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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Junior League of Memphis announces 2016-2017 Community Projects**

MEMPHIS, TENN. – April 13, 2016 –The 2016-2017 Junior League of Memphis Community Projects has been announced. These community projects will allow the JLM to continue its mission of promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women and improving communities.

“The JLM is excited to partner with these incredible organizations and programs in the form of volunteer and funding support, said Amy Stack, President of the Junior League of Memphis. True partnerships are what move the needle when it comes to improving our neighborhoods, and we're proud to join with groups who share that commitment."

The 2016 – 2017 JLM Community Projects are as follows:

**GrowMemphis Garden**

Volunteers will work alongside members of the community, as well as the GrowMemphis Garden Program Director, interns and organization staff, to support community gardens throughout Memphis. Projects include planting and harvesting, working together to assemble raised beds, green houses, compost tumblers etc. in various community gardens.

**Binghampton Christian Academy**

Members of the Junior League will tutor children at Binghampton Christian Academy (kindergarten to eighth grade) once a week for one hour. In addition to this weekly tutoring, one social event will be held each semester for the 30 students who live on campus.

**Camp Good Grief**

Our goal is to provide fun for children ages 7 to 12 living in Shelby County and surrounding areas who have experienced the death of a loved one in the past two years. The camp provides a safe, secure, and structured environment, in which they are encouraged to work through their grief issues with other children experiencing a similar loss. It encourages the children to explore their feelings about the loss of a loved one so they may learn to thrive in a world without that special person.

**FirstWorks**

The Corners of Highland Heights provides academic and life skill assistance to the children and families in the Highland Heights community through weekly programs of tutoring by professional teachers and tutors. The children range in age from 1st grade through 8th grade and are split into classrooms based on age.

**Memphis Athletic Ministries: Ladies Lounge**

The mission of Memphis Athletic Ministries is to help build Godly youth in under-resourced neighborhoods by teaching them to love God, love others and love self, thereby positively impacting their families and neighborhood. MAM provides year-round mentoring programs to at-risk youth, ages 5 to 14, in disadvantaged urban Memphis neighborhoods. Our MAM focus will be on girls in the program so we get the opportunity to hold special events like "spa day" and have decorated a "Ladies Lounge" for our special young women.

**FirstWorks: Parent Program**

Volunteers will build relationships with and provide programming to parents of children enrolled with Corners of Highland Heights. The program goal is to empower parents with life skills and career information to help them live better lives.

**Su Casa: Faith and Finances**

Su Casa is an organization dedicated to meeting the spiritual, physical and social needs of adults who use its services. Su Casa is a Christian-based organization and its programming is modeled on Christian love for our neighbors. JLM volunteers will partner with Su Casa staff to provide financial literacy tutoring.

**Su Case: Childcare**

Su Casa is an organization dedicated to meeting the spiritual, physical and social needs of adults who use its services. Su Casa is a Christian-based organization and its programming is modeled on Christian love for our neighbors. JLM volunteers will provide childcare for nursery during parents’ ESL classes.

**Impact America: Save First**

Impact America provides free tax preparation services to working families by engaging students and recent college graduates for the purpose of addressing community needs and empowering generations through collaborative efforts to promote change. Impact America will soon open in the Binghampton Development Center in Memphis.

**Neighborhood Delegate**

**Is this a project?**

**LEAD**

The JLM LEAD program (Leaders Evolving and Development) serves people across Memphis who are involved in the nonprofit community. Over the course of 10 classes, participants acquire skills ranging from Personal Branding and Time Management to Technology and Networking. Upon completion of the LEAD Program, participants will be equipped with the knowledge and skills that will empower them as leaders within their organizations.

**Neighborhood Impact Committee**

The Neighborhood Impact Committee is a new committee for 2016-2017. These volunteers will put their event-planning skills to good use as they organize special events in the neighborhoods we have chosen as our community partners - Binghampton, Berclair, and Highland Heights.

**GROW Binghampton Thursday Nights and Saturday Events**

G.R.O.W. (Giving, Readiness, Opportunities & Wellness) is one of the JLM's most popular and successful projects. The program focus will continue the work we've done in the Binghampton neighborhood by providing programming and events that focus on education and personal development for families in the area.

**GROW Pre-K and Reading Readiness**

This collaboration will build on the collective assets of the JLM community and help G.R.O.W. (Giving, Readiness, Opportunities & Wellness) students’ potential by providing programming and events that focus on education and educational development. The JLM will partner with the Pre-K and Kindergarten teachers at Brewster Elementary School to choose books & crafts that go along with their curriculum and work one on one with the students to prepare them for kindergarten.

**GROW Berclair**

Thanks to the hard work of our GROW Expansion Volunteers, we are settling into the Berclair neighborhood with our partner, Streets Ministries. Volunteers will work to establish and grow our programming which typically includes evening events for kids and their families followed by a nutritious meal that everyone enjoys together. Volunteers will also work with the Neighborhood Impact Committee to host special events in the neighborhood to help spread the word about GROW-Berclair and other JLM efforts in the community.

**Extra Hands**

Extra Hands volunteers are often the "face" of JLM in the community as they provide organizations with helping hands for many activities including silent auctions, 5K runs, parties, and other events.

**Kids in the Kitchen**

We partner with different internal and external community groups to bring nutrition education and allow children in the community to experience different healthy snack/meal options in an interactive fashion. We work as a team to teach health education and fundamentals of healthy living while serving as role models to school age children who are excited and enthusiastic about working with us.

**Innovative Teaching Grants**

Innovative Teaching Grants volunteers review grant applications from local teachers wanting to provide additional opportunities for their students to experience creative and innovative projects. Once grants are awarded, we follow up with teachers to provide support and learn how their projects were received. We also help our teachers prepare a presentation of their project to share with JLM members. This year we are planning to focus in the neighborhoods we've identified as partners in our Neighborhood Revitalization work, Binghampton, Berclair, and Highland Heights.

**TAPA**

**Is this a project?**

**Impact Grants is this the same as Impact America: Save First?**

Impact America provides free tax preparation services to working families by engaging students and recent college graduates for the purpose of addressing community needs and empowering generations through collaborative efforts to promote change. Impact America will soon open in the Binghampton Development Center in Memphis. As part of this new project, JLM volunteers will work one-on-one to help participants prepare their tax returns. Volunteers will receive training prior to the start of the placement, so there is no prior experience in tax preparation necessary.

**About the Junior League of Memphis**

The Junior League of Memphis (JLM) 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. As one of the largest volunteer groups in the Mid-South, the JLM is committed to revitalizing neighborhoods in and around Memphis through the development of, and participation in, programs that positively impact the environments where people live, work and play.

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