



JUNIOR LEAGUE OF  
**WILMINGTON, DE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION  
RECOGNIZES RETIRED STATE SEN. MARGARET ROSE HENRY**

WILMINGTON, Del., May 16, 2019 – An iconic First State lawmaker known for leading, inspiring and empowering Delawareans for more than 30 years has received the Association of Junior Leagues International's (AJLI's) highest individual award, a recognition accorded to only one of its more than 140,000 members each year.

Retired Delaware State Sen. Margaret Rose Henry, a member of the Junior League of Wilmington (JLW), was presented with the 2019 Mary Harriman Community Leadership Award during at the AJLI Annual Conference in Denver, Colo., earlier this month. The Harriman Award acknowledges a Junior League member whose service provides a contemporary link to Junior League founder Mary Harriman's sense of social responsibility and her ability to motivate others to share their talents through effective volunteer action. Since 1990, when the award was established, it has been given to Junior League members whose leadership exemplifies the Junior League mission, vision and values.

Henry, who grew up in Louisiana and Texas and was the first person in her family to earn a college degree, has been a paragon of public service in Delaware for nearly four decades. Known for her fearless determination, trailblazing spirit and community impact, Henry has worked in nonprofit administration with organizations such as Girls Inc., the YWCA and the United Way and served on the boards of organizations such as Interfaith Housing in Delaware and the Christiana Care Health System. She became the first African-American member of the JLW in 1981 and the first African-American woman to serve in the Delaware Senate in 1994.

As a legislator, she provided a voice for the most vulnerable and underserved populations. She championed a range of socially responsible legislation addressing issues – discrimination, education, housing, equitable pay, crime and law enforcement, physical and mental health, senior services and child protection – critical to families, children, women and seniors. In 2016, Henry sponsored passage of Erin’s Law after the JLW spearheaded a campaign to add Delaware to the states that had adopted the measure that requires schools to implement age-appropriate child sexual abuse prevention education.

In Denver, Henry addressed hundreds of Junior League leaders from the United States, Canada, Mexico and the United Kingdom. She encouraged them to be kind but fearless as leaders and shared a list of her top 10 qualities of a woman leader. **A video about Henry’s life, career and contributions to the community – featuring commentary by Delaware Gov. John Carney and current JLW President Angela Gustavsen, among others – was shown as part of the award presentation. The video may be viewed at <https://www.jlwilmington.org/mary-harriman-community-leadership-award/>.**

“Sen. Henry has long been an inspiration to Junior League of Wilmington members for her unwavering commitment to serving our community,” said Gustavsen, who attended the award luncheon with JLW President-Elect Kyle Evans Gay. “By nominating her for this award, we were able to share her story of passion and service with the 290 other Leagues of the AJLI.”

Founded in 1918, the Junior League of Wilmington Inc. is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) organization of women committed to promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women and improving communities through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. Its purpose is exclusively educational and charitable. **For further details, visit [www.jlwilmington.org](http://www.jlwilmington.org) or call 302-652-0544.**



