



Soroptimist International Midwestern Region

**MAY
2019
Edition**

The Vision

2019 Date to Remember

- **July 1,**
Celebrating Success applications due to Vivian Walczesky

SI CONVENTION

- July 18-21, 2019
Kuala Lumpur

SIA CONVENTION

- July 22-25, 2020
Bellevue, WA

In This Issue

Articles from
SI of:

Canton/Stark County

Columbus

Franklin County

Greater Macomb

Grosse Pointe

Lucas County

Monroe

Mount Vernon &
Knox County

Trenton

Governor's Message



Greetings Midwesterners

I am just now catching my breath from Spring Conference, lots of follow up things to do, this being at the top of the list: reviewing your feedback. Most folks seemed happy with conference as a whole, which is great because we tried some new things. For me, the conference was dramatically different because I've never been to one as Governor. But at times, it was as familiar as coming home. In the interest of transparency, I'd like to address a couple of things now, while it's still fresh in my brain. There were a few comments about "too much free time", which I found really interesting as usually we receive the opposite view. We put quite a bit of thought into the agenda with the intent of being "free-range parents". That's why we scheduled a number of pillar reports on Friday night, which allowed us to get through the Saturday business sessions quicker, so that the workshops could run into overtime if needed – although I didn't expect things to move quite as quickly as they did and was about fifteen minutes off in my guesstimate. Hopefully you used that time to grab a cup of coffee and chat with each other. We didn't schedule structured activities after dinner on Saturday night so that you could have more time to interact and collaborate with each other without restriction. If you have thoughts on this, contact me and let me know what you're thinking because it's an important dialog to have.

Some folks noted that we recycle workshops and it's true. The reason that we recycle topics is be-

cause they are relevant to Soroptimist. Almost all of the suggestions were for recycled content. I have a pretty good grasp of Soroptimist and even I learn something new every time, even if the workshop is recycled, so I'd ask you to keep an open mind when attending. For example, we've had leadership workshops before, but Director Christine's presentation was completely different than anything that came before it.

Speaking of content, we had a comment or two about taking time for club sharing. We intentionally did not add time for club sharing. We have 31 clubs, and if each club took only five minutes, we're at two and a half hours of club sharing. Let's be real: ain't nobody got time for that. There are better venues for club sharing, such as our District Meetings at which clubs do engage in structured dialog. Ideally, clubs should be sharing information via newsletters, websites, and social media – those are the best avenues for disseminating information as the message reaches everyone, not just the folks attending a specific meeting or conference.

What I am saying here is that we must evolve and we are actively attempting to do so. Spring Conference 2019 was a step in that direction. For those present, did you notice how many younger members were there? We had a large group of Millennials, which was great to see! Whether we're young, old, new or seasoned, we are all Soroptimists because we believe in the mission. Change isn't always fun or easy and things may get a bit messy at times, but I know Midwesterners and we're not afraid to work and get our hands dirty. This does not mean that we're dumping our traditions, but we may make some new ones. I challenge you to empower each other as we move forward.

*Kris Armstrong
Midwestern Region Governor*

SI Midwestern Region Governors State of The Region Address

For those of you who couldn't attend or if you missed it, here's my State of The Region address. I hope that it resonates with you.

A year ago, I was installed as Governor and wrapped up my installation speech by saying this:

As we enter into the final years of our first century of service, we must lead. Challenge yourself to make a difference. Be intentional, be strong, be bold - be a Soroptimist.

Are we doing those things? For quite some time, I've stared at a blank screen, wondering what in the world I should say here today. What is the state of our region?

We are being intentional. Membership and Program are two areas in which we have focused. We have a goal to charter new clubs and we have, we've chartered two of them in the last six months. But our membership numbers are not great, and we haven't met our goal for total members, so we clearly need to remain focused in that area. We have a goal to achieve 100% club participation with Live Your Dream and we did it. But, our Dream It Be It participation numbers could be better and we'll continue to work toward more clubs adopting the program.

We are strong. Region finances are in excellent shape and we maintain a firm grip on our budget with tenacious Midwestern pragmatism. Midwestern Region members are engaged in philanthropy via the Laurel Society and our own Acorn Guild. We had a noticeable presence at the SIA Convention in Yokohama last summer and at CSW in New York last month.

We are bold. You've been asked to look at the manner in which you manage your clubs and I'm happy to report that most clubs have made changes and are working differently than they have in the past. It may have been that your club made a small change in the way in which you manage your meetings or it may have been a big change in the way in

which you determine where your money goes. Big or small, the region board has noticed. And I am particularly thrilled to see all of you buy into transformational concepts – not because it means that you're following our lead, but because YOU are leading change. Leadership IS fundamental. Do what works for your club. Keep making changes, keep evolving, keep putting in the work, keep "doing Soroptimist".

One of the things that defines Midwestern Region is that we question the status quo. We are politely persistent and possibly a tad bit stubborn. In the drive for SIA brand unity, we toed the company line by updating our materials and we maintain our mission focus. But let me be clear - it's our differences that make us strong. As we build our collective future, we're not getting rid of our region logo, we're not changing our strategic plan, and we're not dumping the Wagner award to concentrate solely on the Dream Programs.

So what about that future? Will all of the former governors raise their hands please. Thank you. Quite a few. Guess what – they were not always former governors. They were sitting there like you, waiting for the Governor to hush up already so the basket raffle could start. But what if I told you that there are half a dozen **Future** former governors here today? Look to your left. Look to your right. Do you see any candidates? Maybe it's you. I'd like to say that if you told me five years ago that I'd be up on this stage, I would have asked what you've been drinking this morning. But that's really not true. I'll bet I would sit out there and think to myself "yeah, I can do that" and I know that there are several of you thinking the same thing right now. I hope that all of you think that. Because, we are the future. We're the ones we've been waiting for.

So, let's be a Region that inspires. Let's be a Region that innovates. Let's be a Region that works hard and does awesome stuff. Let's be a Region that leads.

Keep being intentional, stand strong and stay bold. Get out there and be great, because we are.

Photo's of the 2019 Soroptimist International Midwestern Region Spring Conference



Photo's

Compliments of



Soroptimist Midwestern Region District III



Soroptimist International Of Lucas County

SI Lucas County had their LYD award dinner on March 19, 2019 and was held at the Yala Kol Restaurant, Toledo, OH at 6:00 pm.

One of the ladies is working for her associates in criminal justice, and the other two ladies are enrolled in nursing programs.

Once again we thank our sponsor *ThermaTru Doors* for their support in this SI signature program. Wonderful food, great conversation, and support from the awardees' families made this a special evening.



Pictured are: Robin Gutierrez (Criminal Justice), Kelly Simmons (Nursing), Angel Thornton (Nursing)

Soroptimist International Of Trenton

SOROPTIMIST PRIME

Girls Transforming The Lives Of Others

Soroptimist international of Trenton Area High School Girls' Award

Soroptimist is a service organization of women whose members volunteer to improve the lives of women and girls in local communities and throughout the world. Although we realize that volunteering is its own reward, we sponsor this award because we also know that it feels great to be recognized for your actions.

The Soroptimist international of Trenton Area High School girls' Award honors young women who make the community and world a better place through volunteer efforts such as: fighting drugs, violence,

and crime; cleaning up the environment; and working to end discrimination and poverty. Volunteer actions that benefit women and girls are particularly valued.

High School Girls residing in Brownstown, Gibraltar, Glose Ile, Riverview, Trenton, or Woodhaven are eligible to apply for the award.

The completed application, essay, and additional supporting materials must be received by November 15.

Contact Pat Bryan at: luv2walk2000@yahoo.com



Soroptimist International Of Columbus & Franklin County

On April 6, Soroptimist International of Columbus & Franklin County hosted 32 middle school girls for a 4 hour Dream It, Be It conference. They participated in two fun ice breaker activities that really helped calm nerves as we had all four middle schools participating in our event.

Anne Gregg facilitated the day and led the girls through meaningful discussions about identifying and understanding what values are. Throughout the discussion the girls participated in solo and group activities that they then shared with the larger group. They also spent some time making dream boards that they will be able to hang in their rooms.

We were fortunate to have eight local professional women donate their time and lead small group discussions about their career and the path to get to where they are. The girls had the opportunity to learn from a police officer, auto mechanic, teacher, chemist, children's book author, nurse, veterinarian, and a cosmetologist. The girls had sheets with blanks they were able to fill in as the career mentor was sharing that they can reference down the road should they decide they want to investigate one of the careers they learned about.



Front row: Ann Louise Sumner, Anne Gregg, Paula Dimmick

Back row: Kristi Urig, Vicky Hicks, Veronica Stemen, Wendi Stern, Barb Eberts, Deanna McCaffrey



Soroptimist International Of Monroe

Have you sent in your Celebrating Success form? Entries are due to me by JULY 1, 2019.

Please get on the SIA website (see link below) and find Celebrating Success. All the instructions and the entry form are there. So please check with your club chairs (Program, Fundraising, Membership, and Public Awareness) and find out if they have completed the CS form and those entries should be mailed to me and postmarked prior to

July 1, 2019.

Vivian Walczesky

Midwestern Region Celebrating Success Chair
2018-2020

<https://www.soroptimist.org/for-clubs-and-members/for-clubs/soroptimists-celebrating-success.html>



Soroptimist International Of Greater Macomb

Thursday, April 18 was SIGM'S Award Banquet which was held for the first time at Penne Lane Ristorante Italiano. (Penne Lane is not to be confused with Strawberry Fields Restaurant in New Baltimore, but I digress).



This year we increased the amount of our Virginia Wagner Award by \$500, and is now \$1500. Our recipient is Beatriz Elaine Lee, who attended our banquet with her parents and sister. Bea is a first generation American and is a nursing student at the Honors College at Oakland University. To help

with her university expenses, Bea works as a Resident Assistant. In her application Bea's Residence Director describes her as "a dedicated, strong, compassionate, and incredible student leader."



Our Ruby Award winner is Sandra Hardy, who attended with her husband. Sandy is the Team Leader for Macomb Days For Girls Team. Sandy's team recently completed over 100 complete DFG kits that are ready to be shipped. She had just returned from attending DFG's Great Lakes Regional Conference and is even more

passionate about her DFG after meeting and hearing the stories from the founder of Days For Girls about her work in the field. We think she can hardly wait to spend her \$1000 award to start on our next batch of kits!

Three SIGM members are part of Sandy's team, so we're very happy to see her apply and win this award. Raise your hand if you knew that in addition to the kits, the hygiene education, the anti-human trafficking education, that Days For Girls is also working to eliminate Female Genital Mutilation.

Our 2019 Live Your Dream winner (\$1500) is Erin Reed, the single mom of one daughter. Erin was planning on attending our banquet but at the last minute could not. We look forward to meeting her at a future business meeting. Erin is

finishing her Bachelor of Integrative Studies, also at Oakland University, in the field of Wellness and Health Promotion. Her goal is to work in a healthcare or government facility, with a plan to earn her Masters Degree in Public Health. Her long term aspiration is to "make an impact...by targeting school nutrition, physical education, and overall health and wellness for our youth, especially those in need."

In addition to the above awards this year we were able to make a \$1500 "Steps Toward Freedom donation" to Alabaster Gift. Alabaster Gift is non-profit, faith based, and based in Mt. Clemens. Its mission is assisting Human Trafficking survivors. Right now Alabaster Gift is a drop-in center where survivors can get a cup of coffee, a shower, bus ticket or cab fare, and/or a friendly face. Alabaster also offers training to law enforcement, counselors, and the medical community, and was nominated for the 2018 Liberator Award; they are a member (along with SIGM) of the newly formed Macomb County Anti-Trafficking Task Force (MCAT) under the umbrella of Macomb County Sheriff's Dept.

Last, but not least (speaking of MCAT), we also recognized our very own Susan Rhein for all her tireless efforts regarding Human Trafficking. Susan is now our go-to person re HT, and she is our representative at the MCAT meetings and planning. We awarded Susan with a Soroptimist necklace, and she updated us on the progress of MCAT.

To recap, this was the first time we have ever been able to provide \$5500 in Educational Awards and HT donations.

We are had ten members attend the MWR Conference in Ohio, almost 50% of our membership! And two of them were first time attendees.

Lastly, with May around the corner at the time of this writing, we are thinking about our next business meeting on Thurs. May 2. We are trying a new restaurant, hoping it may be our new permanent home. In addition, we are anticipate meeting at least two guests who have expressed interest in Soroptimist. So our fingers are crossed that by the time you read this, we may have two new members.

Soroptimist International Of Trenton

Midwestern Region Virginia Wagner Winner From District III



Erinma Elibe, Trenton resident and 2008 Carlson High School graduate, won the Virginia Wagner Education Award, which honors a woman who is attending college or university to earn a bachelor's, master's or doctoral degree. Erinma is completing her master's degree in Cancer Chemical Biology from the University of Michigan this April, with a current GPA of 3.918. She holds a bachelor's degree in biomedical sciences with a minor in psychology, and she plans to attend medical school to specialize in oncology and academic medicine focused on the brain, neuroanatomy, and the science behind cognition.

Because of both of her parents' were diagnosed with cancer, her greatest interest is cancer: its prevention, earlier detection, safer more effective treatments and increased access to those treatment.

Congratulations Erinma!!!

Soroptimist International Of Grosse Pointe

In honor of Mother's Day ...

Dear SIGP Sisters:

Soon we will celebrate Mothers' Day. I am not aware that this occasion is officially celebrated in Ghana where our young students at St. Anne Girls' Secondary School study and reside. But our six girls were asked to write on a topic of their choice from a selection of topics we offered. The writing that follows is from a first-year student, Mary Assumpta, who wrote about her mother. I offer you excerpts without corrections. Mary Assumpta is working on grammar, spelling and writing ability. At the end of the page her heart spills out how she really feels about her mother. Let's face it, moms are treasured the world over.

Enjoy.

Carol Hofer

My Mother

My mother is called Madam Joan Kpiimmagle. She is a Dagaati by tribe....She likes talking, and also helping the poor and the needy. She likes advising people and bringing people together. She is more or less a councillor but rather unfortunate that she never went to school . She also likes telling my siblings and I so that we get to know something about pass events And she also taught us about our culture and how we can relate well with other people especially the elderly ones.

She is the mother of four of which I am the first child. My mum is a hard working woman. She takes a lot of risks to keep her children safed all the time. She is also responsible for provisions of our needs, most especially basic needs of food, shelter and clothing. She always makes sure that she advices us whenever we are not on the right path. She's the best mother everyone will love because she a loving and caring mother. Thank You.

Mary Assumpta Kpiinmagle.

Education is the key to gender equality, which has yet to be achieved anywhere in the world.



[Equality in Law for Women and girls](#)

📅 12TH APRIL 2019 👤 SIHQ 📁 BLOG 📁 CSW63 💬 0 COMMENTS

A blog by Dr. Nina Smart EQUALITY IN LAW FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS BY 2030: A MULTISTAKEHOLDER STRATEGY FOR ACCELERATED ACTION - a high-level event addressing the legal needs of over 50 million women and girls "I was fortunate to attend this important side event at CSW63, led by Executive Director



[FGM in the US – a panel discussion at CSW63](#)

📅 22ND MARCH 2019 👤 SIHQ 📁 BLOG 📁 CSW63 💬 0 COMMENTS

A blog by Linda Witong Lead Image: From an FGM exhibition at United Nations, New York "I was privileged to attend an event on 21 March, 2019 which dealt with the issue of Female Genital Mutilation in the US and learned of the brave women, including our own Soroptimist Dr.

Soroptimist International of Grosse Pointe

63RD SESSION - UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Economic Security, Women and Work: Global Solutions for Equity

Sponsored by American Association of University Women
(AAUW)

Kimberly Churches, Chief Executive Officer of AAUW, began the panel discussion. AAUW is providing accountability through metrics, and is tracking data that affects change. Laws do not guarantee change. The Equal Pay Act of 1963 is stagnated. The gender gap still exists. Women earn only \$.80 to men's \$1.00. In the AAUW Gender Equity game plan, facts matter, and research is important. Currently, student debt is also higher for women. In 2019, parents were funding more boys' education over girls. The AAUW has a three pronged approach: policy (laws), employers (practices), and employees (train women in negotiation skills). Women negotiate less than men. Women need to create men allies. The current online salary negotiation program, Work Smart (www.salary.aauw.org) has four key components: know your value, know how to target salary and benefits, know your strategy, and practice, practice, practice. Women need to work on economic security for their families, which includes both boys and girls.

Estelle Kone, Ph.D., Vice President, Controllers Modeling, at Goldman Sachs had clear advice concerning gender equality. Girls should choose to take more mathematics courses in high school. Women should surround themselves with a good network. Women should make their goals known in their company.

Mabel Abraham, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Management, at Columbia University discussed the gender bias issues prevalent in all social classes. In her research she discovered that men have fewer barriers to entrepre-

neurship than women due to patriarchy. In the hiring process, evaluation systems are not effective. Quality is hard to access and there is much ambiguity in analytical skills. When a hiring manager is uncertain, usually a man is hired. There are double standards, and women who excel usually get evaluated as less. A woman has to be a superstar in order to get recognition for her success. Women need to overcome these obstacles by networking. They usually do not find a high power network, but choose peers and family. They need to develop the right contacts for business advice and funding. Women need resources. They need to create business relationships.

Carmen Sebro, MBA, Senior Associate Brand Manager for M & M, Mars Inc. spoke about her company's commitment to gender equity. Mars, Inc. is a world wide, private, family owned business, with 100,000 employees. Their company is involved in manufacturing, the supply chain, STEM, and marketing. Currently there are gender gaps, so Mars is taking a long-term approach to change this. They have partnered with the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in the Media. Their current plan is to attract, develop, advance and retain their employees. This includes the Launch—mentorship and opportunity. Next follows Mid-Career Marathon, which includes balancing caregiving responsibilities. Finally, Executive Transition is to provide more support for leadership. Mars Inc. goals for the future are focused on creating gender equity in their company. They want to add three women to their Board, changing their culture. They are offering and expect men to take paternity leave. They are creating women centered groups to help women. Finally, they believe it is important to show children there are gender equity issues that need to be solved for the benefit of both men and women.

Submitted by: Mary Ellen Burke, an AAUW & SIGP member.

Soroptimist International of Monroe

HUMAN TRAFFICKING INFORMATION

Important documentary to see entitled
At the Heart of Gold
 which will air on Friday night,
MAY 10, 2019, on HBO.

The film is produced and directed by Erin Lee Carr and features the sister survivors of the Larry Nassar case.

Also to watch is Frontline's
Predator on the Reservation

If anyone is interested in joining the Michigan Human Trafficking Task Force, dues are payable by May 31 of this year. Criminal justice organizations and retired CJ personnel are exempt from dues payment.

Agency membership is \$100.00, and single membership is \$60.00. Student membership is \$20.00. Checks should be made payable to MHTTF.

- In Plain Site
- Nefarious Merchant of Souls

- A Path Appears http://apathappears.org/film/#Watch_the_film
- Break the Chain (documentary about human trafficking in Michigan) <https://vimeo.com/158286287>
- CNN Series on Human Trafficking <https://www.cnn.com/specials/us/children-for-sale>
- Detroit area Medical Societies <http://youtu.be/pn6b-WERgsM>
- Kevin Bales How to combat Modern Day Slavery <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HUM2rCIUdel>
- Nefarious Trailer <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q-VC8AUE3Bc>
- Trafficked Orphans \$3.00 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rBKL43KbU2Y>

Soroptimist International Of Grosse Pointe

Join Us on Saturday, Sept 21, 2019



STOP TRAFFIC 5K
A Human Trafficking Awareness Walk/Run

Presented by Soroptimist International of Grosse Pointe
In partnership with St. Lucy's Church in Saint Clair Shores, Michigan.

Check-in begins at 7:30 a.m.



Start time is at 8:00 a.m.

Register at www.grossepointesoroptimist.org

Proceeds benefit anti-human trafficking organizations operating in Metro Detroit.
This is an untimed, family-friendly event.

Soroptimist International Of Canton/Stark County

Fundraiser - Save The Date

What: Fall Fundraiser: Soroptimists on Broadway

When: Fundraiser - September 21st. Soroptimist & S-Club Members arrive at 8 am. Pictures at 9 am. Doors open at 10 am.
Set-Up - September 20th. All are welcome. Time TBD

Where: La Pizzeria – We are moving rooms from the Crystal Room to the Piazza Room! We are so happy to have the opportunity to move rooms to expand our fundraiser! The space is BEAUTIFUL, spacious and has a ton of natural light.

Action #1: All applicable details of our committee meeting will be revealed during the next business meeting. For now, we are asking members to consider donating gift cards of amounts starting at \$10 or more to increase the attention of the "Gift Card" board. All gift card donations can be given directly to Rachel starting at the May business meeting through the September business meeting. Our goal is to get a total of 50-100 different gift cards through member donations and company donations. If you are getting donations of gift cards

Soroptimist International Of Mount Vernon & Knox County

Step into Spring Fashion Show and Luncheon
Co-Producers Kelly Brenneman, Donna Shaw, Joanne Starr

On April 6 at the Gallagher Center the latest spring fashion trends were modeled on the runway from:

Clothes-N-Counters

Lula Roe

Southern Accents Boutique

The Weather Vane

Tre Bri Boutique Wildflower

Ranch Resale

Lending his talents as Master of Ceremonies was Matt Starr.

Due to the work of Soroptimist Fashion Show Committee and members, Corporate Sponsors, Vendors, Advertisers, Silent Auction Donors, Basket Raffle Donors, Models and Guests this was another successful Fashion Show. Over \$7,000.00 was raised to support cash scholarships for Live Your Dream and the Virginia M. Wagner Award, New Directions, Gracehaven, Dream It, Be It, The Winter Sanctuary and many other area charities.



Soroptimist International Of Monroe



Daily Pick 3 - We will be selling tickets through May 24th. Drawings will start June 1 and will run until June 30 with 75 chances to win \$25-250. This raffle follows the State of Michigan Daily Pick 3 evening drawing. If the ticket number comes up Monday – Friday, ticket holder wins \$100. If the ticket number comes up on Saturday, the ticket holder wins \$250. This raffle also goes one number up and down. Monday through Saturday for \$25. There are 3 chances to win daily. We will notify the seller daily if a ticket they sold wins and they will be able to notify the winner. We will also post daily on our Facebook page. Just a reminder, these tickets are a great gift idea for Mother’s Day, Graduations, Bridal and Baby Showers.

Please contact Tammi Van Aiken for tickets at tammi@paulsqualitycollision.com

Soroptimist International Midwestern Region Board

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THE WEB!

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Soroptimist International Midwestern Region 2018 / 2020 Board



Back row: Lata Shastri , Christine Shearer, Mary Pilon, Audrey Jarvey, Susan Frankel, Barb Flory, Jenny Prater, Abby Bouton
**Front Row: Darcy Merritt , Kris Armstrong ,
Connie Gindt , Missie Austin**

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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)

Soroptimist International Midwestern Region Social Media connections

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SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL OF THE AMERICAS
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