

Membership is the Gateway... Blaze the Trail Every Day!

The General Federation of Women's Clubs inaugural National Day of Service was held on September 30, 2023. The response was amazing! Dedicated to establishing an annual day of service, clubs nationwide came together to help raise awareness and solve a domestic problem. "The inaugural GFWC National Day of Service is an exciting opportunity for our clubwomen to demonstrate their volunteer know-how," said Debra Strahanoski, GFWC International President, and we did!



Many of you know the impact that Legislation, Public Policy, and Resolutions has had on our Federation. As a non-partisan and non-denominational organization, we have focused on issues involving women, children, and families. As early as 1904, we campaigned for the passage of the Pure Food and Drug Act. We have advocated for seat belt laws, equal pay legislation, and recently, in North Carolina, to raise the lawful age to marry to sixteen. Together, our voices are powerful.

As members of one of the oldest and largest women's volunteer organizations in the world, we are united in volunteer service. Over 60,000 members in every state and twenty countries work to improve the lives of others in their local communities. GFWC members annually donate an average of \$23 million on behalf of more than 195,000 projects, and volunteer more than six million hours! Wow!

Beyond the framework for five Community Service Programs, GFWC has two Special Programs. The first is the Signature Program: Domestic and Sexual Violence Awareness and Prevention, and the second is the Juniors' Special Program: Advocates for Children. Also, each administration the GFWC of North Carolina President selects a President's Special Project, which keeps the organization fresh and welcomes new opportunities and ideas for service.

We are thrilled with the support of this administration's President's Special Project, Mountains-to-Sea Trail

(MST.) Members are having fun with the MST, taking photos, and sharing creative ideas so we can post them on Facebook, Instagram, and in the NC Clubwoman Magazine. Our Juniors are busy too! The Director of Juniors' Special Project, NC C.A.R.E.S., boosts awareness of our Climate, Advocacy, Recycling, concern for our Environment, and Sustainability.

We have had famous members over the years, from the suffragists who worked tirelessly for the Women's Right to Vote, to First Lady, Eleanor Roosevelt, who advocated for the poor and disadvantaged, to Margaret Chase Smith, who was the first woman elected to both Houses of Congress.

The Women's History and Resource Center (WHRC) was founded by GFWC International Past President Juanita Bryant (1982-1984), in 1984, to collect, preserve, and promote the history of GFWC and women volunteers. They document the contributions of GFWC clubwomen from 1890 to the present through the GFWC archives, related special collections, and publications. Juanita Bryant, also a GFWC of North Carolina Past President, and the Women's History and Resource Center, located in Washington DC, will celebrate its 40th Anniversary next year on May 1, 2024.



Our State Federation's biggest fundraiser, Corporate Champions for Women and Children (CCWC) will take place on October 27, 2023. Established in 2017, CCWC recognizes companies who distinguish themselves through community involvement in support of programs

that benefit women and children. Funds raised at the event will allow GFWC-NC to continue to champion women and children, including the development of women in leadership, and our annual Leadership Education and Development Seminar (LEADS.)



FOR WOMEN & CHILDREN

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The LEADS panel and workshop provides LEADS participants with skills, a personal style inventory, and an overview of GFWC and GFWC of North Carolina, including history and accomplishments. Next year's LEADS Seminar will be held on April 25, 2024, the day before the official start of our Annual Convention. Topics include All Things GFWC, Connecting Digitally, GFWC to the Rescue, The Membership Connection, and more. You do not want to miss it!

Some of the many benefits to being a member include:

- Leadership Training and Professional Development
- Being a Member of a Community with Shared Values and Interests
- Advocating for Women and Children's Initiatives
- Personal Enrichment, Fun and Lasting Friendships
- Giving Back and Paying it Forward
- Strength in Unity for Shaping Public Issues and Policy
- Health & Happiness - Volunteers Live Longer and Enjoy Life More!

GFWC and GFWC of North Carolina websites offer member portals for use by members only. When you log in you will find a wealth of tools to support you and your club. There are toolkits for Communications and Public Relations, Leadership, Legislation and Public Policy, and Membership. The GFWC Stylebook, member orientation and retention brochures, member and club anniversary forms, resource guides, and community service program information and project ideas are also available.

Members are our greatest asset! GFWC Membership Recruitment Grants are available to all North Carolina clubs. A reminder that requests for the GFWC \$50 grants to assist with recruitment activities are being offered on a first-come first-serve basis. Be sure to send in the application soon; copy us and keep us informed. From the Mountains to the Sea... Members are Our Priority!

We extend a big thank you to all members for Living the Volunteer Spirit!

Karen Throckmorton
GFWC-NC President-elect
Karent@atmc.net

Rebecca Duffy
GFWC-NC Director-elect of Junior Clubs
rmouberly@yahoo.com

