Soroptimist International of Grosse Pointe



The Pointer

Presidents' Message: April is National Poetry Month

Poetry evokes feelings, emotions and ideas through language, rhythm and sound. We all react to poetry and find meanings unique to ourselves. At our March Awards Ceremony Cameron Cherry, an honor student at George Washington Carver Academy in Highland Park and a participant of My Sister's Keeper, recited Amanda Gorman's poem, *Day of the Girl: The Power of Firsts.* Listening to her powerful presentation, we were reminded why our work with young women is so important. A girl who is educated can dream and will truly believe that she can achieve her dreams. She will believe in herself.

Day of the Girl: The Power of Firsts

by Amanda Gorman, first person to be named National Youth Poet Laureate

Power unfurls in a girl at school like the first pages of a book unwritten, She's a story waiting to ignite. An educated girl is like the question the first rain tosses at the earth after the drought — Are you ready to start again? A girl who dreams to be the first in her line to go to school is the most vivid of things like the one red spark that stands up to the sky In a chorus of wet logs. A girl who graduates secondary school is like the first wave to hug the shore After a hurricane, Whispering the coming of better things. These we know as truths Not wonders. The miracle isn't just in a girl being the first; It is in her seeing that which is nonexistent; It is her seeing the blank space of an untouched sky and sculpting her own dreams into the emptiness. A girl who is the first is a vision in and of herself. These girls don't want to be unbelievable they want to be believed in,

Presidents' Message continued on next page

Presidents' Message (continued from p. 1)

- <u>Elly from Tanzania</u>: "What we do for ourselves dies with us, but what we do for others remains forever."
 The first bud of spring sings the other seeds into joining her uprising.
- <u>Angel in India</u>: "I won't stop learning, because I carry my book bag with me everywhere I go."
 The sky carries tears. But also the sun. And that's what makes it blinding.
- <u>Deepa in Nepal</u> says: "I am a girl, and I am better than you think, sturdier than I look, smarter than you know, and braver than I saw"

After all You don't know how strong the willow tree is until You see her arms dance in the face of the storm. We remember this and more so that we might imagine a day for the girl without such firsts, Where the wind opens the floodgate for the river of women behind her. We are here not to be the first but to refuse to be the last.

All of our award winners have kept their belief in themselves strong and look at what they have been able to achieve. They have opened the floodgates to success with hope and promise for themselves and others.

Briana Cruga not only won our SIGP Virginia Wagner Award, but also the District III and Midwestern Region Virginia Wagner Award (see page 4). Like the willow tree, she has danced in the face of her storm. We are so proud of our winners and we know they will not be the last.

- Ellen Chapin and Marya Rosenthal, Co-Presidents

March 2021 SIGP Awards Ceremony

On Wednesday, March 10, 2021, Soroptimist International of Grosse Pointe (SIGP) held its Annual Awards Ceremony virtually on Zoom. More than 50 people joined the online event, which included 28 SIGP members, 5 awardees and their families, award judges and other guests including Midwestern Region Governor-elect Christine Shearer, and District III Director, Kellie Klingel.

SIGP co-presidents, Marya Malkovich and Ellen Chapin hosted the Zoom call. Each awardee received a gift bag that included an award check, yellow rose, restaurant gift card, award certificate and a fun and clever "survival kit" (see p. 10).

The Live Your Dream (LYD) award is the signature award of Soroptimist International of the Americas. It honors women who are going to school to improve employment opportunities, are the head of household, enrolled in a training or educational program and have financial need.

The first-place winner, Ariel Jewell, \$3000

The second-place winner, Tonesia Loyd Nesbitt, \$2000.

The third-place award winner, Jeritha Brown, \$1,000.

SIGP awarded the Virginia Wagner Educational Award of \$3,000 to Briana Cruga. The Virginia Wagner award is a Midwest region award given by each club in the region to a woman who is enrolled in a university degree program (Bachelor, Master or Doctorate), who has a financial need and serves as a volunteer in the community. Our winner was also chosen as the Midwest Region Virginia Wagner award winner. She will be receiving an additional award of \$2,500.

The Soroptimist Ruby Award is given to women who have made a positive difference in the lives of other women and girls. Tanesha Windom, founder of My Sister's Keeper, was awarded a \$500 donation to be used toward mentoring and advocating for young women aged 7-24.

This year the Continuing Education Award in the amount of \$500 was given to previous LYD award winner Lavina Hutchinson. This award is given to provide additional support and mentorship to previous LYD awardees.

Each awardee was introduced by an award chairwoman and then given an opportunity to speak. All the awardees expressed their gratitude for the monetary award and explained how the money would help them to continue in school. After hearing the struggles these women endure, SIGP members know their fundraising efforts will have a profound affect on these women's lives.

- Roseanne Horne & Aleksa Andjelkovich, Awards Ceremony Chairwomen

Special thanks to our award judges for their time and effort:

Virginia Wagner Award: Kristin Fellows, Darcie Debasio and Paula Gianoplos Ruby Award: Maureen Anthony, Carolyn Barth, Karrie Blankenship, Ellen Chapin and Marya Rosenthal Live Your Dream: Mary Alvin, Jenelle Lefief, and Mary Jo Magee

Kudos to our Awards Committee Members who did all this via Zoom:

Aleksa Andjelkovic, Maddy Colavito, Carol Hofer, Roseanne Horne, Nancy Kelley, Diana Langlois, Bette Lepouttre, Liz Lucas, and Anne Schwartz, plus the Ruby Award judges listed above.

SIGP's Virginia Wagner Educational Awardee, BRIANA CRUGA, named District III winner AND Midwestern Region winner!

Soroptimist International of Grosse Pointe received the most exciting news: Our Virginia Wagner Educational Award recipient, Briana Cruga, was named the District III VWEA winner and then went on to win the Midwestern Region award as well.

CONGRATULATIONS BRIANA!!!

Briana is currently enrolled at the University of Michigan-Dearborn where she is earning a Bachelor of Science degree in Biological Sciences. Upon graduation she intends to pursue her interest in public health and ultimately obtain a medical degree. Her goal as a physician is to use integrative and preventive medicine techniques to help mobilize communities and resources to deliver healthcare to vulnerable populations. As a self-described "STEMinist," she is an ardent proponent of women having careers in STEM or traditionally maledominated fields.

What is so amazing about Briana is her drive to gain experience to be the best physician she can be. She helps to pay for her tuition and contribute to her family's expenses by working as a medical technician/phlebotomist and as a supplemental instructor providing interactive and collaborative review sessions for fellow students.



Briana Cruga

Her volunteer activities have included: 1) student researcher in faculty-sponsored biochemistry and psychology labs; 2) Detroit Regional Dollars for Students alumnus; 3) President of the One University organization in Dearborn; 4) coordinator for Biology Club and Mindful Medicine events on campus and 5) teaching Bible lessons for young children in her church.

SIGP Business Meeting Wednesday, April 14, 6:30 pm. via Zoom

The meeting will be kicked off with a presentation facilitated by SIGP Board member Diana Langlois. Carol Classen, of Positive Images, will speak about a new grant initiative titled *Prevention*. Carol will explain the new program and talk about the young women it benefits. Look for your emailed Zoom link the day of the meeting.

Announcing SIGP's Live Your Dream Winners!





Ariel Jewell

First Place Winner Ariel Jewell

Ariel Jewell is an unwed mother of three children: 5-year-old Nyla 4-year-old Nikolas and 1-year-old Nayah. She is going back to school to get her Bachelor of Science in Nursing. Returning this time has been a particularly difficult struggle. While battling with inadequate housing and childcare, she lost her job and some class credits.

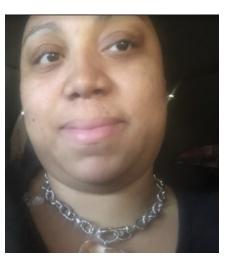
This led her to seek out different organizations to get assistance, including the Department of Human Services, Gianna House, Pregnancy Aid, and more. The different organizations and donors have been able to help guide her toward finding resources.

Ariel says, "With Soroptimist GP blessing me with this win, this will put me and my family back on track. I just want to say thank you and how appreciative I am for all that Soroptimist has done to bless my family. Thank you again!"

Second Place Winner Tonesia Loyd Nesbitt

Toneisa has a passion about God, children, helping others, and making a difference. She is a single mother whose child was born with multiple, special needs. Toneisa says, "It is a miracle and a testimony that my child is here today. The doctors did not believe my child would make it to see another day, but did. Having my child opened my eyes to a lot of things, and taught the true meaning of faith, sacrifice, unconditional love, and the will to fight and push for a better life. A better life for myself and above all, my family."

Had it not been for her child's numerous surgeries, the frequent visits to the doctors, hospital stays, and challenges faced on a regular basis, Toneisa would not understand nor have the faith or courage to continue to pursue her dream of becoming a nurse, author, and motivational speaker. By accomplishing these goals, she says, "I will be able to help make a greater impact on the lives of other people. That is what receiving the Soroptimist Live Your Dream Award means to me. It is a step toward all my future endeavors that I want to share with my child and the children that I care for on a regular basis."

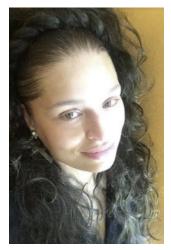


Tonesia Loyd Nesbitt

(More Award Winners continued on next page)

Next SIGP Board Meeting Wednesday, April 7, 2021, 6:30 p.m., via Zoom

Award winners (continued from p. 5)



Jeritha Brown

Third Place Live Your Dream Winner Jeritha Brown

Jeritha Brown is the mother of five children, a kidney transplant survivor who is a fighter and mentor. She volunteers and speaks publicly to discuss kidney disease and to encourage donors.

Jeritha is extremely appreciative to SIGP for her LYD Award.

She recently graduated with honors from the Dorsey School with a Med-Tech Professional Certification. Her dream is to continue her education and work sideby-side with the people who saved her life.

You can read her story at: https://www.nkfm.org/about-us/stories/jeritha-brown.



Ruby Award Winner Tanesha Windom

Tanehsa S. Windom is no stranger to life's challenges. She formed My Sister's Keeper, a youth mentoring organization based in Highland Park, Michigan. This ambitious project grew in response to her own tumultuous adolescence. She turned her pain to purpose by reaching the growing number of hurting, underprivileged, under-valued, and under-served young ladies who could benefit from her love, experience, guidance, and resources.

She has worked tirelessly, without a salary, and often uses her own finances to safeguard the trajectory of today's youth and to change their narratives.

Ms. Tanesha, as she is affectionately called, is a professional counselor and member of the National Counseling Association. She earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration from Rochester and a Master of Arts degree in Community Mental Health Counseling from the University of Detroit Mercy.

Tanesha is the mother of two young-adult sons and a native of Highland Park. She has received accolades for her work, particularly the UAW-Ford Community Award. Her goal, which she is well on her way to achieving, is to mentor one million youth.



Tanesha Windom

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ellen Chapin and Marya Malkovich Rosenthal *Co-Presidents*

> Karrie Blankenship President Elect

> > Laura McCourt Vice President Membership

Aleksa Andjelkovic Past President

Mary Ellen Burke Treasurer

Bette Lepouttre Assistant Treasurer Fundraising

Maureen Anthony Secretary

Diana Langlois Assistant Secretary Public Awareness

Carolyn Barth Director Grant Coordinator

Madeline Colavito Director

> Nancy Solak Director

SIGP Friday Zoom Cocktail Hour

With warmer weather upon us, the Zoom Cocktail Hour will be suspended until further notice.

SIGP continues to collect bottles and cans!

Please deliver returnables to either 1247 Elford in Grosse Pointe Woods, or 458 Cloverly (first block off Mack where Jagged Fork is located) in Grosse Pointe Farms. If someone wants them picked up, contact Roseanne Horne at (313) 706-1801.

A reminder so you can budget

SIGP Dues of \$125 for FY 2021-22 are due June 9, 2021. Payments will be accepted starting May 12, 2021.

BIG SHOUT OUT TO ALL OUR SIGP PEEPS!



It takes a village of peeps (modern lingo for "people") to raise enough money to give out thousands of dollars for educational awards to aspiring young women. To each and every one of you peeps out there who helped, whether you raised a dollar or a thousand, thank you! P.S. Don't forget your peeps!

Four Updates from SIGP's Human-Trafficking Awareness Committee

Next Human Trafficking Committee meeting: Tuesday, April 13, 6:00 p.m. on Zoom

- The Grosse Pointe & Greater Macomb clubs are partnering this year on two human-trafficking awareness events. In the month of January, weekly emails were sent of video interviews from knowledgeable experts sharing their knowledge and insight of the most current information about human trafficking. Each club posted these recorded interviews on their website and distributed them to family, friends, and members.
- 2. Both clubs have agreed to fund a short documentary video that curates the most salient points from these interviews. This project is being put together by Bev Todd, of the Greater Macomb club, Laurie Jost and myself, Karrie Blankenship. We hope to have this documentary completed and ready to be shown in early fall or sooner.
- If you have not had a chance to see all the videos, please visit our website at https://www.grossepointesoroptimist.net/ and click on the page titled

"Human Trafficking, What? Here? MI!"

4. This year's 5K Race is going to be virtual and you will have the whole month of September to complete your 3.10686 miles. Susan Rhein, of the Greater Macomb club and SIGP member Roseanne Horne are collaborating on the flyer and are hoping to have it ready for distribution before the end of April. While there are many facets to putting on an in-person event, there are just as many details for a virtual event. The committee is working diligently to complete all the details for our first virtual 5K event.

REMEMBER: No Soroptimist in-person meetings until Soroptimist International of the Americas gives the okay



LET'S CONTINUE OUR 100S CELEBRATION BY HONORING ONE OF OUR OWN MEMBERS WHO WILL BE 100 THIS YEAR.

DOLORES GOODGER WILL BE **100** YEARS OLD ON APRIL 11TH. SHE HAS BEEN A MEMBER OF SIGP FOR 46 YEARS. DOLORES IS NOW RESIDING IN FLORIDA, BUT SHE HAS KEPT HER MEMBERSHIP, READS OUR NEWSLETTER, AND CONTRIBUTES TO OUR FUNDRAISERS.

PLEASE SEND HER A BIRTHDAY CARD OF CONGRATULATIONS ON REACHING THIS MILESTONE. PASS THE WORD TO OTHERS SO THAT SHE WILL RECEIVE **100** CARDS!

DOLORES GOODGER 900 WEST LAKE RD APT F186 PALM HARBOR, FL 34684



Happy April Birthday to ...

Katherine Baetz, April 1 Cara Crawford, April 6 Donna Fitzgerald, April 11 Dolores Goodger, April 11 Laura McCourt, April 27

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Below is a list of the items put in the "Survival Bag" that was given to each awardee. In the center is a list of lighthearted reasons for each item. Thank you Awards Committee for being so thoughtful, not to mention clever!

SIGP SURVIVAL BAG FOR EDUCATION AWARD RECIPIENTS

Eraser: To remind you that everyone makes mistakes, but they can be Jewel: Because you are as valuable as a precious stone Crayon: To color you day bright and cheerful Band-Aid: For when things get a little rough Snicker Bar: For the days when nothing is funny Stick of Gum: To remind you to stick with it Tootsie Roll: Try not to bite off more than you can chew Smarties: To help you on the days you don't feel so smart Chocolate Kiss: Remember, you are loved.

CRAYONS

Lifesaver: To remind you of the many times others needed your help and you theirs Soothing Bath Item: To "take you away" because you deserve a quiet break Starburst: To give you a burst of energy on days that you have non Mint: To acknowledge that you are worth millions

Mounds Bar: For the mounds of confidence we have in you

Paper Clip: For you to hold it all together Candle: For you to share your light!

Nuts: To acknowledge that things may get a little nutty Rubber Band: To remind you to be flexible

A Gift Bag: To keep it all together!

Remember...YOU ARE SPECIAL!!!

OROPTIMIST

Best for Womer

SIGP member Peggy Hart finds a mother lode of masks





In keeping with our year of "hundreds," SIGP member Peggy Hart took up the challenge of donating 100 masks with the help of a group of local volunteers. She outdid her goal in a big way.

Through a friend, Peggy was the recipient of several masks made by local resident Annmarie Schaden. When the two women met, Peggy discovered that Annmarie, a retired nurse, had started making masks when her husband, a police officer in Detroit, let her know there was a shortage of PPE among law enforcement.

Annemarie fired up her sewing machine, and created masks for a number of police departments. Word got around, and soon she had several local women volunteering to assist in the project.

After chatting with Peggy and learning about the goals of our Soroptimist Club, Annemarie graciously donated 270 masks to our Club, asking Peggy to find a place where they could be used. The Motor City Mitten Mission was thrilled to accept the donation from us. They told Peggy that the masks will be put to good use in their outreach mission.

– Laura McCourt, Membership Chairwoman

Top: Hundreds of masks. Bottom: SIGP member Peggy Hart.

Save the Date

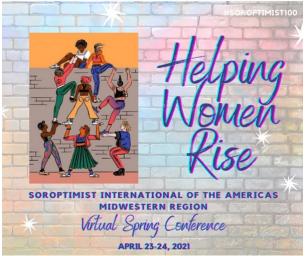
Join us for SIA's 47th Biennial Convention in Seoul, South Korea!



2021 MIDWESTERN REGION VIRTUAL SPRING CONFERENCE April 23 & 24, 2021 (PLUS PRE-CONFERENCE EVENTS)

Preconference Midwestern Region Monthly EventsLeading up to spring conference the goal is to have two
events for members to attend each month; one socializing
event to give members a chance to connect with one another
and one informational event.03/23Be a Brand Warrior
04/0104/01Virtual Fundraising Workshop
04/1404/19Dream It Be It PanelFor preconference programs, scroll down
once you get to the following link:

https://mailchi.mp/f415487bb82c/simwr-springconference



About the Actual Conference

Join us for virtual spring conference on Friday, April 23, and Saturday, April 24. Once you are registered, you will receive the links for the conference on April 22 via your email.

While the conference is free, we are taking donations to support the region. Whoever makes a donation will have their name entered into a prize drawing. Depending on your donation amount, your name will be entered more than once.

All activities require registration.

https://www.eventbrite.com/e/simwr-spring-conference-tickets-141200800395?aff=ebdssbeac

WHY SHOULD I CONTRIBUTE TO THIS CONFERENCE?

- You don't have to drive to it (saves gas money)
- You don't have to stay overnight (sleep in your own bed and save hotel cost)
- You don't have to pay for meals (eat at home—ok, maybe it'd be good to get out!)
- It's free.

So please consider giving a generous donation to help support the Midwestern Region.

It's Getting Closer to Mother's Day!

We are preparing to create Mother's Day Gift Bags for the Positive Images residents this year.

This is what we need:

Cosmetic bags—new, or like new Costume jewelry—necklaces, bracelets, earrings and pins Jewelry boxes—4" x 6" or 5" x 7" (NO TINY BOXES)

You may drop off items at my home on my patio, but please text me first.

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU Mary Ellen Burke.....313-399-8934



PET PROFILE: STEL-LAAAH!





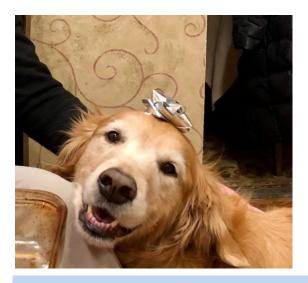
"We were tricked into getting our dog Stella. Our daughter graduated college in Chicago, moved home and supposedly was looking for jobs. Our 10-year-old golden had died in the fall. Our daughter spent her time puppy shopping on line ... not job shopping. She found us a puppy near Holland, MI.

Despite splitting our time between living in Chicago and GPP, we made a home visit before Christmas and fell in love with our Stella.

Before we were able to bring home this puppy in January, our daughter found a job ... in Australia!

Raising this puppy, alone, almost killed me. My husband was still in Chicago; fortunately he moved home shortly afterward. He named the dog; he wanted a name that he would not be embarrassed to yell while at the park. STEL-LAAAH!"

Photos of Stella, first as a puppy and then all grown up and ready to par-TAY!



Regional Membership Chair update

SIGP is one of 30 clubs in the Midwest Region (MWR) and one of 1,260 clubs in the Soroptimist International of the Americas (SIA) federation. The Diamond Campaign is a multi-year campaign developed by SIA to strengthen our organization's membership base as we approach Soroptimist's 100th anniversary. We are currently in the third year of the campaign which will end on May 31, 2021.

Through the Diamond Campaign we will ensure the future of Soroptimist, and our legacy will shine on as we carry our mission forward. By growing our membership, it becomes possible for us to deliver our brand-unifying Dream Programs. That brings us closer to our Big Goal to reach even more women and girls who face obstacles.



BRIGHT PAST BRILLIANT FUTURE

Our SIA Board has defined the following goals for ALL clubs and regions to meet or exceed by May 31, 2021, in Phase 3 of the Diamond Campaign:

85% or better club member retention rate by May 31, 2021 A coordinated effort by all regions to charter 15 new clubs across the federation.

Soroptimist of Grosse Pointe Club Progress

SIGP has met and exceeded the member retention rate of 85%.

Total members as of 5-31-20	67
Total members as of 7-1-20	60
New members 6-1-20 – 2-28-21	2
Total members as of 2-28 21	62
Club Retention rate:	89.6%

For more information on the Diamond Campaign visit:

https://www.soroptimist.org/diamond-campaign/index.html

Thank you for helping to grow our membership!

- Roseanne Horne, Midwest Region Membership Chair

District III Emails

Governor– Darcy Merritt (dmerritt1963@hotmail.com) Governor Elect - Christine Fowler Shearer (fowlerartistic@gmail.com) Secretary - Sheila Zingler-Gilbert - (sheilasifdl@gmail.com) Treasurer - Audrey Jarvey - (audreyjarv@charter.net) District III Director - Kellie Klingel (ktklingel@yahoo.com) Secretary - Patricia Cavell (bsktpac@comcast.net)

Soroptimist Websites

Soroptimist International Midwest Region - (<u>simwr.org</u>) Soroptimist International of the Americas (<u>soroptimist.org</u>) Soroptimist International (<u>soroptimistinternational.org</u>) Soroptimist International of the Americas -

(<u>soroptimist.org/about-us/contact-us/index.html</u>) For upcoming SIGP events and information, click the link <u>https://www.grossepointesoroptimist.org/</u>

Soroptimist Pledge

I pledge allegiance to Soroptimist and to the ideals for which it stands: The sincerity of friendship, The joy of achievement The dignity of service, The integrity of profession, and the love of country. I will put forth my greatest effort to promote, uphold and defend these ideals, for a larger fellowship in home, in society, in business, for country and for God.



			7				
	The Who's Who of						
	SIGP's PUBLIC AWARENESS COMMITTEES						
Ľ	Submit photos, club information, news, upcoming events and dates to this e-mail so the information can be accessed by all public awareness chairs: socialmediasigp@gmail.com						
	WEBSITE:	grossepointesoroptimist.net					
×	INSTAGRAM: E-MAIL:	soroptimistgp Anne Schwartz grossepointesoroptimist@gmail.com Anne Schwartz					
Ŷ	SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS:						
Ľ	FACEBOOK and	facebook.com/soroptimistgrossepointeRenee Rodriguez	5				
î	NEWSLETTER:	THE POINTER is on the website and					
Ľ		is emailed to membersNancy Solak					
Ŷ	MEDIA:	Newspaper articles, radio PSAs, etcDiana Langlois	>				
Remember to use AMAZON SMILE. Each dollar you spend on amazon.com gives .05% to SIGP							
Ŷ		<u>smile.amazon.com</u>					
The							

Roseanne Horne c/o SIGP 1247 Elford Grosse Pointe, MI 48236		SOROPTIMI Investing in Drea	
Name:			
Shipping Address:			
Shipping City:		State:Zip	
Telephone Number:			
Email Address:			
Soroptimist club:			
Picture shows Ladies (S)	Ladies (S) Ladies (M) Ladies (L) Ladies (XL) Ladies (2XL)	Force (2XL) Force (3XL) Force (XL) Circle embroidery choice	
Jacket Cost \$45	Shipping: \$10	Embroidery: White or E	Blue
Cash:	Check:	Credit Card:	
Soroptimist Internati	ional of Grosse Pointe	Accepted VISA	
updated 5/27/20			

All proceeds from the sale of jackets go to SIGP. Each one has a zipper, hood and pockets. Length to hips. Order yours today!

SIGP Member Ads

Rasheda Kamaria Williams

Mentoring consultant, speaker, author

Rasheda is an award-winning mentor, speaker and founder/chief empowering officer for Empowered Flower Girl. She empowers youth and youth advocates to live above life's drama to make a powerful difference.

Learn about Empowered Flower Girl's engaging and empowering programs for youth and adults, including Girl World Peace Academy - a new virtual course for educators, counselors, mentors and afterschool program professionals.

empoweredflowergirl
 www.empoweredflowergirl.com



https://thriveglobal.com/stories/rasheda-kamaria-williams-if-you-want-something-youve-never-had-you-must-be-willing-to-do-something-youve-never-done/



Don't forget to support our member-owned businesses.

SIGP members are welcome to place ads at no cost. To place an ad, contact *The Pointer* editor, Nancy Solak, at:

solaksinitaly@yahoo.com