



JUNIOR LEAGUE OF MINNEAPOLIS

Women building better communities®

For Immediate Release

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THE JUNIOR LEAGUE OF MINNEAPOLIS'S TWO NEW PROGRAMS TAKE AIM AT LITERACY AND HUNGER

Minneapolis (June 25, 2009) — The Junior League of Minneapolis (JLM) has announced two new community outreach programs that will join its roster — one aimed at literacy and the other at hunger.

Between the Lines is a program designed to strengthen the bond between a child and an incarcerated mother or other female caregiver through literacy. Of these children, the average age is 8 and 6,600 of them are under the age of 5. JLM members will go to minimum-security prisons and tape female inmates reading books to their children or grandchildren. The recording, a new copy of the book and a personal note will then be sent to the child.

Based on a successful program that is currently in its fifth year at the Junior League of Portland, *Between the Lines* will supply the resources, supplies and volunteers to facilitate reading events at a local prison starting in the fall of 2009.

Backpack Buddies aims to help kids who due to their family's financial situation, suffer from chronic hunger and who may not have enough to eat when they're away from school and the free meals provided there. Junior League volunteers will pack food in reusable bags that kids can take home each weekend and return the following Monday.

The program is based on similar programs implemented in the Junior League of Hampton Roads, Va. and San Angelo, TX. Backpack Buddies is expected to start serving kids next fall.

The Junior League's outreach programs are designed to provide maximum benefit to JLM communities through the support of league volunteers, community partnerships and direct financial assistance.

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“For more than 85 years, The Junior League of Minneapolis has recognized needs in the community and developed programs that connect a cadre of trained volunteers to help get the programs off the ground,” said Anna Lyons, president of the Junior League of Minneapolis. “We’re excited to find new ways to attack two very serious problems facing our community.”

The new programs will receive support from JLM for three to five years on average and then spin off into the community as other JLM programs have done in the past. *Between the Lines* and *Backpack Buddies* joins JLM’s roster of current outreach programs which include: *Kids in the Kitchen*, *Helping Hands*, *Books 4 Kids* and *LeagueAires*.

The League is currently searching for community partners ranging from food shelves to grocers as well as local companies and organizations who can assist in this initiative.

About the Junior League of Minneapolis

The Junior League of Minneapolis (JLM) is a nonprofit organization made up of women committed to promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women and improving the community through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. Established in 1923, the JLM continues to develop projects to fill needs within the Minneapolis community. Past projects include helping to found the Greater Minneapolis Crisis Nursery, Free Arts MN and the Jeremiah Program. Current projects address issues from hunger to nutrition to literacy. The Junior League of Minneapolis reaches out to women of all races, religions, and national origins who demonstrate an interest in and commitment to voluntarism. For more information please visit www.jlminneapolis.org.

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