



JUNIOR LEAGUE OF GRAND RAPIDS

INFORMATION ABOUT MEMBERSHIP

We're so glad you're considering joining the Junior League of Grand Rapids. We are a group of leaders and visionaries, activists and philanthropists, graduates and professionals, moms and singletons. From all generations and backgrounds, we are bound by two goals: to improve the state of children's physical health in Grand Rapids and develop the potential of women in our community. We look forward to working with you, learning from you and having fun! We created this guide to help you understand our history and mission and what our members get from and give to the League.

HISTORY

The Junior League of Grand Rapids is an outgrowth of the Butterfly Guild of Butterworth Hospital, started in 1903. They raised \$5,000 which was eventually turned over to Butterworth Hospital. In January 1925, the Guild was formally accepted by the A.J.L.A. and in 1926 our League was Incorporated. Since then, we have influenced the Grand Rapids community in a multitude of ways, including: the implementation of an education program at Blandford Nature Center, the creation of a docent program at John Ball Zoo, the organization of an arts festival for disabled children which turned into "Very Special Arts," and we started CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) in Kent County which advocates for abused and neglected children as they make their way through the family court system. JLGR is part of the Association of Junior Leagues International (AJLI), which has 150k+ members in 291 Leagues across 4 countries.

JLGR COMMUNITY FOCUS

The Junior League of Grand Rapids is dedicated to improving the state of children's physical health in our community. Currently, 1 out of 10 youth in Kent County are obese. Nearly \$3b in annual medical costs are attributed to obesity. This is a growing epidemic across the nation but can be reduced through healthy eating and exercise. Through our JL Wellness Adventure Yards (WAY) we are working to improve children's physical health by increasing access to safe, cooperative play for those children in situations or neighborhoods where it is needed most. Kids in the Kitchen healthy eating initiative partners with local organizations to increase education for children and their families on healthy choices including nutrition & exercise.

WHAT TO EXPECT AS NEW MEMBERS

As a New Member, you will be trained on League history, our mission, current projects, and fundraisers. By the end of the New Member year, each woman will have had the opportunity to



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interact with and learn about each of our committees (you will then select the one you want to join during your first “active year”), volunteer at events, and implement a service project.

NEW MEMBER MEMBERSHIP OBLIGATIONS*

1. Attend two new member trainings (Aug/ Sept and then winter)
2. Participate in the New Member Project (Spring)
3. Attend as many General Membership Meetings as possible (these occur monthly)
4. Volunteer at our annual fundraiser Beneath the Wreath (November) OR the Gala (spring)
5. Attend a minimum of FOUR other events (can be social events, fundraising events, training events, community impact events)
6. Attend a minimum of two monthly small group events

** We track attendance and recognize women who have met their obligations at the end of the year. You will not be penalized for missing an event credit.*

WHAT YOU'LL GET FROM YOUR JUNIOR LEAGUE EXPERIENCE

The Junior League of Grand Rapids is the premier women’s training organization in the city (and really, around the world). From public speaking to negotiation and conflict management, we offer a lot of different soft skills training that can be applicable in many scenarios. We use that training to serve our community, which should give you a sense of fulfillment and achievement. We find our members gain confidence, friendships, new perspectives and skills throughout their Junior League experience. Our President, Tessa Hessmiller, explains what she’s gotten out of her time with the Junior League: “While I joined to make friends, I soon realized that the Junior League is a total powerhouse for training women leaders. I can honestly say that the Junior League leadership training is more organized, more translatable, and more effective than any other training I have ever had, including Army training. And the Army is pretty organized! I am constantly blown away by the passion that our members have for leading other women in community action.”

ANNUAL DUES

Dues are \$208 annually. New Member dues are paid in the fall, but all active member dues are due in the Spring (April) and pay for events from July 1-June 30. \$148 of the dues payment is tax deductible.

Breakdown of dues: \$43 goes to AJLI (website maint., benefits, organization), \$105 goes to the JLGR (office space, admin, 5 BTW tickets, Michigan State Council of Junior League dues, social events), \$60 goes to arrangement fees (GMMs, training, food at meetings)