Our grant request was made on behalf of the women in our club to decrease isolation due to Covid-19. We received \$7,500. Purchasing Chromebooks and supporting technology will allow us to connect our members to others in need of support, guidance, expertise, and mentoring, which will improve their overall mental and physical health. We hope to continue our volunteer work with Positive Images by adapting our current programs to an online platform. We hope all our members will find even a small way to be involved in this project. Many of the activities will evolve from our Dream it, Be it program which means we will be looking for help in break out sessions such as leading the clients at Positive Images in cooking, arts and crafts, music, meditation, exercise, yoga, just to name a few. We would also like to provide online tutoring for the children living at Coplin House, offer computer skill classes, a book club, game nights and any other activity members would like to lead. If we succeed in engaging the women with our online connection then our next goal will be to extend our programs to other facilities in the area such as Alternatives for Girls, My Sister's Keeper, or Genesis House.

SI of Grosse Pointe

In May, Soroptimist of Grosse Pointe continued the "100s" project started in January, that will culminate at our October meeting, when we celebrate the 100th Birthday of SIA. Members were asked to share "What I learned from COVID." Here are our 100 responses:

Love wine-A LOT!
Like working from home
Still like to cook
Appreciate calls with family and friends
It's fun to send cards and notes to loved ones for holidays
Enjoy sharing baked goods with neighbors via secret delivery
Don't think about myself as much
Feel more connected to loved ones through regular contact
Wearing a mask hides the bags under my eyes
As a homebody-happy to interrupt travel schedule
Enjoyed winter Zoom meetings-no cold car
Had time to write a memoir
Teeth stayed cleaner
Doctor appointments were more efficient
No long waiting room stays
Saved a lot of money
Love my face mask-no "resting bitch face"
Capable of more than I thought
Could be more grateful for what I have
Can get a 4.0. GPA in a PhD program
It's relaxing to clean out drawers and keep them neat and clean
A job well done requires time, had time to get that feeling
Wearing clothing is what separates us from the slug
Will never complain about going to the gym again
No cold this year-could it have been the mask
Zoom can be a gateway to the world with lectures, theatre, gallery visits
Working women MUST have more affordable child care
Everyone handles stress differently
There are too many science deniers
Have learned how to spend a day alone and not feel sorry for myself
Who needs lipstick?
80 year old men still have what it takes-go Dr. Fauci!
I like staying home
Dressing up sucks
Once a nurse, always a nurse
Enjoy my own company. I'm my own best friend
Now understand what refrigerator soup is
Netflix, Hulu, Amazon Prime, Disney Plus..... Did I miss any?
Charmin makes a perfect gift
David Rose rocks!
Rachel Maddow is a genius
Steve Kornacki has the stats! I want them
New rules for right of way on the sidewalk
Masks don't really make you incognito
Gray is the new blonde
Ew, David...
Science and politics are a dangerous mix

Never knew how much I could miss my extended family
 Chess was never so popular
 Turns out, my dog IS my best friend
 Stay home, practice social distancing, clean yourself often. OMG we're all becoming cats!
 An act of kindness can make your day, whether you are the giver or the receiver
 Watching detective series all the time, will eventually burn you out on Detectives. And their shows.
 Whatever you appreciated before COVID, you appreciate more after COVID
 Made me value what I want to do with my time, personally and professionally
 Inequality has been magnified by the Pandemic
 Some people's lives hardly changed, the pandemic was just a nuisance
 Some people's lives changed forever
 Birds really do sing
 Medical science has made great progress since the 1918 Pandemic, but almost as many people have died in the US during COVID as died then.
 Selfishness is a lethal disease
 Network television really is a wasteland
 Telemedicine is a great innovation
 Maybe it was the mask that kept me from getting a cold this year
 I love, and miss, going to the movies
 British royalty have their own reality show
 Grocery shopping can be a sport-a 6 pack of Charmin is a trophy
 Liking Zoom is my guilty secret
 We can all become more introverted when isolated
 Habits are easy to fall in to
 Going to class is better than watching lectures on line
 I never thought I would miss crowded places
 Sitting at restaurants is underrated
 Even if you remove bars, people will still drink
 The world can shut down, economically
 Anything can be cancelled
 You cannot have ice cream delivered
 A great way to getting out of people you dont want to see
 Difficult times can bring people together
 If you keep people inside they will start drinking
 Masks can be fashionable
 You can always learn more about health care
 Twitter is great for health care debates
 How you spend your time, and derive meaning in your life, becomes paramount
 People are more polite in one on one situations
 Driving has become a death defying experience
 It's o.k. To have a day to do nothing
 I appreciate friendships more
 Always had a "to do" list, so never bored
 Common sense beats rules and regulations
 TCBY is the best night time snack. On Saturdays, buy a quart, get a pint free!
 Small family groups make for more meaningful visiting
 Zoom saved the day and kept me connected
 Learned I can go a year without a haircut
 Found a whole new wardrobe when I cleaned the closet
 Learned that advocacy can work to make major changes through email, letters and Zoom
 Saw how individuals and organizations have created amazing content to connect with their audience
 I don't think I could have survived without Stephen Colbert!
 Cooking at home beats carryout
 Dr. Fauci IS the man of the year

Spring Conference

Ending Female Genital Mutilation Is Mission of Keynote Speaker

Torture of Girls Is Still Done Globally, Even in the U.S.

Nina Smart is a medically educated PhD advocate for human rights, an author, a world traveler, and a Soroptimist who gave the keynote address April 23 at the Midwestern Region Spring Conference.

Nina is the child of a Romanian mother and a father from Sierra Leone, in western Africa. Her mission is to eradicate female genital mutilation (FGM). Since Sierra Leone was her home for many years, that country's practices are where she concentrates her efforts, but the mutilation of young girls for the pleasure of their husbands-to-be is practiced widely in Africa and, in fact, globally, including in Nina's current home of Los Angeles.

The ritual circumcision is carried out differently in different societies. In Sierra Leone it is done in secret, with no medical supplies or anesthetics and can involve cutting genitalia with pieces of broken glass, razor blades or rusty knives.

When girls reach puberty they can be kidnapped and hauled into the bush for the procedure, which is both cultural and economic. It is usually done by a woman who is very highly regarded in the tribe and paid for by the men. The money that might otherwise be used to educate the girls goes instead to the cutter. The girls are left with no option but to marry much older men who often are abusive to the property they have purchased.

Mutilating the girls makes intercourse easier for the males and assures that the females will never be able to get any pleasure during sex. It also affects them in other ways, such as making urination a very slow and painful process, and, of course, it scars them mentally and emotionally for life.

Nina is founder of Female Genital International, a human rights organization that seeks to bring this practice into the light, and, by educating both men and women about it, to eventually see its demise. Jan. 30, 2021, was declared International Day of Zero Tolerance for FGM through the United Nations-UNICEF. There are 20 organizations worldwide seeking to end this extreme form of violence and discrimination against women and girls. Soroptimist



International has had a role for the past 10 years through the President's Appeal and Nina is its spokeswoman.

Nina pointed out that about 3 million girls are potentially deprived of an education and a future while being used as a political tool. Some have escaped to safe houses and some become advocates themselves, risking their very lives to spread the word.

Nina tells her own story, including how she was able to avoid FGM, in her book "Wild Flower." It is available through Amazon and other booksellers.

BOOK FOR SALE

Wild Flower by Dr. Nina Smart on the subject of FGM

Dr. Smart was a keynote speaker at the virtual Midwestern Region Spring Conference held on April 23 and 24, 2021, on the subject of "female genital mutilation" or FGM. If you wish to purchase a copy of her book, with a forward by Bev Bucur, please email

me: Vivianwalczesky@yahoo.com.

Spring Conference



Spring Conference raffle winner, Diana Langlois, SIGP, loved her new pink suede wallet that came with a \$100 fan of folded money!

The Vision

SI of Milwaukee

Obstacles Delayed, But Didn't Defeat Top LYD Awardee

(Photo not available)

Teresita "Teresa" Lopez overcame some huge obstacles on her way to being named recipient of SI Milwaukee's top Live Your Dream award this year.

Teresa, who lives in Kenosha, was not born in the United States and was not allowed to attend college here after graduating from high school in 2005 because she did not have a Social Security number.

That prohibition was lifted when the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program was put in place, but by that time Teresa had already started a family. She feared being overwhelmed by trying to work and raise two small children while attending school, so she put off starting for a time.

But she was determined to get an education and she had a passion for technology and for helping people. Today she has earned an associate degree at Bellevue University and has a job as an IT Helpdesk Specialist. She is working on her bachelors degree in Computer Science and Information Technology, needed so she can apply for the post of Systems and Network Administrator at Fox Conn in Mount Pleasant.

While all this is going on, she is raising a 2-year-old son and daughters 7 and 10. It is her children who motivate her. "As I take the next step in my career I am showing them that everything is possible if there is a passion for it and school can help make that possible," she said.

Eventually, she said, she would like to be in a leadership position at Fox Conn where she would be able to work with and help others using the skills she is mastering today.



Angelaique "Angie" Dunbar

Psychiatry Is Goal for LYD Awardee

A career in medicine beckons Angelaique "Angie" Dunbar, recipient of SI Milwaukee's second place Live Your Dream Award.

Angie (she says that's just easier for most people than Angelaique) lives in Milwaukee and is enrolled at Milwaukee Area Technical College working virtually toward the Associate Degree in nursing which she is due to receive next year. At the same time she is raising a 5-year-old son who has a form of degenerative glaucoma. "The steps we are taking now could keep Ethan from eventually going blind," she said. These steps include the surgical insertion of a tube into Ethan's eye.

Yet this is just the first step in the future she sees for herself. After earning the Associate Degree at MATC Angie will pursue a Bachelors Degree at the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee and then she plans to apply for admission to medical school, preferring the Medical College of Wisconsin at Madison. "I want to go into psychiatry," she said.

Angie graduated from Wauwatosa West High School and started at MATC, but circumstances caused her to drop out after a year. It was seven more years before she could return to her studies. "It was hard at first, especially with the pandemic causing so many changes. It took a while for me to get reacquainted, to work out a schedule for classes and caring for Ethan and working part time at a pre-natal agency." When she occasionally needs help, her 80-year-old dad is there for her. "It's been a difficult year for everyone," she said.

It's a long road ahead, but Angie's determination to reach her goals remains strong.

SI of Milwaukee

Ava Tryon Earns Virginia Wagner Honors

The Dr. Virginia M. Wagner Educational Award is unique to the Soroptimist Midwestern Region. The awardee selected this year by the Milwaukee club is fittingly unique as well.

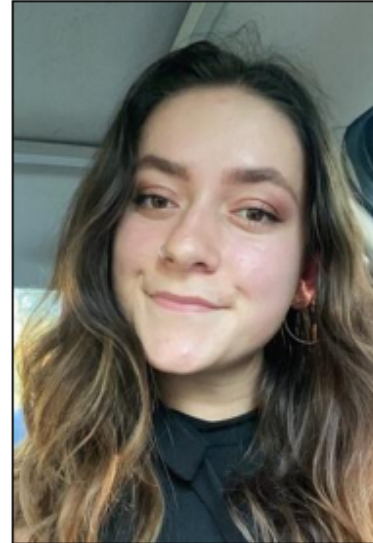
Ava Tryon's accomplishments earned her step-up awards from District I and the Region, and that is not surprising.

Ava, who lives in Oshkosh will be graduating in May from the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh in three years with a grade point average of 3.9. She has a strong work ethic, is a critical thinker and has a positive attitude and a personable nature, according to Jean Kwaterski, adviser to the Oshkosh Student Association.

Carrying a double major in Psychology and Political Science has meant a heavy academic load, but it has not limited her outside activities. She has held leadership positions in the Psychology Club, National Society of Leadership & Success and the Psi Chi International Honor Society and she's on the Dean's List.

Equally important to Ava is her advocacy for diverse and under-represented populations. She was the Women's Advocacy Senator in OSA, a liaison to the Women's Advocacy Council and is a member of the Diversity & Inclusion Committee on campus. According to Jean, she has a passion for learning more about the world and social justice.

She works with children with autism and has volunteered at a mental health outpatient clinic. These experiences helped her decide that her goal after graduate school will be to become a Licensed Professional Counselor and to focus on working with children and adolescent populations experiencing intellectual disabilities or mental health-related issues. She hopes eventually to earn a leadership position where she can supervise other aspiring counselors and possibly research intervention and play therapy strategies to help this population succeed.



SI of Iliana

Members of SI of Illiana meeting in person since the pandemic. Our gracious host, Mattie Curties, invited us to meet at the Robert Cove Lake. We had a wonderful time. This was a membership event, we had three guests and now we have a new member.



SI of Chicago

We had a joyful in person reunion at a members home recently. We enjoyed great food and conversation. After our business meeting, our members worked side by side putting together Hygiene kits for Days for Girls. We made 200 kits with another 200 to assemble.

When travel opens up a bit more these kits were be distributed to a third world region.

SI of Trenton

“Hope in a Handbag” Service Project

Soroptimist International of Trenton Area collected basic hygiene and comfort items to pass on to women that really need them - those in homeless situations, and those that have escaped domestic violence or human trafficking.

Janelle Rose of Willow Tree in Wyandotte was the event chair for this service project. Requested items included any gently used totes or handbags, feminine products, soap, facial and skin care items, haircare items, grooming items, dental care items, and other miscellaneous items like manicure kits, socks, footies, books or magazines, makeup, non-perishable snacks, make-up, and Chapstick.

Several participating Downriver businesses were drop-off locations for the collected items. Helping the Soroptimists were All About Grace Boutique – Trenton, Bloom Salon & Aesthetics - Grosse Ile, Instinct Salon - Flat Rock, Motown Harley Davidson – Taylor, Sterling Hair Company – Taylor, and Willow Tree – Wyandotte.

The collected items were gathered, sorted, and organized into the totes and handbags at Provisions Wyandotte Event Center, which resulted in 266 assembled bags, with additional boxes and bags of bulk items. Two of the largest donations were bulk items, rather than bags. This year’s “Hope in a Handbag” project garnered at least three times as many items as last year’s 250 bags.

Distribution and delivery of the sorted handbags and totes were made in time for Mother’s Day to the following charities and locations: Covenant House Emergency Interim Housing, First Step, Christ Net, Stanford House, St. Cyprian Parish Pantry, Salvation Army, Wayne Wright Community Pantry, Gabriel Richard High School, Vista Maria, and Wyandotte Public Schools.

The Trenton Soroptimist organization meets on the fourth Tuesdays of the month. All women are welcome to attend. You may contribute to the foundations that the Soroptimists support on smile.amazon.com and [krogercommunityrewards.com](https://www.krogercommunityrewards.com). If you are interested in learning more about the Trenton Area Soroptimists and our other activities, check out our page on Facebook@Soroptimist Trenton, MI or sioftrentonarea@gmail.com.



SI of Trenton

Trenton Area Soroptimists' 2021 Awards, Installation, and Club Anniversary Ceremony

The Trenton Soroptimists had three great reasons to celebrate on June 8th at Wyandotte's Portofino Restaurant. Soroptimist International of Trenton Area marked its 70th charter anniversary as a service organization. More than forty women comprise the club that involves the downriver communities of Trenton, Grosse Ile, Gibraltar, Riverview, Brownstown, and Woodhaven. The women of SI of Trenton Area have previously raised almost \$200,000 in scholarship awards, to promote human trafficking awareness and prevention, domestic violence shelters, women's health issues, and other service projects. This local volunteer group offers service by way of fundraising and donations, public awareness and educational programs, and hands-on assistance. The Trenton Area Soroptimists give their time and talents to local food pantries, Vista Maria, First Step, Stanford House, Covenant House, Christ Net, Salvation Army, Hope Against Trafficking, Transition123, Oakwood Beaumont Southshore, and to area women's health institutions. Soroptimists are dedicated to improving the physical, mental, and emotional health and lives of all females. Their focus, as the name Soroptimist means "best for women," is on empowering and protecting women and girls. Below are just some of the fundraising and public awareness events that we host.

Past-president Terry Morreau and Soroptimist International of Trenton Area celebrated the induction of thirteen new members: Marlene Benson, Jill Blackson, Claudia Duzzie, Jacqueline Davies, Diana Garza, Cindy Gouth, Leann Hedke, Kristin Mans, Bernadine Martin, Elaine Roman Needham, Michelle Peraino, Breanna Shopshire, and Lisa Stack.

Membership chairperson Linda Crisi presented Bobbie Navarre with her five-year membership pin. Pat Bryan and Shelley Amrozi both earned their ten-year pins, and Cris Howe obtained her 25-year anniversary pin.

President Abby Premoe announced Roni Drakos as the "Rookie of the Year" award for taking charge of the bottle drive fundraiser which gathered over 25,000 bottles and cans. Paetrah Collins was given the "Key Member" award for her willingness to help with many projects. Last year's winner, Chris Speedie presented our most important award, the Soroptimist of the Year, to Janelle Rose for taking charge of the very successful "Hope in a Handbag" community service endeavor. In turn, Chris was given a plaque to commemorate her as last year's recipient.

The annual scholarship awards commemoration was postponed from March due to the coronavirus, so the recipients were feted in conjunction with the installation ceremony.

The Soroptimist International Organization has as an international theme, "DREAMS," which carries over into many programs and events that the Trenton Area Soroptimists sponsor. One of them is the "**Live Your Dream Award**," which recognizes women who are head of households working toward a certification, apprenticeship, trade school, associate's, bachelor's, master's, or doctorate degree. This year, the Trenton Area's "Live Your Dream Award" is given to Brownstown's **Crystal Gorecki**. Crystal is a single mother of four children, ages one through fourteen. She worked at Angels R Us since she was eighteen, but Covid 19 caused the home health care business to close. She is attending Dorsey School in Woodhaven pursuing a professional training certificate in medical coding. She chose this area of study because she wanted to stay in a career associated with the medical field.

Crystal's story exemplifies the resilience and tenacity that Soroptimists promote to empower women and girls. Crystal received her high school diploma in 2019 from Asher Alternative Education. She refused to settle for GED, even though she was told it would take her three years to graduate. Despite many personal challenges during that time, Crystal wanted her children to look up to her, and she graduated with honors before her three-year goal. She spoke of her hardships and challenges at the graduation ceremony, just three days after giving birth by C-section. Her message to all: "Maybe it can inspire other students that have the same challenges I had been enduring. Hopefully, it gives anyone hope they can do it if they try and never let anything or anyone hold you back from your dreams."

Lauren Carney of Macomb is the awardee of the Soroptimist of the Trenton Area **Virginia Wagner Award** for 2021. This award is judged by the goals and accomplishments of a woman who is pursuing a bachelor's, master's, or doctorate degree. Lauren has a bachelor's degree in elementary education with an emphasis in English Language Arts. She is pursuing a master's degree in Clinical Mental Health/School Counseling at Spring Arbor University, hoping to graduate in April 2022, while maintaining a 3.89 GPA.

SI of Trenton

Lauren is finishing this stressful year as a third-year teacher of first graders in the Leslie Public School System, where she also serves on the School Improvement Committee. As she began teaching, she soon found her students were dealing with poverty, divorced homes, incarcerated parents, and other forms of trauma. This experience led her to her choice of a counseling career, so she can help her students cope with their troublesome and unstable home lives, while also providing a meaningful educational experience to them. She has also placed 1st, 2nd, and 3rd in the Community Light Pole Fundraisers, where she and her students make decorations. The children and their families help decorate a light pole in Leslie each October, encouraging giving back to the community.

SI of Trenton Area lost long-time member, Barb Rigg, last year. Because her family knew of her commitment to its mission and goals, her husband, Carl, donated money to the club to use for purposes deemed important. In keeping with the commitment to promote the education of women because it empowers them to be self-sufficient and successful, the first Barbara Rigg Memorial Award goes to Jennifer Dionne. Barb's husband Carl and her children were honored guests.

Mrs. Dionne, a Brownstown resident, is currently finishing a bachelor's in Nursing Science from Ohio University (currently all online with a 3.599 GPA) with hopes to graduate in May 2024 with a master's degree as a nurse practitioner. She is currently employed as an ICU RN at Taylor Beaumont and has been a nurse for sixteen years. She is helping to pay part of her daughter's college expenses at Wayne State besides her own.

Despite some hardships, she enrolled in nursing school, and obtained her associates degree in nursing. Jennifer exemplifies the goal setting, identifying obstacles to education, overcoming them, and identifying resources to help reach goals that Soroptimists promote in delivering the "Dream It, Be It" curriculum, which the Trenton Area Soroptimists recently held for homeless girls and survivors of human trafficking at Alternative for Girls in Detroit.

The **Soroptimist Prime** award is exclusive to SI of Trenton Area. High school girls residing in Brownstown, Gibraltar, Grosse Ile, Riverview, Trenton, or Woodhaven are eligible to apply. The Soroptimist of Trenton Area High School Girls' Award honors young women who make the community and world a better place through volunteer efforts.

The 2020-2021 Soroptimist Prime award winner is Trenton High School junior, **Kara Howey**. After learning from her volleyball coach that thirty percent of homeless people are women, her team organized over 200 hygiene kits for women all over the world for the "Clean Love Project." Their mission is to help less fortunate women and girls who live in poverty, homelessness, or are survivors of domestic violence to feel clean, empowered, and loved.

Kara founded a club called "Students 4 Freedom" during her freshman year with the goal of educating fellow students about the liberties we hold dear in our own country. The club distributed food for veterans and the less fortunate as a community service project.

During Kara's sophomore year, her group collected over 300 toiletry and hygiene items from local businesses, friends, and neighbors for the "Clean Love Project" to distribute to Detroit shelters.

The Trenton Soroptimist organization meets on the fourth Tuesdays of the month. All women are welcome to attend. You may contribute to the foundations that the Soroptimists support on smile.amazon.com and [krogercommunityrewards.com](https://www.krogercommunityrewards.com). If you are interested in learning more about the Trenton Area Soroptimists and our other activities, check out our page on Facebook@Soroptimist Trenton, MI or sioftrentonarea@gmail.com.

SI of Trenton



New Members



Award Winners



“Rookie of the Year” & “Key Member”



Soroptimist of the Year



Members being pinned

SI of Dayton

Abolition Ohio selects Soroptimist International - Dayton as the affiliate 'Partner of the Month'

To stir society's conscience to action against all forms of trafficking and slavery.

Abolition Ohio works in partnership with concerned community members and organizations in the Miami Valley and throughout the state of Ohio and national level to abolish all forms of human trafficking, protect victims and survivors, and help prosecute the criminals responsible through awareness-raising, advocacy, education, and research.

During the Abolition Ohio June monthly coalition meeting, SI Dayton president Teresa Huntley provided a passionate overview of the mission and programs of our Soroptimist International organization. During the monthly AO meetings, SI Dayton is well represented; SI members Susan Gruenberg and Judith Wehn work with our Missing Children Poster distribution and provide updates of the effectiveness of the poster program with updates of youth being found. Sheila Crane is chair of Abolition Ohio Speakers Bureau and joined Soroptimist International - Dayton in 2017 after presenting on Human Trafficking during the SI Dayton Education Awards Brunch. A Human Trafficking sticker program was implemented in Ohio, SID past president Susan Sparks coordinates the program distribution of approximately 5,000 stickers every six months mostly to Ohio's highway rest areas. During a recent Abolition Ohio meeting it was noted the increase of Ohio calls to the 888-3737-888 national hotline number.

Abolition Ohio was founded in March 2010 and we held our first public meeting in March 2011. We work in partnership with concerned community members and partner organizations in the Miami Valley and across the state and the country in a holistic approach aimed at preventing human trafficking, protecting victims and survivors, and helping to prosecute the criminals responsible. Abolition Ohio leads the Miami Valley's anti-human trafficking coalition with over 30 member organizations and 200 individual members from across Southwest Ohio. We are a registered, unincorporated nonprofit organization in the state of Ohio and a project of the University of Dayton Human Rights Center. The University of Dayton is our parent 501c3.

SI of Dayton



Sheila Crane

Soroptimist International - Dayton, Secretary

Abolition Ohio Speakers Bureau, Chair

District IV Roundtable

District IV Roundtable

On June 26, members from five clubs, in District IV, gathered in Belleville, Ohio; to socialize, strategize, and visualize. Attendees took a test to determine their leadership style according to The Leadership Wheel. They gathered in groups to exercise their brainstorming muscles in “Beyond the Box”. And exchanged ideas to find more efficient and productive ideas for fundraising, membership, and public awareness.



Soroptimist International Midwestern Region Board

Governor *Darcy Merritt*

SI Monroe County

Governor-Elect *Chris Fowler Shearer*

SI Cleveland

Region Secretary *Shelia Zingler-Gilbert*

SI Fond du Lac

Region Treasurer *Audrey Jarvey*

SI Fond du Lac

District I Director *Susan Frankel*

SI Fond du Lac

District I Secretary *Connie Gindt*

SI Fond du Lac

District II Director *Ruth Waggoner*

SI Kenton-Hardin County

District II Secretary *Laura Ferguson*

SI Kenton-Hardin County

District III Director *Kellie Klingel*

SI Flat Rock Area

District III Secretary *Patricia Cavell*

SI Monroe County

District IV Director *Abby Bouton*

SI Columbus & Franklin County

District IV Secretary *Mary Lorenzo*

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Soroptimist International Midwestern Region 2020 / 2022 Board



Front Row L to R: Region Treasurer Audrey Jarvey; Region Governor Darcy Merritt; Region Governor-Elect Christine Fowler Shearer; D4 Secretary Mary Lorenzo
Back Row L to R: D2 Secretary Laura Ferguson; D2 Director Ruth Waggoner; D3 Secretary Patricia Cavell; D3 Director Kellie Klingel; D1 Secretary Connie Gindt; D4 Director Abby Bouton; D1 Director Susan Frankel;
Not pictured: Region Secretary Sheila Zingler-Gilbert .

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Soroptimist Websites

Soroptimist International Midwest Region - (simwr.org)

Soroptimist International of the Americas (soroptimist.org)

Soroptimist International (soroptimistinternational.org)

Soroptimist Summary (soroptimistsummary.org)

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