

## Zonta Club of South County Rhode Island Annual Report June 1, 2024 - May 31, 2025

In the first full year of operation for our club, we had a very full slate of activities. We started and ended the year with the total addition of eleven new members. This gave our club the ability to successfully expand into new areas. We were able to undertake fundraising in a manner that provided us with the opportunity to choose and carry out a large service project. We chose the "Period Project" of creating and distributing 98 kits of feminine personal hygiene products to women and teens living with homelessness, those who may be in transitions due to emergency circumstances, or are of poverty status. These women have inconsistent access to hygiene products or safe sanitary spaces. The club solicited donations of both feminine hygiene products and cash donations from club members and the surrounding community, as well as expending some of the club's funds to purchase the rest of the needed supplies. The kits were assembled by club members and distributed to social service agencies that provide emergency shelter, basic needs, resources and support for the homeless, and a state program for foster children. Excess bulk items were distributed to public school nurses' offices in two nearby communities.

The fundraisers that were undertaken were the sale of poinsettia plants for the holidays in December, participating in holiday gift wrapping at a local mall, and undertaking a Calendar Raffle of gift cards and other prizes solicited from local merchants in our area. In addition to providing funds for the Period Project, and a donation to the Zonta Foundation for Women, some of it will be used next year to offer a local club award to the Young Women in Leadership Award candidate that our club chooses, and other local service needs that we will be seeking out.

In the way of education and scholarship, we selected a candidate for the ZI YWLA, but she wasn't chosen at the District level to go on. We had the wonderful opportunity to celebrate Amelia Earhart month at our January meeting by hosting Kiera Wilk, a local woman who is studying at Brown University who was awarded a 2024 Amelia Earhart Fellowship. Our members got to meet her and listen to the story of her very inspiring life journey.

The year was rounded out by also having other guest speakers at several of the monthly meetings. One of the speakers was from the Jonnycake Center in Westerly, a nonprofit community organization that, with the help of over 370 volunteers, maintains a food pantry, thrift store, a seasonal garden, and provides financial assistance, educational, and employment training opportunities. Our Area 2 Director, Verna Frasca, came in the fall and installed six new members and provided our newly formed club an insight into District 1. Our District Governor, Donna Raycraft, came to our Annual meeting in May and installed five new members. She told us about attending the ZI convention in Australia last summer, and about the upcoming District Fall Conference. In March, for International Women's Day, we watched a video entitled: "Breaking Barriers: International Day of Women and Girls in Science 2025". This was followed by an enlightening discussion by several club members, of their personal experiences of discrimination/harassment in the workforce over their careers in positions that are typically held by males.

Our club spent time during the year working with Mary Knight, the District Webmaster, in creating and uploading information to our new club website. We hope to use this website for greater visibility of our new organization, in a new community and a new state, as well as offering members an outlet for information about the club and its activities. We were also able to reach local people by having information about our activities published in two local newspapers, including a letter to the Editors for "Earth Day Elevating Equality for All". It highlighted the challenges posed on the environment and its subsequent gender inequities, caused by climate change, human activities that alter natural environments, and actions that disrupt biodiversity.

Our club is participating in the inaugural group of club "Twinning" at the International level with the Zonta Club of Wangaratta in the Province of Victoria in Australia. Our club is a newly formed club that is paired with a club that has been around for 36 years. The presidents of the two clubs meet via Zoom with the goal of sharing ideas that will help each other with the overall success of our clubs and extending international relationships. Despite the 16 hour difference in time zones and being on different continents, we are still able to communicate with each other with the hope of being able to meet up at the next international convention.

Our club did have its first summer social last July, with some of the prospective new members attending, to bridge the 'gap' when the club doesn't officially have a meeting scheduled. We will do so again this summer. In December we had a special holiday meeting at a local restaurant, which was very well received, and which likely will become a tradition.

Respectfully submitted,  
Nadine A. Salley  
President