Meet SIA’s 2018-2019 President
Get to know Elizabeth Di Geronimo of Caracas, Venezuela

Soroptimist Source
Read important news and information from SIA headquarters

SIA’s New Website
Learn about the “For Clubs and Members” section and the additional resources available to help you navigate the new site

Meet Soroptimist’s 2018 Live Your Dream Awards Recipients

Triumphing Over Extreme Adversity
Meet SIA’s 2018-2019 President Elizabeth Di Geronimo

What first attracted you to Soroptimist? The social service aspect. Mother Teresa of Calcutta once said of volunteers that the one who gives is the one who receives.

What function should volunteerism play in today’s world? In this world full of inequalities, poverty has the face of a woman. Our actions as volunteers give a voice to women and girls, who otherwise would not be heard.

Why is it important for Soroptimist’s brand that our focus be on women and girls, particularly with regard to access to education? Research confirms that education is the most effective intervention to help women and girls overcome obstacles. Helping them through our Dream Programs will ensure their future success.

What are the most pressing organizational issues facing SIA, and what are your ideas to address them? We need to modernize and redesign our systems. I pledge we will continue to what’s necessary to keep our organization moving forward.

What are your specific ideas for your year as president? I am asking all members and clubs to use #SpotlightSoroptimist to increase recognition of our work on behalf of women and girls. So, on the 25th day of each month, please upload news about your club’s Dream Program activities using the hashtag.

To read the full interview with President Elizabeth visit <bit.ly/MeetPresidentElizabeth>.

Transformation: A View from Spruce Street

A message from the SIA Executive Director & CEO

Nearly 3,000 members came together from all across our 21 countries and territories to celebrate our stars, explore our dreams, and make our wishes for the future.

During convention, we:
- Celebrated our Live Your Dream Awards recipients
- Commended our regions, clubs and leadership for their contributions and successes
- Gained insights into what we are doing well and opportunities to extend our reach
- Reflected on our MemberSHIP campaign achievements
- Honored our corporate partner, Torrid
- Learned about SI President Mariet’s President’s Appeal, and SI’s 2019 quadrennial convention in Malaysia.

Visit the convention page on our new SIA website for a complete recap, including numerous presentations.

As your club year gets underway, support your organization as we continue to work as one. Be sure to share how your club is adding to our collective impact through our Dream Programs. Join SIA President Elizabeth’s new hashtag campaign on social media: #SpotlightSoroptimist.

And please—weigh in, let me know how you feel. I want to hear from you: <elizabeth@soroptimist.org>.


President’s Message

It is my greatest delight that you have bestowed your trust and faith in me to serve as your president. This journey would not be possible without the support of my family and relatives, our SIA Board, our Executive Director & CEO Liz and her staff, and all the leaders who came before me.

Our organization is about changing lives. The fact is, every human being has the power to contribute to positive change—to be a gift to the world. Sometimes we might think, “What can one person do?” But the reality is we can change lives through many small actions. Our Dream Programs are proof of this. And, of course, when each of us works as part of the group, we can accomplish so much more.

In light of this, I believe we should scale up our programs, stand up for women and grow our impact. Our relevant response to meeting existing need will contribute positively to our brand by increasing our visibility and understanding of our important message.

I invite every member throughout SIA to participate in my social media campaign, #SpotlightSoroptimist. Be an influencer by telling the story and impact of our Soroptimist Dream Programs as experienced by your club by using this hashtag—and show how much Soroptimist is doing and what people are saying about our work.

As your president, I invite you to join the conversation using this hashtag, and take this journey with me. Together, we will make a difference in the lives of women and girls. Together we will #SpotlightSoroptimist!

Each year, we are astounded by the courage and perseverance of our Live Your Dream Awards recipients. Throughout our 21 countries and territories, these women inspire us with their triumph over extreme adversity. Convention attendees were especially thrilled to see and hear our three finalists in person. Thanks to the generosity of our corporate partner—Torrid—Lucia, Ana Caren and Shamayel traveled to Yokohama to share their extraordinary stories. All three are survivors of violence and on a quest to create a better life for themselves and their families.

Meet Soroptimist’s 2018 Live Your Dream Awards Recipients

Lucia, from British Columbia, Canada, 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. Horribly, 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. “I have now gained the confidence and hope to dream again,” said Lucia. “I am ready to put on my wings. I feel I have finally earned them.”

Ana Caren, from Mexico, was forced to deal with the trauma of an abusive father and mentally ill mother. After years of chaos, her parents separated and Ana Caren 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 engineering and 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. “This is no longer a goal or a dream, it has become stronger than a commitment,” she stated. “There is no choice … I will simply fight until I accomplish it!”

Shamayel was born to human rights activists in Afghanistan. When she was a young girl her parents defied the Taliban and sent 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. “My overall goal is very clear: I want to work on behalf of justice, equality, and peace on earth for all,” she said. “I will do everything needed to allow me to live my dream.”

Congratulations to these three phenomenal women, and the almost 1,500 others who are well on their way to living their dreams. And many thanks to the commitment of our members who help make dreams come true for these deserving women.
45th Biennial Convention

Thank you to the nearly 3,000 members who joined us in Yokohama, Japan, to celebrate our stars, explore our dreams and make wishes for our future! In addition to learning new things, members met new people and heard from inspiring speakers. The event offered members an opportunity to celebrate Soroptimist’s accomplishments benefiting the lives of women and girls, as well as to improve their own lives by gaining personal and professional development skills.

To read more convention coverage, visit <http://bit.ly/SIAConv2018-recap>. Make sure to save the date for SIA’s 46th Biennial Convention in beautiful Bellevue, Washington, USA!

SIA’s New Website

SIA is proud to showcase a new and engaging website! We have completely redesigned it to more accurately portray our vital brand, and to support a superior member experience. We collaborated with a reputable design firm, gathered input from leadership and members, and made sure to deliver a responsive and mobile-friendly design that features our Dream Programs, highlights our impact, and boasts a better-organized members area.

The members area is now called “For Clubs and Members,” and includes links to our translated documents on every main page (Federation Info, Program Resources, For Clubs, For Members, What’s New, Donate/Fundraise, and Shop). For our non-English speaking members, there is a Google translate link on the home page.

Here is a list of the new sections and what you can find under each area:

**Federation Info**
Access Club/Member/Leadership Directories, SIA’s Strategic Plan, Key Messaging

**Program Resources**
Live Your Dream Awards and Dream It, Be It club resources, Soroptimist Club Grants and LiveYourDream.org resources

**For Clubs**
Diamond Campaign materials, Pay Dues/Manage Club Roster, General information including Club Roadmap, Finance Information and more

**For Members**
Access/Update your Member Profile, Membership Benefits and Best for Women

**What’s New**
Important Updates, Headquarters Highlights, News from your SIA President and more

**Donate/Fundraise**
Individual Gifts, Laurel Society, Annual Report, Monthly Giving and enrollment forms, Club Gifts and other ways to give.

Additional resources to help you navigate the new site:

- A cheat sheet <http://bit.ly/website-cheat-sheet> to help you find the resources and information you need for a successful club and member experience
- A video tutorial <http://bit.ly/website-video-tutorial> to help you navigate everything the new site has to offer
Thank You

On behalf of the women we serve, 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, Ana Caren and Shamayel. 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.

Program

Increased Collective Impact

We consistently witness the power of education in transforming women’s lives through our Live Your Dream Awards.

The Institute for Women’s Policy Research released a report underscoring what we see all the time—that higher education is a pathway out of poverty for single mothers. Their research shows that single mother poverty rates were an average of 33 percent lower at each additional level of education attained. Our Live Your Dream Awards serve a specific population of head-of-household women with dependents because they face greater barriers to economic empowerment. Check out the full report here <http://bit.ly/womens-policy>.

Public Awareness

Be Brand Warriors

Having a consistent look and tone is important to increasing our local and global recognition. It is important that all levels of our organization use the “S” logo consistently. But branding is not just about the logo. The visual identity, website, name, and experience provided are all part of a brand. Each part must function in order for a brand to be successful and result in a positive emotional connection between the organization and its constituents.

Members can help cultivate our brand by participating in and promoting the Dream Programs. These programs are a true testament to what Soroptimist stands for. Promoting these programs helps extend our reach by attracting more applicants; appealing to those who wish to make an impact by donating to a good cause; and making ourselves known to the greater public, which increases our global recognition.

Fundraising

A Commitment to Our Mission

This year, Adrienne Horen of Janney Montgomery Scott is celebrating 30 years of supporting Soroptimist members and programs. What a commitment to our mission! As SI/Center City, PA (North Atlantic Region), president, Adrienne knows first-hand the impact the Dream Programs can have on women in her local community—and across the world.

Club Giving: Working as One

Certificates of Appreciation for the 1,011 clubs that gave in 2017-2018 will be arriving shortly! And we’re excited that 564 clubs will receive an extra honor on their certificate—the shooting star seal, for clubs that increased their giving this year. This special seal is a symbol of the reasons clubs are increasing their support of our global Dream Programs.

SI/Twain Harte, CA (Sierra Pacific Region), increased their club giving contribution to $3,000 for the 2018-2019 year, from an already generous $1,000. When asked what motivated this tremendous and life-changing increase, President Christine Ravely answered club members learned at the Sierra Pacific Region conference that our Dream Programs are made possible in large part by Club Giving! Members of SI/Twain Harte were also motivated by the idea that funds raised are dispersed to clubs across 21 countries and territories—including in their own region!

We are so glad the Dream Programs are fueling such great generosity, and we invite YOUR club to participate in Club Giving as well. Giving at least 10 percent of your locally raised funds leaves up to 90 percent of your proceeds to help women and girls in your local community. To learn more about why clubs participate in Club Giving, or to make your gift, visit <http://bit.ly/SIAClubGiving>.
Follow Soroptimist on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram and YouTube! Simply visit these social networks and search for “Soroptimist International of the Americas” to follow SIA today!

Members:
Email is the primary way we communicate with our members. Make sure you are receiving important emails and alerts by reviewing your profile at <Soroptimist.org/for-clubs-and-members/for-members/update-profile.html> and making any necessary changes.

Clubs:
The best way for headquarters and prospective members to contact clubs is through the Soroptimist club email accounts. A designated member should be checking the club email account regularly (at least once per week) to keep up to date with the latest SIA news or to connect with prospective members.

For help with setting-up or accessing the account, see the “For Clubs and Members” area on SIA’s website <Soroptimist.org/for-clubs-and-members/for-clubs/club-administration.html> or contact <siahq@soroptimist.org>.

Get in the Network!

Does SIA have your email address?

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Soroptimist Thanks its Official Sponsors