

The Vision

January
2020
Edition



Governor's Message

I'm Kris Armstrong and Welcome to 2020. We are $\frac{3}{4}$ through the biennium and will soon be installing a new Governor and board of directors, time has sure flown by. But before we end the 2019/20 Soroptimist year, we have things to accomplish: finishing up the Live Your Dream and Wagner Awards are on the top of that list; Membership goals for the Diamond Campaign – getting closer to our target; Fundraising goals – has your club earmarked 10% of funds raised to go to SIA? I can tell you that we are woefully short of where I thought the Acorn Guild would be; has your club planned for new leadership in the new biennium? You know, I should have just bullet pointed because there's even more: who's going to the Convention on the Status of Women in New York? What about the SIA Convention this summer – who's going? How about the Governor's Club Award – have you started working on that? And to circle back to where I started, who's coming to Spring Conference in Ann Arbor?

As you see, we still have a lot to get done before summer rolls around. Your board of directors is meeting in less than two weeks and shortly afterwards, Secretary Missie will send out the Call to Conference. It's time to shake off the Holiday Season and rev up your Soroptimist motor – let's go!

Kris Armstrong
Midwestern Region Governor



In This Issue

Articles from
SI of:

- ♦ Columbus & Franklin Co.
- ♦ Dayton
- ♦ Downriver Area
- ♦ Greater Macomb
- ♦ Grosse Pointe
- ♦ Illiana
- ♦ Middletown
- ♦ Mt. Vernon & Knox Co.
- ♦ Monroe

2020 Date to Remember

- 1/10-12 Winter Board Meeting -
- 1/11 National Day of Human Trafficking Awareness in the US
- 1/15 Virginia Wagner Award Applications due to Clubs & District Live Your Dream Award Winner due to Region Chair
- 1/18-20 MWR Winter Board Meeting, Indianapolis, Indiana

SPRING CONFERENCE

- April 24-26
Ann Arbor, MI-pg 14

SIA CONVENTION

- July 22-25
Bellevue, WA-pgs 15&16

VISION: Women and girls have the resources and opportunities to reach their full potential and live their dreams.

MISSION: Soroptimist is a global volunteer organization that provides women and girls with access to the education and training they need to achieve economic empowerment.

TAG LINE: Investing in Dreams

SIA's refined vision, mission and tag line statements.

GOVERNOR

Kris Armstrong – SI Bloomington-Normal IL
607 W. Hamilton Road
Bloomington, IL 61704
Cell: 309-530-5989
Email: krisquin@msn.com

SECRETARY

Missie Austin – SI Kenton Hardin Co OH
513 N. Detroit Street
Kenton, OH, 43326
Cell: 419-673-7374
Email: missieaustin@gmail.com

DISTRICT I DIRECTOR

Susan Frankel – SI Fond du Lac WI
291 Old Pioneer Road
Fond du Lac, WI 54935
Cell: 920-251-2259
Email: smfrankel5@gmail.com

DISTRICT II DIRECTOR

Barb Flory – SI Middletown OH
5016 Oakview Drive
Middletown, OH 45042-4901
Home: 513-422-1882
Email: bflory@cinci.rr.com

DISTRICT III Director

Mary Pilon – SI Wyandotte Southgate Taylor MI
1711 Chestnut Street
Wyandotte, MI 48192
Cell: 313-405-5807
Email: pilonmary0@gmail.com

DISTRICT IV DIRECTOR

Christine Fowler Shearer – SI Canton Stark Co OH
4590 Rockridge Way
Copley, OH 44321
Cell: 216-408-4124
Email: fowlerartistic@gmail.com

GOVERNOR-ELECT

Darcy Merritt – SI Monroe MI
1554 Riverview Avenue
Monroe, MI 48126
Cell: 734-968-7991
Email: dmerritt81@hotmail.com

TREASURER

Audrey Jarvey – SI Fond du Lac WI
N74W13737 Appleton Avenue #116
Menomonee Falls, WI 53051
Cell: 920-979-0606
Email: audreyjarv@gmail.com

DISTRICT I SECRETARY

Connie Gindt – SI Fond du Lac WI
250 E. 11th Street
Fond du Lac, WI 54935
Cell: 920-948-1357
Email: Connie@ep-direct.com

DISTRICT II SECRETARY

Jenny Prater – SI Hancock Co OH
PO Box 156
Findlay, OH 45839
Cell: 419-979-9884
Email: Jmprater92@yahoo.com

DISTRICT III SECRETARY

Lata Shastri – SI Wyandotte Southgate Taylor MI
37279 Aspen Drive
Farmington Hills, MI 48335
Cell: 248-890-0343
Email: shastrilata@gmail.com

DISTRICT IV SECRETARY

Abby Bouton – SI Columbus Franklin Co OH
2101 Mackenzie Drive
Columbus, OH 43220
Cell: 614-285-8212
Email: abbouton@yahoo.com

Soroptimist International of Grosse Pointe

Meeting the Students of St. Anne's Girls Secondary School in Damongo, Ghana!

Submitted by Kerri Green

Three SIGP members (Kerri Green, Carol Hofer, and Rosanne Morrow) recently travelled to St. Anne's Girls Secondary School (SAGISS) that the club supports in Damongo, Ghana.

The club provides tuition support for 6 girls each year. The tuition is \$500 per term, and with 3 terms per year, the grand total is \$9,000. The school consists of three grades, which are referred to as: Form 1, Form 2, and Form 3. This is the standard in Ghana for high schools.

SAGISS is a boarding school, which is also common in Ghana. I consider this to be a good thing for the students because attendance is more regular. Girls are not distracted by having to take care of younger siblings, the harvesting season, or other family obligations that could limit their schooling. The girls often live far away from the school, and only go home for breaks between the three terms. Transportation can be difficult, expensive, and time-consuming. We experienced multiple times that the dirt road from Damongo leading to the school is 4.3 km (2.6 miles), but feels like an eternity! It is so bumpy, rough, and dusty, and it usually takes about 20 minutes to cover it. The potholes of Michigan are really no competition for the terrible road conditions all over Ghana.

Since SIGP has been supporting this school for six years, we also had the pleasure of meeting some girls who had already graduated school thanks to our support. They came back to Damongo to meet us and express their gratitude. We had a nice group dinner so we could get to know these young ladies.

Francesca (2019 graduate) currently working in an office (typing, making copies, etc.). She wants to become a teacher and hopes to start training school next year.

Rejoyce (2019 graduate) currently lives with her family locally in Damongo and hopes to go to teaching school next year.

Agnes (2018 graduate) lives in Tamale and is taking an additional Mathematics course. If she receives favorable results on her math exam, then she wants to begin training to be a midwife.

Patience (2018 graduate) lives in Abuesi, about 5 hours south of the school. She plans to take an additional Mathematics course in 2020 and wants to study to be a nurse.

As for the club's six current students, we have two in Form 2: Jennifer and Helen, and four in Form 1: Sylvera, Prudence, Hilda, and Hanifatu.

I sat by Prudence at dinner, and we had a nice conversation. She lives with her mother and younger brother in a small, rural village far away from the school. (Her father is dead.) Coming to SAGISS in September was the first time she had ever left her village. At this time, Prudence hopes to become a nurse at a hospital.

I will admit that when we first met students in Ghana, I was very awkward with them. I had trouble finding things to talk about. "What are your hobbies?"—Most teenagers have chores and responsibilities and very little free time. Life is about survival, vastly different from the packed schedules and extra-curricular activities of American teenagers. Sports aren't common, except for football (what we call soccer), and I found that it was mostly played by boys. "Where did you go on your last family vacation?"—People in rural Ghana may never even leave their village, so they certainly don't travel for pleasure. I finally landed on asking students if they had siblings. Everyone could tell me about their brothers and sisters, and if they were younger or older. Also, music and dancing is wildly popular, so I often asked students if they could play an instrument. I was awed at the variety of musical talents these girls had with singing and rhythm, especially during church services and the traditional dances they greeted us with on the first day. (photo's on the next page)



Carol Hofer, Rosanne Morrow, Madame Pauline (SAGISS head-mistress), Irene Allen, and Kerri Green



Kerri Green with 2019 graduates: Evelyn, Rejoyce, and Francesca



With 2018 graduates: Irene Allen, Rosanne Morrow, Patience, Kerri Green, Agnes, Carol Hofer



SIGP members with our 6 current students: Jennifer, Helen, Sylvera, Prudence, Hilda, and Hanifatu.

SIA Headquarters

A Message from SIA Headquarters: We are excited to be launching our #SorooptimistsAtWork social media campaign for membership! The social media membership campaign is intended to demonstrate the value of Soroptimist membership across social media platforms. Using a unified hashtag, SIA, the regions, and clubs will post photos of Soroptimists volunteering and having a great time in fellowship and friendship together—two things members value most about SIA membership. Between now and May 31, 2020 please use the hashtag #SorooptimistsAtWork across your club's Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram pages to share posts and photos of your members having fun together! We have some exciting plans and incentives in store for the clubs and regions whose posts earn the farthest "reach" online.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!
Best Wishes to All
From Soroptimist International of
Greater Macomb

SI Middletown had a Christmas party. We each bought a pair of Christmas socks and filled them with surprises. Everyone was given a number, and when your number was called, it was your turn to choose a pair of socks. After everyone had chosen a pair of socks, we opened them one at a time to discover the surprises inside. We found candy, teabags, lotions, office supplies, kitchen gadgets, more socks, and more. What fun!



Wishing everyone a safe and Happy Holiday!
From Soroptimist International of Mount Vernon & Knox County

The White Elephant Gift Exchange included everything from a calculator, singing toilet paper roll holder, candy, glassware, turtle, golfer and another fuzzy feathered bird! Not to mention our fun festive holiday eyewear!



Wishing everyone a safe and Happy Holiday!
From Soroptimist International of Columbus & Franklin County

A big THANK YOU, to Vicky Hicks for inviting us to her new home for our holiday party!



Soroptimist International of Monroe - Friendship Link Holiday Message

Wish you all for a happy Christmas and all the best for the New Year.

This photo was taken the other day when we went on a bus trip with SI Hofu club members.

This place is Nagato City, Yamaguchi Prefecture, which is an hour and a half by bus from Hofu where we live. And this is a very good hot spring area.

The hotel we visited is a famous long-established hotel that was also used in the Japan-Russia summit meeting in 2016.

We enjoyed a recreation that deepened the friendship of club members by eating great Japanese lunches, playing games and chatting here.

We want to send our bright smile to you.

Sincerely yours



Soroptimist International of Dayton



The Community Outreach to Runaway Youth (CORY) Project has completed its third distribution of posters for this year and two of the eight missing teens have been found. The club also celebrated its 83rd birthday on December 12 with the annual collection of gifts for the CHUMS Project. This project supports the work of Life Essentials which works with vulnerable adults throughout the community. They care for our community's forgotten, those living with mental illness, those who are alone, and those who have no voice. By selecting a Chum and providing a holi-

day gift, our members not only provide much needed clothing or desired items, but our present may be the only gift they receive at this time of giving. For many club members, selecting and providing their Chum with a gift truly starts the holiday season.

Soroptimist International of Illiana

PADS

Every 5th Tuesday of the month the ladies of Illiana provide a meal and words of encourage for homeless women and their children at the Church of the Holy Family for their PADS program. PADS is a program that provides emergency overnight shelter from October 1 through April 30th. They are able to see refuge in safe, warm locations where they are able to connect with case manager, who work diligently to help participants make the transition from homelessness to becoming social and economic investors in the communities where they live and work.

On Tuesday, October 29, 2019 we provide a meal for approximately 20 family members. In addition, we partnered with Dawn's DancinDeevas (a line dance group), who provided over 100 purses filled with toiletries for us to distribute.



Illiana Club members preparing plates for families.



Illiana Club members preparing display of purses filled with toiletries, hats and gloves for the women.

Soroptimist International of Illiana



“HUMAN RIGHTS DAY”

We celebrated “Human Rights Day” during our meeting on Saturday, December 7, 2019 at Olivia’ Restaurant in Dolton, Illinois. We celebrated by having Chicago Police Officer Alise Buford come and speak with us about Trafficking in the Chicagoland. She gave us tips on how to prevent from becoming a victim.

In addition to having a guest speaker, we decided to have a sanitary napkin collection campaign “GIRL CONFIDENCE”. The reason for this campaign to assure our girls did not miss school because they do to not have the resource during their menstrual period. The name was chosen to empower young girls that they are still equip to go school and have the confidence during this time. We collected numerous packages of napkins in several different sizes. Many schools in impoverish areas do not supply sanitary napkins nor does the girls have money to purchase these. These gifts was given to the school counselor and school nurse. We had some many napkins, that we will present a supply to the PADS program on December 31, 2019, where we will celebrate the end of 2019 with them.



Pictured: Devra Collier-DIBI chairman, Marydale Donald-Club President, Pauline Washington-Club Vice President and Beverly Bucur-SI Director of Advocacy.

Soroptimist International of Downriver Area

Soroptimist International Wyandotte, Southgate, Taylor has a new name. We are now Soroptimist International Downriver Area!

Club members hope that this new name will encourage new members from surrounding areas (of W-S-T). This Club has been struggling with low membership for a few years now. Hopefully this new name is the fresh start needed to attract the talent needed to carry out the So-

roptimist mission.

Some of our District III Clubs are great at attracting new members or hosting successful fundraisers and programs. Would you consider attending one of our meetings and sharing helpful tips?

We are looking forward to going into 2020 with a new name and new possibilities



Soroptimist International of Grosse Pointe

Be someone who matters to someone who matters: January Is National Mentoring Month

by Rasheda Kamaria Williams

January is National Mentoring Month – a time for individuals and organizations across the country to bring awareness to the need for caring adults to serve as role models for youth.

According to MENTOR, the National Mentoring Partnership, 1 out of 3 children will face growing up without a mentor. That means millions of children throughout the country may never have powerful, positive interventions.

From children and teens in foster care to those with incarcerated parents, there are specific populations of youth who need positive role models.

Consider one-on-one or even group mentoring in your community. There also are opportunities to mentor youth across the country through online or e-mentoring programs.

It only takes a few hours a month of face time and a phone call or text a week to help increase a child's self-esteem. In addition to the mentee's development, the mentor benefits in many ways. My mentees have helped me aspire higher in my career and in life. And knowing that they're looking up to me keeps me living in integrity.

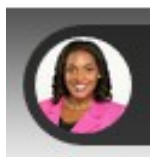
**TWO-THIRDS
OF AMERICANS
CONSIDER IT
HIGHLY IMPORTANT
FOR YOUNG PEOPLE
TO HAVE MENTORS**

The Power of Relationships Report



If you're interested in becoming a mentor but not sure if you have what it takes, answer these questions: 1. Do you have a big heart? 2. Do you have a little time? If yes and yes, then you've got it! At the end of the day, you don't need a fancy job title or curio cabinet full of plaques and medals to make a difference for young people.

Still unsure? Download [EmPOWERed Flower Girl's](#) FREE [Mentoring Guide](#) for some insight. Ready to become a mentor? Visit the MENTOR organization search tool to locate a program near you.



SIGP member Rasheda Kamaria Williams is an award-winning mentor, motivational speaker, author and chief empowering officer for Empowered Flower Girl. She is a dedicated youth advocate and was recently named to the Michigan Community Service Commission's Mentor Michigan + Consultant Network.

Soroptimist International Of Mount Vernon & Knox County

Step into Spring Style Show April 4



**Co-Producers Diana Oswalt,
Chris Kompton**

DOORS OPEN AT 11:00 am

Individual Tickets: \$25

Corporate Tickets: \$250

*8 tickets includes prime
seating and favors*

GALLAGHER CENTRE

Ohio Eastern Star Home
1451 Gambier Road
Mount Vernon

Soroptimist International Of Downriver Area

LUNAFEST, the fundraising film festival dedicated to championing women filmmakers and bringing women together in their communities, will be hosted by Soroptimist International of Downriver at The Catherine Daly Theater in Wyandotte, MI March 27 and 28, 2020. The Soroptimist Club has partnered with The Downriver Actor's Guild in a joint fundraiser.

This unique film festival highlights women as leaders in society, illustrated through seven short films by women filmmakers. The films range from animation to fictional drama, and cover topics such as women's health, body image, relationships, cultural diversity and breaking barriers.

All proceeds from LUNAFEST will benefit Soroptimist Programs, Downriver Actors Guild and Chicken & Egg Pictures, a nonprofit organization that supports women nonfiction filmmakers whose artful and innovative storytelling catalyzes social change. Thus far, LUNAFEST, which is created and funded by LUNA®, The Whole Nutrition Bar, has raised more than \$5 Million for nonprofit organizations across the US and Canada.

The event begins on Friday, March 27 with a red-carpet reception and viewing. Tickets to the reception are \$25 each and include food, raffles and door prizes prior to the viewing. The after glow party's location is to be announced. Two general viewings are scheduled for Saturday, March 28. Tickets to Saturday's viewings are \$10 for adults and \$5 for seniors and students.

The club is currently looking for additional sponsors and in-kind donations to make the event a big success! For more information please contact the club at Lunafest.wyandotte@gmail.com

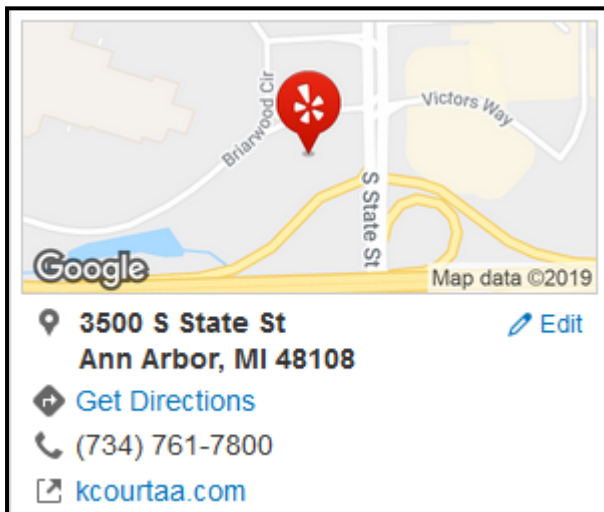


Save the Date
Spring Conference 2020
April 24, 25, & 26
Kensington Hotel Ann Arbor MI

Educate to Empower

Darcy Merritt
Installed as Governor of the
Midwestern Region

The poster features the Soroptimist logo (a stylized 'S' in a square) with the text 'SOROPTIMIST Best for Women' below it. On the right is a circular seal for 'SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL MIDWESTERN REGION' with a colorful map of the region. At the bottom, silhouettes of nine women are shown holding hands against a blue sky background.



**MORE INFORMATION
TO FOLLOW**



**Helping women and girls
live their dreams**



Join Us for SIA's 46th Biennial Convention

You won't want to miss it!

Reach New Heights with SIA in Bellevue! The 46th Biennial Convention will be one for the books. There is so much fun, friendship and learning in store. Plus, be there as we kick off Soroptimist's year-long 100th Anniversary celebration!

See the back of this page for information you need to plan your trip—including pricing, where to stay, how to register and more! Be sure to follow the convention Facebook page <<https://www.Facebook.com/SIAConv2020/>> for updates on speakers, tours and other exciting details!



Make new friends and catch up with old ones! This is your chance to connect with Soroptimists from around the world!



Be inspired by informative keynote speakers and workshops!



Indulge in a world-class urban experience and enjoy all the shopping, dining, arts and culture you can handle.



Explore the great outdoors and take in the beautiful scenery the Pacific Northwest has to offer.



#SIAConv2020



SOROPTIMIST®
Investing in Dreams



Start Planning Your Trip Today!



Registration and housing open in October!

Visit the SIA website Soroptimist.org/SIAConv2020.html for all the details you need to make this convention one you'll never forget!

Hotel Information

Hyatt Regency Bellevue Hotel
900 Bellevue Way, NE
Bellevue, Washington 98004 USA
Phone: (425) 462-1234

Book your room when you register for convention via the hotel link included with the convention registration information. Must book online to receive SIA discount.

- **Single or Double (king or two queens):** \$219 USD, + 14.4%, tax per room/per night
- **Triple (three people sharing room):** \$244 USD, + 14.4% tax per room/per night
- **Quad (four people sharing room):** \$269 USD, + 14.4% tax, per room/per night

Hotel reservation deadline: June 10, 2020

Meals/Social Events

- Wednesday, July 2—Friendship Dinner: \$110 USD
- Thursday, July 23—Sit-down Lunch: \$70 USD
- Saturday, July 25—Sit-down Lunch: \$70 USD
- Saturday, July 25—Recognition Banquet: \$120 USD

Registration Rates*

	Early Bird <i>By January 15</i>	Regular <i>January 16-May 15</i>	Late/Onsite <i>May 16-July 25</i>	Daily
Member/ Non-Delegate	\$550	\$625	\$675	\$325 \$375 (late/onsite)
Delegate**	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Guest	—	\$350	\$375	—

**Registration fees cover the cost of convention, including speakers, interpretation services, and audio visual services that enhance your experience through projections, live camera operators, teleprompters for presenters and more.*

***SIA will send an invoice to all clubs for the delegate fee. All clubs are required to pay this fee.*

Soroptimist International Midwestern Region Board

Governor Kris Armstrong

SI Bloomington Normal

Governor-Elect Darcy Merritt

SI Monroe County

Region Secretary Missie Austin

SI Kenton Hardin Co

Region Treasurer Audrey Jarvey

SI Fond du Lac

District I Director Susan Frankel

SI Fond du Lac

District I Secretary Connie Gindt

SI Fond du Lac

District II Director Barb Flory

SI Middletown

District II Secretary Jennifer Prater

SI Hancock County

District III Director Mary Pilon

SI Wyandotte Southgate Taylor

District III Secretary Lata Shastri

SI Wyandotte-Southgate-Taylor

District IV Director Chris Fowler Shearer

SI Canton/Stark County

District IV Secretary Abby Bouton

SI Columbus & Franklin County

CHECK US OUT ON
THE WEB!

WWW.SIMWR.ORG



Editor for The Vision
Karrie Blankenship
SI Grosse Pointe
karrieb40@gmail.com

Soroptimist International Midwestern Region 2018 / 2020 Board



Standing: Christine Shearer, Jenny Prater, Barb Flory, Susan Frankel,
Connie Gindt, Mary Pilon, Lata Shastri, Abby Bouton

Seat: Missie Austin, Kris Armstrong, Darcy Merritt, Audrey Jarvey

Connections for the 2018–2020 Midwestern Board

Emails Contacts

Governor-Kris Armstrong - (krisquin@msn.com)

Governor Elect -Darcy Merritt - (dmerritt81@hotmail.com)

Secretary - Missie Austin - (missieaustin@gmail.com)

Treasurer - Audrey Jarvey - (audreyjarv@gmail.com)

Soroptimist International of the Americas - (siahq@soroptimist.org)

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

Tweet us [@SoroptimistMWR](https://twitter.com/SoroptimistMWR)

Like us on Facebook at [@simwrgov](https://www.facebook.com/simwrgov)

MIDWESTERN REGION 2020

January 10-12	Winter Board Meeting - Time and Place TBD
January 11	National Day of Human Trafficking Awareness in the US
January 15	Virginia Wagner Award Applications due to Clubs
January 15	District Live Your Dream Award Winner due to Region Chair
January 18-20	MWR Winter Board Meeting, Indianapolis, Indiana
February 1	Club Live Your Dream Report due to District Director
February 15	Virginia Wagner Club Award winners due to District Director
February 15	Region LYD Winner info due to both SIA and Treasurer Audrey Jarvey by Region Chair
March 1	Soroptimist Club Grant applications due at SI HQ
March 8	International Women's Day
March 8	Virginia Wagner District Winners due to Region Chair
March 15	Award Report due from District Directors to Governor Elect Darcy
March 31	Region Virginia Wagner Award Winners names to Region Treasurer Audrey Jarvey by Region Chair
March 31	Governor's Award Form due to Governor Kris Armstrong
April 23 & 24	MWR Board Meeting Kensington Hotel - Ann Arbor, MI
April 24 - 26	2019 Spring Conference Kensington Hotel - Ann Arbor, MI
May 31	Club Giving and Founders Pennies contributions to SIA for 2020 recognition
June 1	Dream It, Be It Online Club Reporting due to SIA
July 1	Club Celebrating Success forms due to Kris Armstrong
July 10-12	MWR Summer Board Meeting, Location TBD
July 22 - 25	SIA 46 th Biennial Convention- Bellevue, WA
July 26 – 27	Governors Roundtable – Bellevue, WA