



## ***Women Building Better Communities***

### **The Projects and Services of the Junior League of Palo Alto•Mid Peninsula, Inc.**

The Junior League of Palo Alto•Mid Peninsula, Inc. (JLPA•MP) is an 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. The League reaches out to women of all races, religions and national origins who demonstrate a commitment to voluntarism.

JLPA•MP has served the following Mid Peninsula communities for more than 40 years: Atherton, Belmont, East Palo Alto, Foster City, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Menlo Park, Mountain View, Palo Alto, Portola Valley, Redwood City, San Carlos, Stanford, Sunnyvale and Woodside. Over that period, the League has contributed more than \$4 million and hundreds of thousands of volunteer hours to launch such notable nonprofit organizations and programs as the Tech Museum of Innovation, Daybreak Shelter and Rebuilding Together.

Current projects include:

#### **Done in a Day**

##### ***Making an Immediate Impact***

The League's Done in a Day projects focus on short, intensive community projects that are typically completed in a single day or weekend. The League partners with other nonprofits and community service agencies to identify projects that fit our focus area, respond to short-term needs and benefit the community at large. The League's Done in a Day projects contribute more than 1,000 volunteer hours annually to meet short-term needs in our community.

#### **EPA Charter School Character Development *Building Character in Students***

The East Palo Alto Charter School (EPACS) strives to equip students in an under-served community with the skills necessary to read, write, speak and calculate with clarity and confidence while fostering the desire to participate responsibly in the community. Through the Character Development project League members participate in an innovative education program designed to provide a framework for students' individual growth and self-awareness. League members facilitate weekly discussions with a small group of middle school students.

#### **First Teachers**

##### ***Empowering Parents and Caregivers***

First Teachers is a project of Bring Me A Book®, founded in 1997 by Judy Koch. The organization envisions a read-aloud culture where all families place a high priority on literacy and are actively involved in their children's education. The mission of First Teachers is to engage and to educate parents and caregivers in the importance of reading aloud, to encourage a daily ritual of reading to children and to foster an early love of reading and learning. League volunteers conduct read-aloud and language development training programs for parents and caregivers of young children.

#### **Fostering Families**

##### ***Creating New Family Bonds***

Working with Help One Child in Los Altos, Fostering Families offers eight educational sessions to foster children and their foster/fost-adopt families during the Junior League year. The focus of each session will meet an identified need of foster children and their families and by creating a fun, safe, learning environment for the foster child, discuss specific issues unique to the needs of foster children and their foster or adoptive families, provide a "safe" break for the foster parent and offer guidelines for implementation of the lesson by the foster or adoptive parent and the child in their own home. League volunteers attend each session and work alongside Help One Child staff and/or board members to coordinate, facilitate and assist in facilitating a successful session with the children and their families.

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JUNIOR LEAGUE OF PALO ALTO•MID PENINSULA, INC.

*FOCUSING ON DEVELOPING THE POTENTIAL OF FAMILIES*

555 RAVENSWOOD AVENUE • MENLO PARK, CALIFORNIA 94025-3422 • ☎ 650•321•5026 • FAX 650•321•7493 • [www.thejuniorleague.org](http://www.thejuniorleague.org)

In addition to our current projects, the JLPA•MP provides the following services:

### **Community Grants**

#### ***Seeding Other Nonprofits***

Through its Community Grants Program, JLPA•MP seeks to respond to critical community needs in our geographic service area. Community Grants of up to \$7,500 in a single fiscal year are available to nonprofit agencies for new programs, capital expenditures and emergency or general operating funds. Eligible nonprofit agencies must be tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, demonstrate financial stability and utilize community volunteers to support their programs.

### **State Public Affairs Committee (SPAC)**

#### ***Raising a Voice for Change***

The California State Public Affairs Committee (SPAC) represents the 16 California Junior Leagues. SPAC delegates from each League research legislative issues affecting their local communities, and work with state legislators on specific legislation relevant to four focus areas — family support, education, health and violence prevention.

SPAC's efforts have resulted in passage of two critical bills dealing with domestic violence and health care. SPAC successfully sponsored Senate Bill 563, a landmark piece of legislation that eliminated a dangerous loophole to toughen domestic violence penalties. SPAC also effectively sponsored Assembly Bill 40, which established the California Breast Cancer Treatment Program. This program covers treatment for uninsured and under-insured women diagnosed with breast cancer.

### **Funding Our Future**

The JLPA•MP makes a tangible contribution to the 15 Mid Peninsula communities it serves. Through our community projects, grants, outreach and training, the League gives back more than \$400,000 and an estimated 35,000 volunteer hours to our community each year.

Funds for League programs are raised through the League's annual **Home Tour, The Shop** (a resale store on Santa Cruz Avenue in Menlo Park) and the **Endowment Fund**, which contributes a portion of its earnings to the League's annual operating budget.

*The League greatly appreciates all donors and underwriters — without whom our community projects, grants and services would not be possible. Donations to the JLPA•MP are tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Our tax ID number is 94-1603047.*

## **2009-2010 Board of Directors**

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### **Past Community Projects: A Groundbreaking Legacy of Impact**

Listed below is a sampling of the groundbreaking community projects in which the JLPA•MP has been involved. The date in parentheses indicates the year in which the League's involvement began.

#### **Rosalie Rendu Center (1999)**

At the Rosalie Rendu Center, League volunteers worked with low-income families to help break the cycle of poverty through education, mentoring and raising the self-esteem of the entire family. Sister Trinitas Hernandez launched the center in 1998 to help low-income families in East Palo Alto build the English language and life skills necessary for better employment — and a way up the economic ladder in the Bay Area. League volunteers taught English classes, hosted a homework help center, provided access to computers and offered a structured educational playgroup for pre-schoolers at the “Tot Spot.”

#### **Edgewood Kinship Support Network (2003)**

The Kinship Support Network provides resources and support to caregiver families in which a grandparent or other family member is raising a relative's children as an alternative to foster care. Among the resources available are a weekly support group offering speakers, special programs and “just plain fun.” League members worked with the Kinship Support Network to plan speakers, outside programs and fun outings for the caregivers. The program's ultimate goal is to provide children a stable home life and an opportunity to grow into self-reliant individuals.

#### **Shelter Network (2000)**

Shelter Network provides short-term housing and support for homeless families and individuals of San Mateo County. Its goal is to help homeless individuals re-establish themselves in the community and return to permanent homes of their own. JLPA•MP volunteers worked with staff at Haven House in Menlo Park to develop a program to support children ages 18 months to 17 years and families who live there. Activities include tutoring and mentoring, organizing special classes in art, music or athletics, and sponsoring four field trips a year.

#### **Rebuilding Together (1990)**

Rebuilding Together, formerly Christmas in April, is a national program through which volunteers build partnerships to rehabilitate homes, schools and community facilities in low-income neighborhoods so residents can live in warmth, safety and independence. Held annually on the last Saturday in April, volunteers and commercial businesses partner to paint, fix and rebuild selected homes and facilities. JLPA•MP helped to launch this program on the Peninsula.

#### **Daybreak Program for Homeless Youth (1989)**

Daybreak Program was the first shelter for homeless teenage youth in the suburban United States. Located in Redwood City, this model shelter was launched by Youth and Family Assistance in partnership with JLPA•MP. Today, community volunteers continue to serve as long-term mentors for youth living at the shelter and provide ongoing training in areas like personal budgeting, vocational planning and life skills.

#### **Court Designated Child Advocates (1987)**

This program began as one of JLPA•MP's most successful projects, matching trained League volunteers with abused and neglected children caught in the county judicial system. Now affiliated with the Child Advocates of Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties, volunteers from the program continue to work with individual children, their families, the courts and other relevant parties to provide services and a recommended course of action that serve each child's best interests.

#### **Hope House (1987)**

Hope House in Redwood City is a residential drug treatment program for mothers recently released from jail. JLPA•MP volunteers served as mentors to pregnant women and new mothers, providing parenting and nutrition classes, mental and physical health programs and job skills counseling. Today, community volunteers continue to provide mentoring relationships and other support services to Hope House residents.

#### **The Tech Museum of Innovation (1982)**

“The Tech” began as the vision of JLPA•MP Sustainer Carol Schwartz. Over a period of 11 years, the League provided nearly \$175,000 in seed money to the museum's Board of Directors. As the museum was launched, members from the JLPA•MP and the Junior League of San Jose collaborated to develop the museum's comprehensive volunteer recruitment and training program. The Tech is considered one of the Silicon Valley's “must see” attractions.

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