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**6<sup>th</sup> Annual Junior League of Grand Rapids Gala  
Honors Diana Sieger**

**WHEN:** May 5th, 2022

**TIME:** 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. EST

**WHERE:** The Goei Center

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**Grand Rapids, Michigan – January 18, 2022**

Celebrating her longtime passion and leadership in the Grand Rapids community, the Junior League of Grand Rapids will honor Diana Sieger at their annual Gala on May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2022. The Gala will benefit the League's programming, including women's leadership development and improving children's physical health in the Grand Rapids area.

Diana is a dedicated, passionate, and effective leader within the community. Her impact is felt at the city, county, state, and national level. In a career spanning more than 48 years, Diana has been honored for her breadth of leadership and depth of expertise in the Grand Rapids community and beyond. She has been named six times as one of the "50 Most Influential Women in West Michigan" by the Grand Rapids Business Journal, and was recently inducted into the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame through Michigan Women Forward.

"We're thrilled to honor Diana Sieger at our 2022 Junior League Gala," says Junior League President, Kim Crane. "Diana represents everything we seek to cultivate in the Junior League: servant leadership, passion for developing others, relentless pursuit of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging in everything she does. Diana will help us celebrate the Junior League's collective impact on the Grand Rapids community for nearly 100 years and our mission to connect women, cultivate leadership, and collaborate with the community for meaningful impact."

Celebrating its 97<sup>th</sup> year, the Junior League of Grand Rapids has worked to develop the potential of women through leadership development and volunteerism. Funds raised at

the Gala will support the Junior League of Grand Rapids' leadership training and signature programs aimed at improving children's physical health, including:

- **JL Delivers** is a partnership between the Junior League of Grand Rapids and the Wege Sojourner House, a domestic violence shelter operated by the YWCA of West Central Michigan in Grand Rapids. The families who reside at Sojourner House spend over 45 days on average in the safety of the no-cost shelter, where they find a restful place to live, prepared meals, and advocacy as they regroup, heal and move toward independence. However, according to the National Domestic Violence Hotline, it takes on average seven attempts to leave an abusive relationship permanently. As family's transition from the shelter and into independent housing in new and unfamiliar living situations, the stress of moving, enrolling children in new schools, budgeting, and navigating life can often become overwhelming.

The Junior League's "JL Delivers" program seeks to bridge the gap during the first month of this transition. Sojourner House's Program Manager identifies suitable families for the program. If those families elect to participate, they choose and receive free groceries delivered to their doorsteps by Junior League member volunteers for the first four weeks in their new homes. This program stretches families' existing food budgets and provides support as they progress in their journey.

The goal of JL Delivers is twofold: to provide families with higher food security as they move from the domestic violence shelter to independent housing, and to see a reduction in the rate of participants' recidivation to homelessness or abusive domestic situations.

- **Kids in the Kitchen** is a Junior League initiative to involve children and their parents in hands-on activities that focus on preparing nutritious foods and establishing healthy habits. The Junior League partners with local organizations to teach children and parents about nutrition and healthy lifestyles through interactive games, food preparation, and fun ways to exercise.
- **Wellness Adventure Yard projects** are an outreach effort by the Junior League to increase children's access to safe play spaces in areas of the city that need them most. Each state-of-the-art play space is specially designed to allow children to practice goal setting, build confidence and develop cooperation and teamwork. The Junior League worked with the Grand Rapids Parks and Recreation Department to install the League's third Wellness Adventure Yard over the past five years. The play space is at the corner of Division and Hall St. SE, one of the lowest-income census areas in the city. The League selected the location because of the large population of children and lack of safe play spaces in the immediate area.

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