

Soroptimist International of the Americas, Inc.®

# 2017-2018

## Annual Report



SOROPTIMIST

Best for Women®

# FY17/18 Soroptimist Board of Directors

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# To Our Donors, Members and Supporters

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We dedicate this report to you in honor of your generosity, support and love for the world's women and girls. Without you, none of our work would be possible. And because of you, women and girls are on track to living full and productive lives. You have made incredible things happen in FY17/18.

**From the bottom of our hearts,  
we thank you!**



**FY17/18 SIA President**  
Dawn Marie Lemonds



**FY17/18 SIA Secretary/Treasurer**  
Kathy King



**SIA Executive Director & CEO**  
Elizabeth M. Lucas, CAE

# The Soroptimist Dream Programs

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The Soroptimist Dream Programs—*The Live Your Dream Awards: Education & Training Awards for Women*® and *Dream It, Be It: Career Support for Girls*®—are dedicated to helping women and girls who face obstacles achieve economic empowerment.

Thanks to your support, our program participants have the resources and opportunities they need to reach their full potential and live their dreams.

## Thank You, Torrid Foundation!



Soroptimist extends our deepest thanks to the Torrid Foundation for its generosity over the past year. In addition to supporting the *Live Your Dream Awards* through direct funding and promoting the program in Torrid stores, the Torrid Foundation contributed \$25,000 cash awards to *Live Your Dream Awards* finalist recipients Lucia, Shamayel and Ana Caren. The Foundation worked with Soroptimist staff to fly all three recipients to Yokohama, Japan, where they accepted their awards in person at Soroptimist's 45th Biennial Convention. In addition, Torrid provided the three women with wardrobes for this special occasion. SIA is grateful to have Torrid as a partner in our mission to empower women and girls.

# Live Your Dream: Education and Training Grants for Women®

The Soroptimist Live Your Dream Awards program provides financial support to head-of-household women striving to enhance their economic status and create better lives for themselves and their families by obtaining additional education and training.

Recipients may use the cash grants however they choose in support of their education goals—including for tuition, books, childcare and transportation.

This year, thanks to our generous donors, funding for the program increased by 15 percent and we were able to give 128 additional awards to deserving women!

## In FY17/18

**1,595**

women's lives were improved

**\$2.4 million+**

in education awards were disbursed through the program

**802**

women received additional support beyond an award

**100%**

of Soroptimist countries and territories gave awards

*"In keeping my future in focus, I plan to align myself by obtaining the education I need to succeed. The Live Your Dream Award has been a tremendous blessing for me in helping me to conquer my dreams and it gave me this boost of confidence to keep pressing forward."*

**—Ivana, Live Your Dream Awards Recipient**



# Meet the FY17/18 Live Your Dream Awards<sup>®</sup> Finalists



## Ana Caren

Mexico

Ana Caren was forced to deal with the trauma of an abusive father and mentally ill mother. After years of chaos, her parents separated and Ana moved with her mom and siblings to live with their grandparents. After her mother died and her grandfather could no longer care for her three young siblings, Ana Caren began caring for them—all while going to college.

A bright young woman and good student, Ana Caren is studying for a degree in business development/innovation. She dreams of starting her own business one day. Ana Caren's first priorities are getting through school and being there for her siblings. She stated, "This is no longer a goal or a dream, it has become stronger than a commitment."



## Shamayel

USA

Shamayel was born to human rights activists in Afghanistan. When she was a young girl her parents defied the Taliban by sending Shamayel to an underground school. It was an incredibly brave move with deadly consequences. The Taliban subsequently murdered Shamayel's father, and her mother died of a heart attack upon hearing the horrible news.

Shamayel was sent to the U.S. by representatives in Afghanistan after they learned her life was also in danger. Her six younger siblings were left behind until Shamayel was able to arrange for them to come to the U.S., where they now live with her. Studying for a degree in international relations, Shamayel wants to continue her parents' human rights work, particularly around women and girls in Afghanistan. She recently became a U.S. citizen.



## Lucia

Canada

Lucia suffered unspeakable violence at the hands of her now ex-partner, who controlled every aspect of her life including her education, friends, religion, finances and independence. Horrifically, he had acquaintances break into their home and rape Lucia in front of her baby girl. She left several times before finally breaking free.

It took tremendous strength to overcome the physical and emotional abuse so that Lucia could see herself as a person worthy of success and happiness. After earning her GED, Lucia is now studying to become a special education assistant, with the eventual goal of becoming a teacher. Lucia said, "I have now gained the confidence and hope to dream again."



Watch Ana Caren, Shamayel and Lucia share their inspiring stories at: [Soroptimist.org/extraordinary-stories/index.html](https://www.soroptimist.org/extraordinary-stories/index.html)

# Igniting Change for Women

Your donations to the *Live Your Dream Awards* program empower women to make the best decisions for their circumstances. You trust women to use their award money in whatever way helps advance their educational goals. By giving women control over how they use their awards, you increase their self-confidence, and motivate them to reach for their dreams. Because of you, our *Live Your Dream Awards* recipients prove that with just a small boost of financial resources, women can get back on track and achieve their goals.

## Past *Live Your Dream Awards* recipients report:



**86%**

increased their standard of living for themselves and their dependents



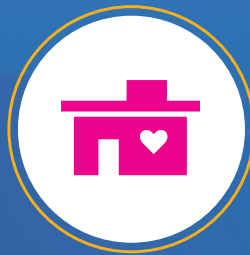
**74%**

who completed their education secured higher-paying employment



**93%**

have increased self-esteem



**97%**

of the 55% who reported past experiences with domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, trafficking, and/or prostitution—report now living in a safe environment.



**94%**

serve as a role model for their dependents

*“Being recognized for how hard I worked to fulfill my purpose as a human being and as a mother was one of the best experiences of my life.”*

**—Bailey, *Live Your Dream Awards* Recipient**





## ***Dream It, Be It: Career Support for Girls***<sup>®</sup>

*Dream It, Be It* gives girls the tools they need to achieve their education and career goals. It empowers them to break cycles of poverty, violence, and abuse. Your contributions to this program help young girls stay healthy and safe, and reduces the number of women in crisis in the future.

### **In FY17/18**

**14,547**

girls participated

**508**

*Dream It, Be It* projects were hosted in 14 Soroptimist countries and territories

**\$314,612**

was contributed by clubs in support of local *Dream It, Be It* projects, along with 27,915 volunteer hours

### **Powerful words from *Dream It, Be It*:**

*“I have learned I am more powerful than any obstacle.”*

*“I had no idea what I’m good at. Now I have some ideas about different careers and I can volunteer to see what I might like to do.”*

*“This program has given me the confidence and help I need to know how to grow and get what I need to succeed.”*



# On the Path to Success

Your *Dream It, Be It* support equips girls with the resources they need to overcome obstacles, such as poverty, teen dating violence, and teen pregnancy. Your financial support puts girls on the pathway to achieving their dreams.

## Dream It, Be It participants report:



**91%**

are more confident about their future success



**88%**

feel more prepared to pursue their career goals



**90%**

created achievable goals for the future



**85%**

believe *Dream It, Be It* has provided them with new tools to overcome obstacles to their success



**88%**

understand how their values can connect to possible careers



**85%**

were introduced to professional role models



# Soroptimist Club Grants for Women & Girls

You made it possible for Soroptimist to award grants to clubs for projects that address specific local needs throughout the communities our organization serves. Your support makes a lasting difference in the lives of women and girls throughout the world.

## In FY17/18

**\$70,500**

was granted to 30 Soroptimist projects in 6 countries

**2,522**

women and girls were helped through club grants projects



### Impact of Projects Conducted in 17/18



**1,000**

women and girls were provided opportunities for economic advancement



**1,058**

women and girls gained access to educational opportunities



**419**

women and girls were given tools and resources to help them live free from violence



**45**

women and girls gained access to healthcare

**SI/Yosakoi Kochi, Japan,** used its Soroptimist Club Grant to provide three *Dream It, Be It* seminars to secondary school girls living in rural areas who do not have easy access to career planning resources or mentors. Funds were used to secure the venue and provide printed materials. Club members planned and prepared the seminars, hosted sessions, and secured guest speakers.

# LiveYourDream.org

Soroptimist powers LiveYourDream.org, a digital action network. This online movement is dedicated to ensuring every woman and girl has the opportunity to reach her full potential and live her dream. Supporters create impact through Soroptimist’s two life-changing programs leading to economic empowerment—*Live Your Dream: Education & Training Awards for Women* and *Dream It, Be It: Career Support for Girls*. Supporters take action to address some of the most serious challenges women and girls face today, such as gender-based violence and lack of access to quality education.

## In FY17/18

**127,825**

supporters are part of the community

**\$165,000**

in funding from corporate partners who discovered Soroptimist through LiveYourDream.org

## A Community in Action



**9,690**

actions were taken to help women and girls reach their full potential



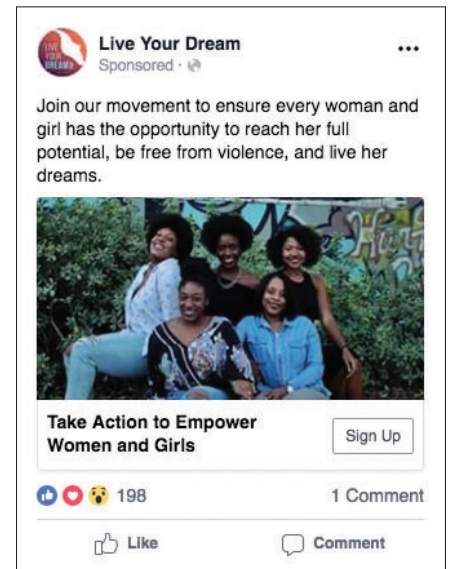
**1,333**

advocates sent messages to member of Congress urging them to pass the International Violence Against Women Act



**80**

supporters served as virtual judges for Soroptimist’s *Live Your Dream Awards* program



**6 million+**

women across the U.S. saw our online ads (Google Grants and Facebook Ads)

*“I felt honored to help with such a worthy cause. For too long women have been left in the shadows; it is wonderful to see the opportunity provided by LiveYourDream.org.”*

**—Live Your Dream Awards Volunteer Judge**

## Soroptimist Membership

At the end of FY17/18, Soroptimist comprised 21 countries and territories, including Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guam, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Puerto Rico, Taiwan, United States, and Venezuela.

### IN 2018

**Clubs:** 1,269

**Members:** 29,335

**Change in members from FY16/17:** (546)

**Change in clubs from FY16/17:** +7

*“I love being able to support other women and girls, especially from Paraguay, in the areas of education and health, and sharing experiences with other members, developing friendships, ideas and objectives. It feels very rewarding to assist other women and be part of their progress and satisfaction.”*

—Soroptimist Member

## FY17/18 Financials

Fiscal Year Ended August 31, 2018

### Statement of Financial Position

|   | FY2018       | FY2017       |
|---|--------------|--------------|
| <b>Total Assets</b>                     | \$14,291,581 | \$13,659,277 |
| <b>Total Liabilities</b>                | 2,384,983    | 2,293,850    |
| <b>Total Net Assets</b>                 | 11,906,598   | 11,365,427   |
| <b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b> | \$14,291,581 | \$13,659,277 |

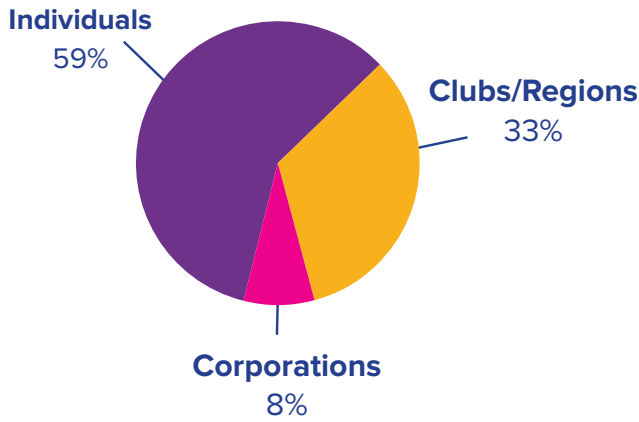
### Statement of Activities

|                              | FY2018       | FY2017       |
|------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| <b>Revenue</b>               | \$8,295,600  | \$5,570,940  |
| <b>Expenses</b>              | 7,754,429    | 5,745,624    |
| <b>Change in Net Assets</b>  | \$541,171    | (\$174,684)  |
| <b>Net Assets, Beginning</b> | \$11,365,427 | \$11,540,111 |
| <b>Net Assets, Ending</b>    | \$11,906,598 | \$11,365,427 |

*Financial information taken from the audited financial statements dated August 31, 2018. The full audit is available at <Soroptimist.org>. A copy may be requested by contacting Soroptimist International of the Americas, Inc.® at <siahq@soroptimist.org>.*

## Who Supported Us This Year

Fiscal Year Ended August 31, 2018

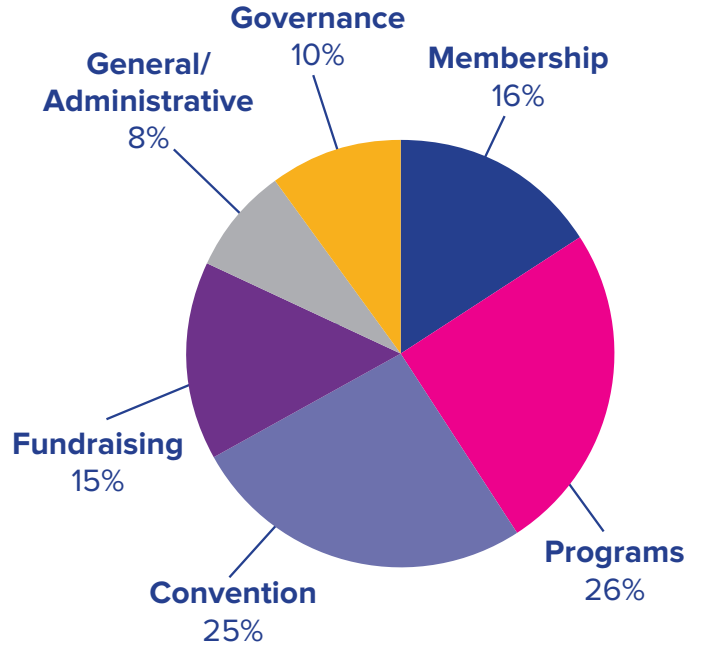


### Contributors

|               | FY2018             | FY2017             |
|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Clubs/Regions | \$749,304          | \$728,813          |
| Individuals   | 1,354,687          | 1,130,432          |
| Corporations  | 180,375            | 12,000             |
| <b>TOTAL</b>  | <b>\$2,284,366</b> | <b>\$1,871,245</b> |

## How We Use Our Operating Funds

Fiscal Year Ended August 31, 2018

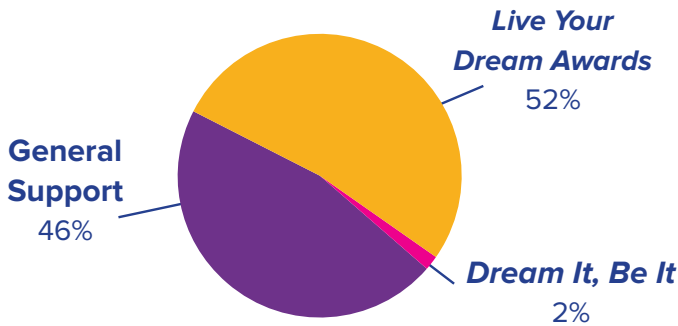


### Program Services

|            | FY2018      | FY2017      |
|------------|-------------|-------------|
| Programs   | \$1,918,827 | \$2,268,315 |
| Membership | 1,358,766   | 1,666,871   |
| Governance | 736,136     | 772,911     |
| Convention | 1,969,428   | -           |

### Support Services

|                        | FY2018             | FY2017             |
|------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Fundraising            | \$1,160,230        | \$589,848          |
| General/Administrative | 611,042            | 447,479            |
| <b>TOTAL</b>           | <b>\$7,754,429</b> | <b>\$5,745,624</b> |



### Contributions Supported

|                        | FY2018             | FY2017             |
|------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Live Your Dream Awards | \$1,193,069        | \$752,686          |
| Dream It, Be It        | 39,417             | 52,034             |
| General Support        | 1,051,880          | 1,066,525          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>           | <b>\$2,284,366</b> | <b>\$1,871,245</b> |

# Donor Spotlight

Generous donors like you make everything Soroptimist does possible.  
On behalf of the women and girls we serve, we thank you!



“There are many women who aren’t blessed all over the world,” says Chihiro Kon of SI/Hakodate, Japan, and this truth has been a guiding force for the past 28 years of her Soroptimist tenure, in which she has held many leadership positions. Chihiro has served as governor and region fundraising chair for Japan Kita Region.

She fundamentally believes in not only supporting Soroptimist’s global Dream Programs with her volunteer efforts, but also contributes financially, reaching the Laurel Society’s Inner Circle in FY17/18 following an especially generous gift. Chihiro made this gift “as the commemoration of my installation as the 2018-2020 Japan Kita Region governor.” She joined a long lineage of women whom she hoped to honor with her generosity. “I gave the donation as a mark of respect to the Founder Governor, Kayoko Sen, great past governors, Tomiko Sen and Masako Sen over three generations, and also, Masako Sen who was installed as Yokohama Convention chair.”

In every facet of her life, Chihiro seeks to help others—Soroptimist is grateful to benefit from her altruism.



Kelly Fogarty of SI/Manhattan Beach, CA, in Camino Real Region, has been a Soroptimist for 16 years, and FY17/18 year was one of the best yet! It marked her return to the Fund Development Council, as well as her entry into the prestigious Laurel Society’s Inner Circle, following an extraordinarily generous gift of stock shares totaling more than \$36,000.

Says Kelly, “All funds donated through the Laurel Society support our global Dream Programs, add to the funds that are distributed to region *Live Your Dream Award* recipients, and support local projects through Soroptimist Club Grants.”

The generous gift of stock is just one of her contributions to SIA. Kelly is passing on the Soroptimist tradition to the next generation—her daughter Katie became a Soroptimist after graduating college. “My husband and daughter supported me in everything we did ... it’s now such an important part of our lives!”



**Ohran Choe**  
SI/Daegu, Korea

“People think of Soroptimist when they think of Ohran Choe,” says Ohran of SI/Daegu in Korea Region, and we believe it! Ohran went on to say, “People around me think that my second job is serving as a Soroptimist member. I talk about Soroptimist all the time to people around me and ask them to join.”

Ohran has been on the Fundraising Council, a governor, and is currently serving on the Soroptimist Board of Directors. She is also a dedicated Inner Circle member within the Laurel Society. When asked what the greatest reward is from making a monetary contribution to Soroptimist, Ohran says, “my heart was filled with joy when I saw the funds that we use helped women and girls have dignity and confidence, thereby making their lives better.”

In the past 24 years, Ohran has made a tremendous difference in our organization. We are grateful that nearly two and a half decades ago, she chose to follow her mentor, Sungsoon Kim, to Soroptimist. The organization has only improved since Ohran’s arrival.

A special thank you to Chihiro, Kelly and Ohran, and all of our generous donors for helping women and girls to reach their dreams.

View the complete FY17/18 donor list at <http://bit.ly/SIADonors17-18>.

## Thank You to Our Official Partners



**Interested in becoming a Soroptimist sponsor?**

Contact Susan Doughty at [susan@soroptimist.org](mailto:susan@soroptimist.org)

# Soroptimist International of the Americas, Inc.®

*Improving the lives of women and girls through  
programs leading to social and economic empowerment.*

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