

# THE LINK

A Publication of the Junior League of Albuquerque



**JUNIOR LEAGUE**  
ALBUQUERQUE

## A SNEAK PEEK INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Letter from the President

Kickoff Party

90th Anniversary

Women's Voter Civic Engagement

SLBI Conference

JLA Diaper Bank

General Membership Meetings

Newest Members

Dollars for Diapers

Done In A Days

Recruitment Events and Socials

Book Club



90th Anniversary Celebration

The first half of the 2024-2025 Junior League of Albuquerque year was full of celebrations and events! We started with a fun-filled afternoon celebrating our 90th anniversary in the Albuquerque community. Since then we've been busy with socials and recruitment events, volunteering with our community partners, and hosting general meetings and trainings. JLA continues to have a variety of events to both educate our members as women and civic leaders, as well as provide networking opportunities to help grow our members.

We looked forward to the latter half of our League year, sure to be filled with more events and milestones we can't wait to update you about!

# A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Looking back at my first few months of my presidency, I am filled with excitement and gratitude to serve this incredible organization. The Junior League of Albuquerque is a vibrant community of women dedicated to making a lasting impact, and I am honored to lead us into another year of service and growth. Together, we will continue to empower each other, our community, and the next generation of leaders.

We started the year off with a fantastic kick-off party at Flying Star Rio Grande, where the majority of our active members came together to celebrate the beginning of a new League year. It was a wonderful opportunity for our members to reconnect, share their passions, and look forward to a year filled with community service and meaningful engagement. The energy in the room was powerful, and it's clear that 2024 will be a year of great accomplishments for our League.

This fall, we've had an exciting and enriching lineup of meetings and trainings. We welcomed several community partners to our first GMM, where we learned all about how they are serving the Albuquerque community. Dr. Jessica Feezell spoke to us about the historical suppression of women's votes, sustainer Jen Bishop gave a powerful training about breast cancer and effective screening, and Brenda Lewis shared her Toastmasters insight effective public speaking. In addition, we had a joyful and festive Holiday Party that brought our members together in celebration of the season.

Beyond our monthly meetings, we've had a number of engaging volunteer opportunities and member activities. Our "Done in a Day" events allowed us to roll up our sleeves and make a direct impact in our community, and our book club provided a space for members to connect with each other and engage in thoughtful discussions. We are also sponsoring a Lean In Circle for our members to further develop their professional skills. These initiatives, along with our ongoing community partnerships, create a diverse and supportive environment where we can continue to grow both personally and professionally.

As we look ahead to the spring, we're excited for our Home Meetings—one of our favorite traditions. These intimate gatherings allow us to connect with each other and dive deeper into the heart of our League's mission. We'll also hold our annual business meeting, where we will vote on next year's leadership slate.

Lastly, I'd like to update you on our Diaper Bank initiative. Thanks to the generosity and dedication of our members, we were able to send 2,000 diapers to Ruidoso following the devastating fire, and our partnership with the Storehouse has allowed us to make a wholesale purchase of 33,000 diapers this year and store them in their warehouse. These efforts are just a glimpse of the incredible impact we're making together. I look forward to continuing this journey with all of you as we work to make a difference in Albuquerque and beyond.



# 2024-2025 LEADERSHIP TEAM



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# KICK OFF PARTY IGNITES EXCITEMENT FOR NEW LEAGUE YEAR

The Junior League of Albuquerque celebrated the launch of its 2024-2025 league year with an inspiring Kick Off Party at Flying Star Rio Grande. Members gathered to reconnect, welcome new faces, and set the stage for the upcoming year's initiatives.

The event connected seasoned and new members to share refreshments and conversations. Participants took the opportunity to align their goals, exchange ideas, and strengthen the bonds that make the Junior League such an impactful organization. The gathering was more than just a social event – it was a powerful moment of community and shared purpose.

Returning and new members alike left feeling motivated and excited about the meaningful work, personal growth, and community engagement that lies ahead. The Kick Off Party set the tone for an incredible year of service and impact.



Management Team Meeting

Zoo Music Social



# ***CELEBRATING 90 YEARS OF SERVICE: THE JUNIOR LEAGUE OF ALBUQUERQUE'S ANNIVERSARY PARTY***

This year, the Junior League of Albuquerque marked an incredible milestone — 90 years of service and impact in our community! Founded in 1934 as the Junior Club of Albuquerque, the organization has evolved and grown, staying true to its mission to advance women's leadership for meaningful community impact through volunteer action, collaboration, and training.

Our anniversary party was a vibrant celebration of the League's rich history and the incredible women who have shaped it. It was a chance to reflect on our past, acknowledge our dedicated membership, and honor the legacy of the League's contributions to Albuquerque over the decades.

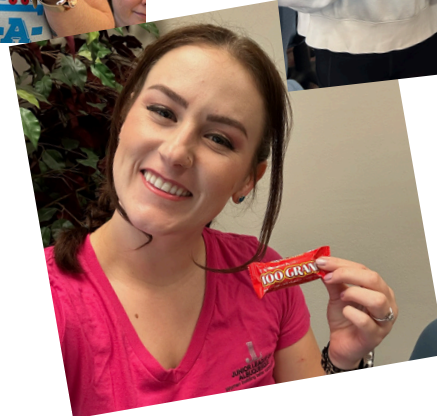
Throughout the event, we celebrated the different eras our members have joined, reminisced about the many impactful projects we've undertaken, and connected with each other across generations. From our earliest members to those just beginning their League journeys, there was a real sense of pride in the room. As we look ahead, we are filled with excitement and anticipation for the next 90 years, continuing our work and fostering new opportunities to serve, empower, and inspire.

Here's to another 90 years of making a difference!





**100,000 DIAPERS GIVEN TO THE ALBUQUERQUE COMMUNITY SINCE JANUARY 2020**

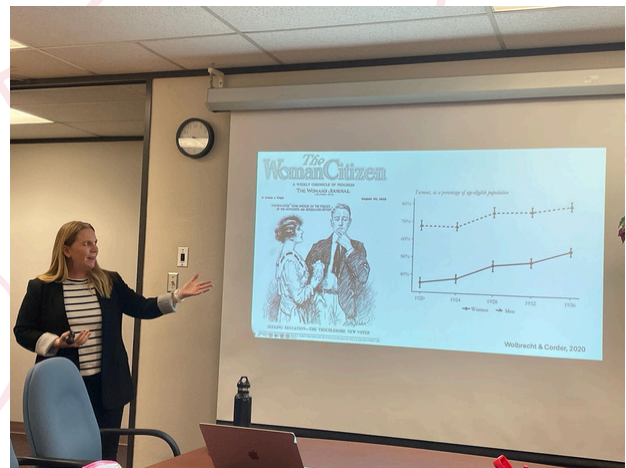


# ILLUMINATING THE PATH OF WOMEN'S CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

The Junior League of Albuquerque welcomed Professor Jessica Feezell from the UNM Political Science Department for a powerful and historically significant presentation. Drawing on her expertise in civic engagement, Professor Feezell delivered an compelling talk on voter suppression against women, a topic deeply resonant with the League's historical roots in the women's suffrage movement.

The event drew a diverse audience of JLA members, families, and friends, all eager to learn about the ongoing journey of women's political participation. With dinner provided and a welcoming atmosphere, the evening offered a meaningful opportunity to reflect on the progress made since women obtained the right to vote and the work that continues today.

Professor Feezell's insights connected the League's past with its present mission, inspiring attendees to continue championing civic engagement and women's empowerment. Thanks to newly active member Kayla Menard for your help in organizing this event!



Trivia Night  
Social

Escape Room  
Social



# SMALL LEAGUES BIG IMPACT CONFERENCE

One of the biggest highlights of the year was attending the Junior League's annual Small Business, Big Impact (SLBI) Conference in Orlando, Florida!

Over three days, Stephanie and I had an absolute blast connecting with other leagues, soaking up valuable insights, and making the most of every networking opportunity.

We tackled 10 sessions on various topics such as league Financial Health, Recruiting and Retention, Effective Fundraising, and even Mastering Robert's Rules to fine-tuning our Message Mapping and League Best Practices. The most impactful portion of the Conference were the fantastic presentations that highlighted the unique challenges small leagues face, as well as the power of leading from any position throughout the League.

We unanimously agree the biggest takeaway is the impact we have on our community is HUGE! Even though we are a small League, we left the Conference empowered, inspired, and grateful for the opportunity to grow and connect with others.

Stephanie and I are incredibly proud to be members of the Junior League of Albuquerque and cannot wait to share the amazing ideas and energy we garnered to our community. Here's to making a big impact, no matter how small the league!"

Brandy Babcock and Stephanie Tillman



# JLA Diaper Bank: Supporting Families, Strengthening Our Community



This year, the Junior League of Albuquerque (JLA) Diaper Bank has made tremendous strides in addressing diaper need in our community. Through the generosity of donors, the commitment of our volunteers, and the collaboration of new and existing partners, we've distributed more than 8,500 diapers to families in need. At the same time, we've received 8,000 diapers in donations, ensuring that we can continue to support Albuquerque's most vulnerable residents.

## Expanding Our Impact Through New Partnerships

One of the most exciting developments this year has been the onboarding of multiple new partners. These organizations have allowed us to extend our reach and deliver diapers to families in need more efficiently. By leveraging their networks and resources, we are collectively working to eliminate diaper need, a critical yet often overlooked issue that impacts the well-being of children and families.

Our new partnerships have also strengthened our ability to serve diverse communities, ensuring that our support reaches families across Albuquerque. With their help, we are building a stronger, more interconnected support system to address the challenges of diaper affordability and availability.

## Bulk Purchases: Maximizing Our Resources

A significant milestone for the JLA Diaper Bank this year was a new collaboration with the NM Storehouse. This partnership enabled us to make a bulk purchase of diapers at a deep discount, allowing us to maximize our financial resources and provide more diapers to families. By purchasing in bulk, we've not only increased the number of diapers we can distribute but also streamlined our operations to serve the community more effectively.

This innovative approach highlights the importance of strategic partnerships in advancing our mission. Through this collaboration, we've demonstrated that collective action can yield significant cost savings and amplify our impact. We're excited to continue exploring similar opportunities to enhance our efficiency and effectiveness in the coming year.

### Addressing a Critical Need

Diaper need remains a significant barrier for many families, affecting access to childcare, employment opportunities, and overall well-being. The JLA Diaper Bank is dedicated to alleviating this burden by providing a reliable supply of diapers to families who need them most. With over 8,500 diapers distributed this year, we are making a tangible difference in the lives of countless children and parents.

### Looking Ahead

As we reflect on the progress we've made, we are inspired to continue growing our efforts. With new partnerships, innovative strategies, and the unwavering support of our community, we are well-positioned to expand our reach and address the ongoing challenges of diaper need in Albuquerque. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has supported the JLA Diaper Bank this year!



# WELCOME THE 24-25 JLABQ NEW MEMBERS!

**Nicole Cerdenola**

**Rachel Hayes**

**Elizabeth Dobbelaire**

**Kendra Marler**

**Stefanie Draper**

**Kayla Menard**

**Blakesley Egan**

**Holly Mitchell**

**Nadja Falk**

**Stefanie Richards**

# CONGRATS TO OUR NEW ACTIVE MEMBERS!



## **Brandy Babcock**

Brandy Babcock is a proud native of Albuquerque, New Mexico. A 2021 graduate of the University of New Mexico, Brandy has channeled her passion for people into her role as an HR Staffing Specialist at the beloved local pizza restaurant, Dion's.

Driven by a commitment to her community, Brandy is an active member of The Junior League of Albuquerque. Her past volunteer efforts also extend to organizations like Big Brothers Big Sisters and Horizons Albuquerque.

When she's not building connections at work or in the community, you can find Brandy whipping up delicious baked goods, exploring her creative side with various crafts, or embarking on new adventures.

# WELCOME TO OUR ACTIVE TRANSFERS!



## Alicia Dabezies

Alicia Dabezies is new Transfer Member to the Junior League of Albuquerque. In May 2024, she relocated to Albuquerque with her Husband (T'Jean) and two dogs (Cooper and Dolly) after living in New Orleans, Louisiana for the last 5 years. In her professional career, she has been an elementary school teacher, non-profit events coordinator, and has worked for the last three years as a health coach. As a National Board Certified Health and Wellness Coach, Alicia is passionate about working with people to achieve their health goals and improve their quality of life. In addition to volunteering with the Junior League, she enjoys exercising, cooking, and spending time with her family.

## Laura Scanland



Laura Blyler Scanland is new to Albuquerque, having transferred from the Junior League of Hampton Roads in Southeastern Virginia in July. Laura originally hails from the Philadelphia area but she spent most of her career in Washington, DC after earning a bachelor's degree in International Relations from American University.

Laura has more than 15 years of experience working for national nonprofit organizations supporting various causes. She currently works as a Director on Global Impact's nonprofit advisory services team. In her current role as a fundraising consultant, Laura finds creative solutions for the fundraising needs of corporate and nonprofit clients developing tailored strategies to solve unique problems. In 2023, Laura raised more than \$3 million for her nonprofit clients.

Laura joined the Hampton Roads chapter of the Junior League in 2020, when a military move took her to a new city in the middle of the pandemic. Eager to make new friends and get plugged into her new community, Laura dove headfirst into virtual meetings and eventually served as an active member there for five years before transferring to JLA. Laura is a military spouse, her husband's service in the Air Force is what brought them to New Mexico. They have two dogs and in her free time, Laura enjoys reading, hiking, swimming, and watching reality television. You may recognize Laura from her 2023 appearance on Jeopardy! Laura is always open to joining or organizing a trivia night outing.

# DOLLARS FOR DIAPERS: MAKING A DIFFERENCE, ONE DIAPER AT A TIME

In its second year, the Dollars for Diapers campaign continued to make an impactful difference in our community. We raised awareness about diaper need, a pressing yet often overlooked issue that affects countless families. Thanks to the incredible support of our community, we raised \$1,500 and collected over 2,000 diapers to help families in need.

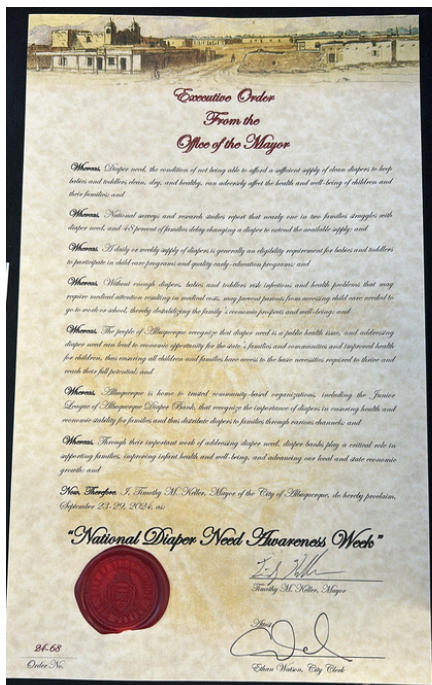


The campaign was bolstered by strategically placed drop-off locations at all three of the City's multigenerational centers, making it easier for residents to contribute. Over 500 flyers were distributed to spread the word, and our website served as a central hub for information and engagement.

Every diaper donated and every dollar raised goes toward supporting families who struggle to afford this basic necessity.

With diaper need being a significant barrier to health, childcare, and economic stability, Dollars for Diapers is empowering families to thrive.

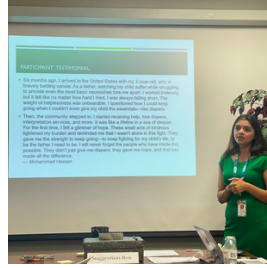
To learn more about this vital initiative or to get involved in future campaigns, visit [Dollars for Diapers](#). Thank you for helping us create a stronger, more supportive community!



# 2024 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

## September

JLA started off the Fall line up of GMM's strong with a roundtable of a handful of our Community Partners, helping to hype up our Dollars for Diapers Campaign later that month!



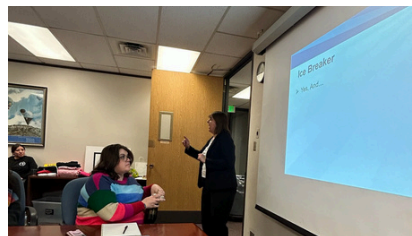
## October

One of our hit topics made a return in October - Breast Cancer Awareness! Sustainer Dr. Jennifer Bishop educated the League on the science, while Allison Hendricks-Smith shared her story and how she founded Pink Warrior House.



## November

Public speaking and small talk give you the ick? We hosted Barbara Lewis from Toastmasters International join JLA who gave us several tips, tricks and hands-on exercises to increase our communication skills!



## Done In A Days Are Back!

This fall we've transitioned from Service Learning Opportunities to our impactful Done In A Day (DIAD) projects!

DIAD organizes service projects throughout the year, helping our community in just one day. Thanks to our committee's strong relationships with partners across the city, we're creating opportunities to work with incredible organizations and explore future partnerships.

We're so happy to share with you the exciting projects we've done this fall! Stay tuned for updates on our upcoming projects and join us in making a difference, one day at a time!

### **JLA Members Volunteer at Roadrunner Food Bank**

Members participated in a DIAD at Roadrunner Food Bank of New Mexico. As the state's largest nonprofit focused on food insecurity and a Feeding America member, Roadrunner Food Bank supports hundreds of food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters, and regional food banks across New Mexico.

Our JLA volunteers contributed to the essential task of providing nutritious meals to those in need. This hands-on experience underscored the significant impact of Roadrunner Food Bank's operations, which reach tens of thousands of hungry children, seniors, and families every week.

Thank you to all our volunteers and to Roadrunner Food Bank for hosting us. We look forward to continuing this important work and making a difference in our community. Stay tuned for more updates on our projects and volunteer opportunities. Together, we can make a significant impact!



## JLA Members Volunteer at Storehouse New Mexico

On a bright Saturday mornings in July and November, members of the Junior League of Albuquerque (JLA) gathered at Storehouse New Mexico, a nonprofit community-based food pantry dedicated to providing free groceries to those in need. With enthusiasm and a strong sense of purpose, our volunteers rolled up their sleeves and got to work.

Storehouse New Mexico serves as a vital resource for many families, and our team was proud to support their mission. Throughout the morning, JLA members worked tirelessly to assemble shopping carts full of nutritious food items, ensuring that local families have access to essential groceries. This hands-on experience not only allowed us to contribute directly to our community but also reinforced our commitment to fighting food insecurity.

We are incredibly grateful to Storehouse New Mexico for their impactful work and for allowing us to be a part of their efforts. Volunteering together strengthened our bonds and reminded us of the power of community service. As we continue to support initiatives like this, we look forward to making a lasting difference in the lives of those around us.

Stay tuned for more updates on our community projects and volunteer opportunities. Together, we can make a difference! 🧡❤️



# ***JOIN FOR THE SERVICE, STAY FOR THE FRIENDSHIPS: A JLA FRIENDSGIVING***



## ***SLICE & DICE: RECRUITING PASSIONATE COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS***

We hosted an engaging Recruitment Social that brought together potential new members and our current members. Over delicious pizza and games, attendees explored the incredible opportunities for community service and personal development.

The social invited passionate individuals to join a network of women committed to making a difference. Thanks to Alicia Dabezies for your help in organizing this event!

We're looking forward to more recruitment opportunities in the new year.



## DEEPENING CONNECTIONS: JLA'S BOOK CLUB

As we all know, the League is well-known for our community impact, but beyond our impactful projects and programs, the League also fosters a unique space for members to connect over shared passions, one of which is literature. This year, JLA launched a new book club, bringing together members to dive into thought-provoking books and engage in lively discussions.

The JLA book club was born out of a shared desire among Members to engage more deeply with literature. The idea was sparked earlier this year when Members decided they wanted to read *The Woman in Me*, a memoir by pop icon Britney Spears. Inspired by the memoir, the group quickly organized its first meeting, which was met with great enthusiasm. Since then, the club has become a regular, monthly gathering that not only celebrates a love of reading but also builds connection among Members.

### **Monthly Meetings: A Space for Engaging Conversations**

The book club meets monthly, providing a consistent and welcoming environment for Members. Rather than formal settings, we gather at local coffee houses around Albuquerque. These cozy, community-centered spots provide the perfect ambiance for relaxed, yet thought-provoking discussions, while supporting local businesses.

Each month, Members pick a new book that spans a variety of genres—from historical fiction to memoirs, and everything in between. While many selections offer rich literary exploration, the club also makes an effort to choose books that promote social awareness, empathy, and growth.

Past selections include *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood, *The Woman in Me* by Britney Spears, *The Women* by Kristin Hannah, *Mexican Gothic* by Silvia Moreno Garcia, *Starling House* by Alix Harrow, and *The Christie Affair* by Nina de Gramont. By picking a wide array of genres, the club creates opportunities for discussion on both light-hearted and serious topics, ensuring that each meeting feels fresh and exciting.



## A Platform for Thoughtful Discussion

What truly sets the book club apart is the commitment to fostering meaningful conversation. Whether the group is debating the motivations of a fictional character or discussing real-world themes, the club provides a platform for Members to express their ideas and deepen their understanding of the world around them. Furthermore, our discussions create an open, supportive atmosphere where all perspectives are valued, making each meeting a meaningful experience that deepens connections. Thus, these gatherings are not only about the books themselves but also about creating lasting relationships, exchanging ideas, and offering support for one another's personal and professional goals.

## Join the Discussion!

JLA's book club has been a great event to bring members together, and if you're interested to see what book club is about—don't miss the next meeting! Be sure to keep an eye out for eBlasts and the League's calendar for meeting information and book details. All Members are always welcome, and we look forward to you joining in on our next literary adventure.



## COOKBOOKS!

Don't forget, JLA Cookbooks are sold online and throughout Albuquerque! We also have many other League's cookbooks on sale online for our members. Contact [cookbooks@jlabq.org](mailto:cookbooks@jlabq.org) for more information.

Seasoned with Sun, El Paso  
Saint Louis Days/Saint Louis Nights, St. Louis  
Pomegranates & Prickly Pears, Phoenix  
Virginia Hospitality, Hampton Roads  
Cooking from the Coast to the Cascades, Eugene  
Dining in the Smoky Mountains, Knoxville



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We are proud members of the  
Association of Junior Leagues  
International

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*The Junior League of Albuquerque reaches out to women of all races, religions, and national origins who demonstrate an interest in and commitment to voluntarism.*

**Follow Us!**



## Our Mission

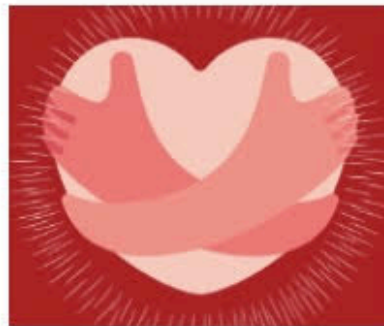
The Junior League of Albuquerque is an organization of women whose Mission is to advance women's leadership for meaningful community impact through volunteer action, collaboration, and training.

## Our Vision

Women around the world as catalysts for lasting community change.

## Become a Member today!

If you're interested in joining the League, applications are always open on [www.jlabq.org](http://www.jlabq.org) or learn more about upcoming recruitment events by emailing [membership@jlabq.org](mailto:membership@jlabq.org)



**SHARE A HUGS TODAY!**

*Help. Us. Give. Support*



submit a HUG here

[HUGS@jlabq.org](mailto:HUGS@jlabq.org)

**JOIN FOR THE VOLUNTEERING. STAY FOR THE FRIENDSHIPS.**