

SOUTH CENTRAL REGION



GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE

Hello everyone, and welcome to the new 2026-28 biennium! I am so honored and excited to serve as your governor, and I look forward to cheering you all to great things as your clubs continue to serve women and girls in your communities and beyond through your fundraising, events and service projects.

I wanted to share my theme for the biennium, which is "Be a Lighthouse." My three main points are to Stand tall, Shine your light and Guide others. We'll talk more about this when we gather for Districts Meeting in October and at the Region conference, but I want you to begin thinking about how YOU as an individual Soroptimist member can be a lighthouse in your community. And then how your club can also be that lighthouse.

The first aspect, Stand Tall, means to be proud of who we are and to embrace the mission and great things happening across our federation. We are making a true impact toward our BIG GOAL of reaching half a million women and girls by 2031, and it takes each of our clubs to reach that goal. This means making sure your club is doing as much as possible to keep projects mission-centric as a way to celebrate our collective impact and be a cohesive unit as Soroptimists.

Our organization is a solid one, with a clear mission, and we want to STAND TALL and be part of that to the best of our ability. I look forward to walking alongside you as we do just that both individually and collectively over the next two years.

Yours in Service,
Teresa Cox Young



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Be a Lighthouse

- *Stand tall*
- *Shine your light*
- *Guide others*



SPOTLIGHT

AUGUST
2026

DISTRICTS MEETING

It's Districts Meeting time!

Our theme for this year is "Get Your Shine On!" And we plan to do just that!

The dates are October 16-17, 2026, and the meeting will be held at the Embassy Suites Will Rogers Airport in Oklahoma City, OK.

We have been super busy planning an unforgettable experience for all!

- ONLINE registration ONLY! We are embracing technology and saving our trees! No paper registration forms will be accepted.
- District Conference T-shirts will be available for advance purchase. We will wear them on Saturday during the day. We will order a limited # of extras BUT please purchase your shirt in advance to ensure that your size is available.
- Trade Fair - ONLY Soroptimist Branded Items will be for sale throughout the conference.
- Friday night will be a Pajama Party! So plan to wear your comfy PJs (public appropriate PLEASE!) for games and competition!
- Service Project (Saturday afternoon) - We will partner with Dragonfly Home in Oklahoma City. They provide free, confidential support services to adult and teen survivors of sex and labor human trafficking. Details to come in the Call!
- Saturday night will be a Decades Soiree! Each District Director has chosen a decade to represent. Plan to wear your "After 5 Attire" according to your decade.
 - District I - 80s
 - District II - 70s
 - District III - 60s
- Our entertainment for Saturday evening will be KARAOKE!!! BUT! You are only allowed to choose songs from your decade to perform! So....get your songs and performances ready! To ensure we have your song selections available, please send your song to Shebra Hackett no later than 9/25/2026! Please email them to her at d3director@scrsoroptimist.org.

As you can see, WE have been quite busy!

We are SOOOOO EXCITED to get our SHINE on with you!

Be on the lookout for the Call to Meeting for registration info and more details!

See you soon!

FOCUS CHAIRS MOMENTS

MEMBERSHIP, KAREN ACKERMAN, CHAIR

A key message from SIA for clubs this year is providing a positive club experience. As we start again in a new club year, remember to include new members in committees by giving them roles, providing education and training for programs that they may not be familiar with, and being open to hearing new ideas.

PROGRAM, JACQUE SAPPINGTON, GOVERNOR-ELECT

Live Your Dream Awards season is upon us! The online application system is open, and all Club chairs have been sent an email invitation to join or reactivate their accounts. Everyone is required to sign a new confidentiality agreement. **Also, don't miss the Region Program training on August 17th at 8:00 pm EST.** If you have any issues, please contact Michelle Radcliffe, Region LYD Chair.

EDUCATION, RENEE CRANE, CHAIR

The focus on Education includes training and educating our members to be effective leaders by showcasing skills such as critical thinking, flexibility, engagement, and problem solving. This will be done through conducting meetings and/or presentations at conferences and ensuring clubs have the information they need to meet roadmap metrics set forth by headquarters. More to come as this new program rolls into South Central Region!

PUBLIC AWARENESS, KELLY FOGARTY, CHAIR

As we prepare for the new club year, be sure to have a plan for increasing Awareness around everything your club does. Please join in our monthly online meetings for discussion, tips, and answers to your questions! The first one will be on Sept. 21. **Until then, also please find and follow our sister clubs in South Central Region. You will enjoy what you learn, and we can all use some extra Likes!**

FUNDRAISING, FARRAH BRABSON, CHAIR

I am honored to serve as Fundraising Chair and look forward to helping our region shine! There are a lot of ways to fundraise for Soroptimist, however this month I would like you to learn more about our Laurel Legacy Program because August is "Make-a-Will" Month. One of the greatest gifts we can leave isn't just what we have—it's the impact we choose to make. By including Soroptimist in your estate plans through the Laurel Legacy program, you can help ensure that women and girls continue to have the opportunity to achieve their dreams for generations to come.

SIA CONVENTION, SOUTH KOREA

Gov. Teresa and Gov. Elect Jacque were honored to represent the South Central Region at the 49th Biennial SIA Convention, held July 21-24 in Incheon, South Korea. We enjoyed a pre-convention tour of the city, then had orientation, a business session, workshops, general sessions and more. Here are the major takeaways:

- A total of 345 clubs were registered (of 1,078 total), with 332 total voting delegates and 928 total attending.
- We voted on three bylaws changes, related to the SIA Board. One involved removing the requirement for being a club president for board consideration (region leadership is required). One involved changes to the qualifications for SIA Board President Elect to require at least one year on the board or previous service of three years. One involved creating a nominating committee for SIA Board President Elect, with specific makeup. Both motions 1 and 2 passed; 3 failed; and all will be sent to the clubs for a vote in October.
- The SIA financial report showed \$16.6 million in assets (\$14.2 million net) and 83% in cash and investments, which make up 65% of the assets. The federation also has 12+ months in reserves.
- Since the BIG GOAL was launched, around 209,400 women and girls have been impacted. That includes \$3.4 million in Live Your Dream Awards and 23,870 girls in Dream It, Be It projects around 14 countries.
- We heard from three federation-level Live Your Dream winners, all of whom had us in tears. And grateful for what our organization does to support women and girls!
- We enjoyed workshops on resolving conflict and listening skills; AI solutions for club promotion; and governance documents.
- It was beautiful to see amazing, strong and passionate women from all over the federation come together from diverse backgrounds and cultures with a shared purpose and mission. Absolutely inspirational!

SPOTLIGHT ON MEMBERSHIP

Many thanks to the clubs who sent in ideas about Membership! The editor wants to thank the clubs in Amarillo, Kansas City Northland, Ponca City, Grand Prairie, Plainview, Arkansas City, Muskogee, Winfield, Joplin, Rockwall, Wichita and Hutchinson. Here is an overview of some of the most successful practices from our clubs, supplemented by some of SIA's initiatives. We hope you find a good idea or two for your clubs.

FINDING PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS

Many clubs get involved in civic events, both as volunteers and attendees, and use the opportunity to talk about Soroptimist. Ponca City shared hosting a succulent potting activity at a fair booth, which keeps people there for a few minutes so they can hear more about us, while taking something fun home. Wear your club shirts and have flyers on hand whenever you participate. You can also hand out "Interest" cards and have a similar form on the website to start a dialog. New members who see us on social media should find a fun, purposeful, and welcoming club vibe. And remember to invite friends.

PROSPECTIVE MEMBER MEETINGS

Dinners, lunches, even a Saturday mimosa brunch are all great events once you have some people to invite. Joplin held a spa day, working with a business that offered discounts to them. Invite a speaker, or make it a low-key social time; call it a Salad Social or other theme to add interest. Amarillo keeps a spreadsheet with each prospect to track contacts made with them. Many clubs offer pro-rated dues after January.

MEMBER RETENTION

Keeping a list of who attends each meeting and event, and checking on those who have not been able to come, are good ways to keep members involved. Mentors/buddies for new members are often used. Recognize birthdays and club anniversaries. Socials, such as 5th Thursday Socials by Plainview and Muskogee, allow for special non-business time together, as do holiday parties. Rockwall holds a summer potluck birthday party and celebrates every member, and Hutchinson has swim parties with themes such as Passport to Purpose, with games to learn about our work.

SPOTLIGHT ON MEMBERSHIP

MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS

Member rosters, with photos and contact info, are circulated by many clubs. To stay in touch, some use email, GroupMe, and text messages. Grand Prairie makes a phone call to remind members of upcoming meetings.



SIA has a new Membership initiative, *Driven by Dreams*. All members are invited to join in a Webinar on September 2.

There is a wealth of information on the SIA site, including topics like Rolling Out the Welcome Mat, the No Guilt Club, and much more. If you are reflecting on new ideas, visit soroptimist.org under “For Clubs”.



JOIN US! Live Webinar

Driven by Dreams Soroptimist Membership Campaign

Learn how Soroptimists' exciting new membership campaign can help your club inspire new members and grow its impact!

**Available in all languages*



Sept 2 | 8:00 p.m. (ET)



soroptimist.org/events



Big Goal Accelerator Projects Quick Guide

June 2026

What criteria must projects meet to be eligible?

To be eligible, club and region work must meet all of the following criteria:

1. Work only with women and/or girls who are facing obstacles
2. Serve women and/or girls who are not already served by or counted under the Dream Programs
(*Live Your Dream: Education and Training Award for Women®* and *Dream It, Be It: Career Support for Girls®*)
3. Provide access to formal education with the ultimate goal of economic empowerment
4. Be a Soroptimist-led hands-on project
5. Be reported to SIA through the official reporting [link](#)

What kinds of projects are NOT eligible?

Projects that focus on:

- Raising awareness
- Beautification of space
- General social empowerment
- Dream Programs work
- Supporting projects conducted by other organizations, including monetary support
- Providing grants/donated funds given to nonprofit organizations

What do we mean by “obstacles?”

These are examples of the obstacles that can make accessing education more difficult for a woman or girl:

- Poverty
- Violence
- Racism
- Teen pregnancy
- Being a foster care youth
- Trafficking
- Single parenting
- Substance abuse disorder

What are some examples of projects that increase access to education for our target population of women and girls facing obstacles?

- Scholarships/awards (for college, technical/vocational school, advanced degrees)
- Removing obstacles (providing necessary items for education like computers, internet, transportation; paying fees for college-preparation exams, college applications, entrance exams, or professional licensure)
- Classes (focused on job training, skills training, applying for financial aid/college, computer training, career mentorship)

Do you have a specific project that you aren't sure is eligible? Email program@soroptimist.org.

WHAT IS THE BIG GOAL ACCELERATOR?

SIA realized a few years ago that clubs were doing more than the Dream Programs (Live Your Dream Awards and Dream It, Be It), to help women and girls reach their dreams. When we approach people outside of our organization, including sponsors, other nonprofits, and even the United Nations, we need to properly reflect the numbers who are served by our clubs.

Instead of just counting the Dream Program total numbers, we realized we could capture other mission-focused work of the clubs, and present a more accurate picture of our impact. So, the BGAP was formed, to allow clubs to report, and SIA to accumulate information about, more of what we do.

A Case Study



Club X had a wonderful charter member, Susan Brown, who passed away. Knowing how much Susan loved her club, her children offered to fund an annual grant award of \$1,000, which the Soroptimists could give. They donated the funds to the club and asked to be present at the ceremony.

The “Susan Brown Award” was running for many years, awarded to help a high school student in the biology field, where Susan had her career. When SIA shared the initiative for the BGAP, the club decided to revise the award. They renamed it the Soroptimist Education Grant in Memory of Susan Brown.

They further amended the application to (1) make only girls eligible, and (2) ask for information about obstacles they have faced.

Susan’s family was happy with the change and agreed she would have loved it. The club gained additional awareness by including *Soroptimist* in the name. And the revisions made it possible to count the program among the mission-focused work of Club X as reported to SIA.

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