

# ANNUAL REPORT

2008- 2009

Life Skills and  
Mentoring For  
Children and Teens



**JUNIOR LEAGUE OF WILMINGTON**  
*Women building better communities®*

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## ***A letter from the President***

### **Dear Friends, Supporters, and Members of the Junior League of Wilmington,**

For over 90 years, the Junior League of Wilmington has embraced and advanced its mission of *promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women and improving communities through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers*. The dedication of our members to this purpose has helped us achieve so much in the 2008-2009 fiscal year. We are proud to report some of our accomplishments.

Led by the **Community Programs Council**, the League followed an accelerated timeline in launching its new focus area centered on Life Skills and Mentoring for Children and Teens. With renewed energy and spirit, our members custom-designed and implemented new programs for such organizations as the Ministry of Caring, Knollwood Community Center and the West End Neighborhood House (WENH). Using a seminar format, we offered practical training on such topics as personal finance, household care and safety, interpersonal skills and conflict resolution, safety on the internet, preparing healthy meals, and job-seeking skills for teens. A highlight of this year's new focus was the completion of an Adopt-A-House project for the West End Neighborhood House Life Lines program. Our members decorated and landscaped housing for teens recently emancipated from the Foster Care system and living independently for the first time. Over the next two years, the League has committed to funding and refurbishing four additional houses.

Our community work could not have happened without the wonderful generosity of our many donors, members and friends



who supported our **Ways and Means Council** efforts. Part fundraiser, part community-service, our 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Whale of a Sale and Preview Party raised nearly \$33,000, while providing high-quality, gently-used household and clothing items to struggling families seeking reprieve from an embattled economy. The Whale committee enjoyed broad print, radio and television coverage this year, and was especially glad to raffle off a donated car. In April, our 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Heart of the Home® Kitchen Tour and related activities raised \$35,000 through sponsorships, donations and ticket sales. We are so thankful to our gracious homeowners, their designers, our sponsors, and the local restaurants that provided tour-goers with ideas, resources and gourmet tastings. And despite a sluggish economy, our Annual Fund campaign exceeded its budget goal, raising nearly \$9,000 due to the steadfast support of our members and supporters. Looking to the future, we continue to evaluate our fundraising structure and revenue streams in order to ensure sufficient income and volunteer coverage to support our many League programs.

The **Membership Council** focused on leadership and volunteer development with its "Willingness to Lead and Serve" campaign, which included training, career



pathing and member advising. The Nominating committee adopted a new application and interview process to best fill our board and other key leadership positions. Thanks to the Recruiting and Provisional committees, we welcomed 23 talented new League members who jumped in and taught life skill seminars, organized a Resource Guide of New Castle County services, and provided backpacks and a Supply Closet for WENH teens. Continuing our commitment to developing the potential of women, the League also offered training on topics such as the power of voluntarism, women in leadership, networking and the new media, and decision-making in fundraising.

Throughout 2009, our League's 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year, the **Communications-Administration Council** led our members through a review of our rich history of service in the Wilmington community. Through *The Lantern* newsletter articles, decade reunions, and speakers, our members took a nostalgic walk through 90 years of accomplishments and memories. With an interest in preserving this history, the Council enlisted the help of a trained archivist to help catalog our archives, which will eventually be housed at the University of Delaware. Fittingly in our anniversary year, the fruition of our multi-year Cornerstone Capital Campaign was achieved with the completion and re-opening of our renovated 200+ year-old headquarters, the Lea-Derickson House. The success of our first-ever capital campaign and the renovation it funded was in large part due to the labor and inspiration of a committed group of sustainers. Thanks to their vision and the generosity of so many members, community supporters and donors we have a headquarters with functioning mechanical systems at which to meet and coordinate our operations.



I wish to extend a heartfelt "Thank you!" to all our members, community partners, supporters and friends for your dedication and belief in the Junior League of Wilmington and its mission. The League is blessed to be part of this incredible community and we look forward to all the great things we can accomplish together with your continued support.

Sincerely,

Catherine Lee Miller  
Junior League of Wilmington President  
2008-2009



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