



Service League  
OF CHEROKEE  
COUNTY

# ANNUAL REPORT



2023 / 2024

MAY - APRIL

# SERVICE LEAGUE OF CHEROKEE COUNTY

## 2023-2024 MEMBERS

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### EXECUTIVE BOARD

*Marcey Stein*  
PRESIDENT

*Melissa Wehunt*  
PRESIDENT-ELECT

*Amanda Speights*  
PAST PRESIDENT

*Becky French*  
COMMUNITY SERVICE

*Kim McCrary*  
CORRESPONDING  
SECRETARY

*Allyson Tanner*  
LEAGUE HISTORIAN

*Stephanie Barber*  
LEAGUE PUBLICITY

*Erika Bryant*  
LEAGUE RESOURCES

*Teresa Henry*  
PARLIAMENTARIAN

*Gwen Green*  
RECORDING  
SECRETARY

*Alison Smock*  
WEBMASTER

*Sarah Smith*  
TREASURER

*Ashley Carlile*  
WAYS AND MEANS

### PROVISIONAL MEMBERS

*Lexi Barnes*

*Kristine Corona*

*Danyel Edwards*

*Jen Garijanian*

*Lis Hames*

*Jessi Kessock*

*Stephanie O'Rourke*

*Brittany Page*

*Melissa Pavsner*

*Jenny Purvis*

*Autumn Ransom*

*Jenna Roberts*

*Nicole Ross*

*Amy Rowan*

*Melissa Sneed*

*Lauren Thomas*

*Angie Trimbach*

*Rebecca Ward*

*Diane Worley*

### ACTIVE MEMBERS

*Ashley Adams*

*Stacy Arnold*

*Rachel Ashe*

*Julia Aubin*

*Stephanie Barber*

*Tracy Barre*

*Brandie Bennett*

*Lendsey Bishop*

*Rachel Blackman*

*Leah Bleisath*

*Sara Bobo*

*Sarah Bowen*

*Erika Bryant*

*Neely Bursmith*

*Ashley Cagle*

*Ashley Carlile*

*Gwen Chambers*

*Brandi Clotfelter*

*Tiffanie Cromer*

*Amanda Day*

*Amber Domino*

*Allison Estapa*

*Becky French*

*Danielle Gantt*

*Danielle Garner*

*Amanda Gauthier*

*Jennifer Ghorley*

*Carol Goodreau*

*Gwen Green*

*Ashley Harwell*

*Allison Hawkins*

*Teresa Henry*

*Savannah Holcomb*

*Michell Houston*

*Kristin Johnson*

*Amy Kesler*

*Laura Killen*

*Anna Lamprey*

*Kathy Maher*

*Regina Martin*

*Leigh McCord*

*Kim McCrary*

*Mary Beth McInvale*

*Carolyn Moraniec*

*Jodi Morgan*

*Megan Morgan*

*Laura Nicholas*

*Tricia Parks*

*Amy Priest*

*Jenny Purvis*

*Autumn Ransom*

*Maggie Reames*

*Jennifer Reynolds*

*Marcelle Robustelli*

*Mary Roehl*

*Beth Rogers*

*Emili Roman*

*Kasey Ross*

*Rachael Sanford*

*Kelly Scott*

*Jaimie Sims*

*Jill Smallwood*

*Katie Smith*

*Sarah Smith*

*Alison Smock*

*Melissa Sneed*

*Amanda Speights*

*Marcey Stein*

*Kelly Street*

*Allyson Tanner*

*Katlyn Thacker*

*Angela Trethaway*

*Melissa Wehunt*



# THANK YOU FOR TEN YEARS OF SERVICE



For ten years, these ladies have served and led the League. They have served as League presidents, board members, and committee chairs. They have given their time and hearts to the children of Cherokee County! Overall, these ladies have helped to raise over \$1,000,000. Congratulations on becoming honorary members and "white shirts"!



Ashley Adams



Brandie Bennett



Neely Bursmith



Ashley Carlile



Brandi Clotfelter



Amanda Day



Mary Beth McInvale



Jennifer Reynolds



Kelly Scott



Katie Smith



# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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For over 85 years the Service League has worked quietly behind the scenes to improve the lives of children in Cherokee County, and the 2023-2024 League year was no exception. Between May 2023 and April 2024, League ladies volunteered thousands of hours, taking time around their busy schedules to work to improve the lives of children in our community.

We would not be successful in our mission to help children if it wasn't for our yearly fundraising efforts. We began the League year off in June with another successful Golfing FORE! the Children golf tournament which was held at a new location, the Fairways of Canton. This is always a fun day on the course, and we are looking forward to our 2024 tournament coming up in June.

Our biggest fundraiser of the year, Riverfest, was held at the end of September and was a massive success with record-breaking attendance. It was a beautiful weekend with over 28,000 patrons joining us at Etowah River Park. We also added additional Arts & Crafts vendors for a more extensive shopping experience for everyone and received great feedback on the additions.

The Reindeer Run for the Children once again included a 1 mile Fun Run for the kids, a Peachtree Road Race 5k qualifier, and as a new option for runners this year, a 10k course. Despite the rainy weather, we hosted 300 runners, had a great time celebrating the winners, and loved seeing everyone come out and bring their Christmas cheer..

In January, we held our third annual Service League Gala & Benefit. It was a beautiful evening that brought together community leaders and League members. We celebrated the work and mission of the League while also honoring other individuals and organizations of our community who do great work helping children along side us.

Through the many hours of hard work from our amazing fundraising Chairs and their committees, League ladies succeeded in raising over \$190,000 to support children in our community this year! The funds raised went towards helping our most vulnerable population in our community in the form of casework, Christmas gifts, scholarships, grants, and community service initiatives.

Throughout this past year, I have been so honored and proud to watch my League sisters come together, assume the best in each other, work as a team, and serve the children of our community with their gifts and talents. We are completely volunteer-led, so what we have been able to accomplish together this year is simply amazing. And it is what makes the Service League of Cherokee County so very special. I can't wait to see how we continue the tradition and heritage of helping children for years to come!

*Marcey Stein*

President, 2023-2024

# OUR IMPACT THIS YEAR

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**Money Spent on Casework, Community Service, Christmas, Grants, & Scholarships**

\$186,951.62

**Children helped through Casework, Christmas Gifts, and Scholarships**

517 children

**Families assisted through Casework, Christmas Gifts, and Scholarships**

340 families

**Hours Volunteered by League Members**

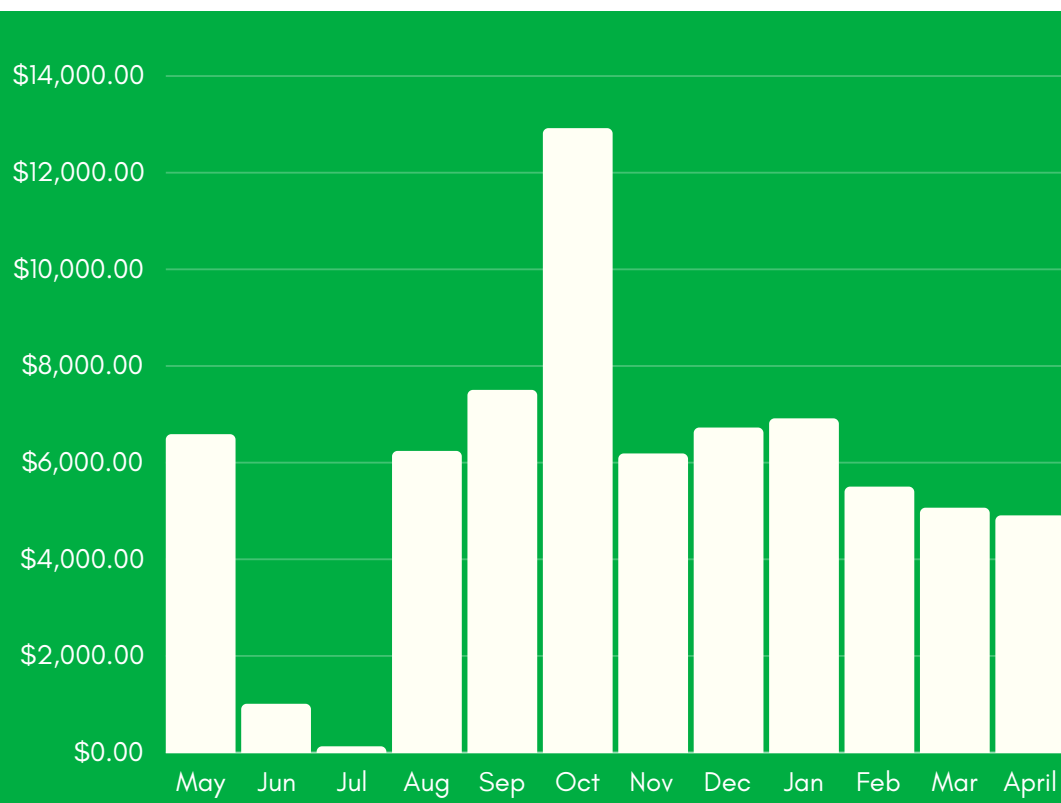
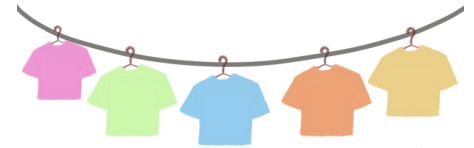
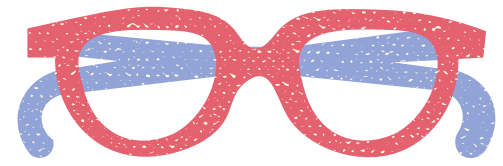
6,015.5 hours

# CASEWORK

The League is deeply dedicated to serving children in need in Cherokee County through our casework initiatives. This year, we received over 260 casework requests, illuminating the pressing community need. Led by caseworker and President-Elect, Melissa Wehunt, we provided essential services such as emergency dental care, over 70 pairs of eyeglasses, utility and rent assistance, medical care, and other basic needs, reaffirming our commitment to making a meaningful impact.

Each casework request we receive represents a family facing various struggles. One story that stood out this year involved a family dealing with the unexpected passing of the mother just before Christmas. This put them under financial strain, and we were able to help by covering a couple of their utility payments. It's moments like these that remind us of the importance of our work in supporting families during challenging times.

We are thrilled and deeply honored to carry forward the longstanding tradition and heritage of the League in providing crucial assistance to children. This is not just a legacy, but a testament to our ongoing commitment to serving the community's most vulnerable members.



*“Thank you so much for your very generous donation in helping two of our elementary families. We truly appreciate your generosity and feel blessed to be part of such a caring community.”*

-CCSD School Counselor

**FIGURE 1.**

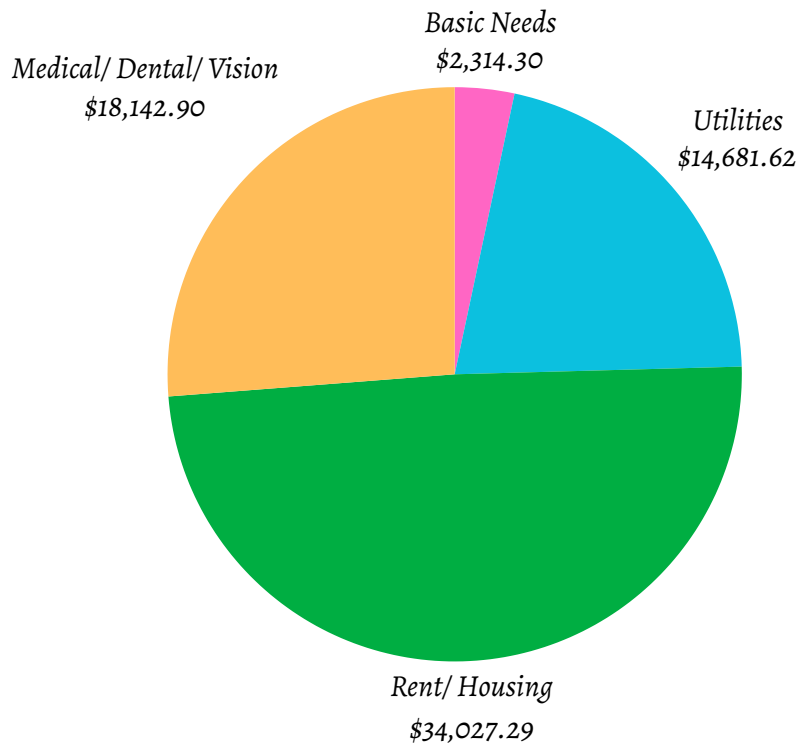
CASEWORK TOTALS BY MONTH

May 2023-April 2024

# CASEWORK BY THE NUMBERS

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Casework addresses children's needs ranging from housing, to utility assistance, to medical/dental or vision care. Housing, including emergency housing in hotels, formed the largest part of the League's work. This year, the League spent \$69,710.10 on casework helping children in need of Cherokee County.



# \$50,000 IN COMMUNITY IMPACT GRANTS

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The Service League was honored to award \$50,000 in Community Impact Grants to various non-profit organizations committed to enhancing the lives of children in Cherokee County. These grants were awarded following a rigorous evaluation process led by a committee of League members, adhering to specific criteria designed to ensure maximum benefit to the children in Cherokee County.

The recipients were Anna Crawford Children's Center, MUST Ministries, Safe Kids Cherokee, Cherokee Family Violence Center, Cherokee County Homeless Coalition, 4H, Cherokee Makerspace, Cherokee Youth Foundation, Circle of Friends, Highland Rivers and Bethany Place.

Overall, the Service League of Cherokee County's annual Community Impact Grants reflect the League's unwavering commitment to supporting children and families in need, fostering a brighter future for the community.

# COMMUNITY SERVICE

Not only does the League serve children in need through fundraising efforts, but we also have a passion to serve through various community service projects throughout the year. Projects this year included creating and providing over 500 hygiene packs for Give A Kid A Chance, packing lunches for the MUST summer lunch program, and building 250 nonperishable birthday cake kits for CCSD schools. Our wonderful Provisional Class continued the hygiene pack project and delivered over 1,000 packs to schools throughout the year as well! Over \$4,600 was spent towards providing items for all of these wonderful projects on top of receiving donations from our community.

Our League members also donated their time volunteering in various capacities with other amazing children-based organizations including A Night to Shine and Holiday Lights of Hope. We are always happy to serve with other organizations working to improve the lives of children in our community.



Completed Hygiene Packs



Completed MUST lunches



Serving at A Night to Shine



Provisionals building hygiene packs



Nonperishable Birthday Kit



Completed Birthday Cake Kits



# ANNUAL LUNCHEON

During the luncheon, the League's current President, Amanda Speights, highlighted the organization's many accomplishments over the past year. Teresa Henry was recognized as League member of the year, an award voted on by league members to recognize a member who shows outstanding devotion and work to support the League.



Honorary members  
present at 2023  
Annual Luncheon.





# SCHOLARSHIPS

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In May 2023, the Service League continued our history of providing need-based scholarships to seniors graduating from high schools in the Cherokee County School District. The scholarships are awarded based on need, academic success, community involvement, and extra-curricular activities.

The scholarship committee carefully reviewed each application, placing an emphasis on the need of the scholarship applicant. A total of \$25,000 was awarded. All applicants selected by the committee represent some of the best and brightest from Cherokee County.



# CHRISTMAS FAMILIES

The Service League's Christmas Families program embodies the spirit of giving by ensuring that children's wishes and essential needs are met during the holiday season. Each child provides a list of wants and needs, allowing us to tailor our gifts to their preferences while also addressing practical necessities. We commit to spend a minimum of \$200 per child, ensuring that their holiday experience is filled with joy. Through the generous support of sponsorships and donations from Fowler Insurance, The Blue Ridge Bar Association, and Cobb EMC Community Foundation, we were able to provide big-ticket items such as bikes and electronics, making the holiday season memorable for these children.

This year, we shopped for 154 children, with a total spend of over \$38,000. Additionally, we extend our gratitude to Safe Kids Cherokee for their contribution of helmets for all children who requested bikes and scooters. These collaborative efforts showcase the power of community support and reaffirm our commitment to making a positive impact in the lives of children and families during the holiday season and beyond.



# 154

CHILDREN PROVIDED FOR

# \$38,185.51

DOLLARS SPENT

*"Thank you so much for making a child's Christmas magical. We could not do it without the support from our community."*

-CCSD SOCIAL WORKER

# Golfing FORE! The Children

JUNE 16, 2023  
FAIRWAYS OF CANTON



## 5TH ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

The Service League hosted the fifth annual Golfing FORE! The Children golf tournament on June 16, 2023 at the Fairways of Canton.

Over 85 golfers drove and putted their way through 18 holes all in support of the children of Cherokee County. Golfers were treated to breakfast & lunch, they had several raffle baskets to bid on, they could purchase extra mulligans, & they were provided with swag bags from our wonderful sponsors.

The golf committee did an amazing job organizing and hosting the event! The golf tournament was a great success and raised over \$14,400 for the children of Cherokee County.

**6th Annual Golfing FORE! the  
Children will be June 14, 2024  
at Fairways of Canton!**



# Riverfest Arts & Crafts Festival

SEPTEMBER 23-24, 2023  
ETOWAH RIVER PARK



For the 39th year, League ladies, sponsors, vendors, entertainers and volunteers convened at Etowah River Park to showcase the beauty of Canton in the fall at the 39th Annual Riverfest Arts & Crafts Festival.

With record-number attendance, more than 28,000 patrons joined us for a weekend at the park. The festival featured over 150 local arts and crafts vendors. Sponsors, who are essential to the festival's success, greeted patrons as they entered the park. The event also featured food trucks and concession vendors to feed the attendees. The family friendly event featured a large children's area and a variety of local entertainment. Scarecrows and fall decor set the scene for a fall festival unlike any other in our community.



As the flagship fundraiser for the League's work, the festival set a record and raised over \$155,000 to help us continue in our mission of helping children in Cherokee County!

**Riverfest 2024 will be held at  
Etowah River Park on  
September 28-29, 2024.**





# Reindeer Run for the Children

DECEMBER 2, 2023 | ETOWAH RIVER PARK

The 20th Annual Run for the Children was held on Dec. 2, 2023. The Service League was excited to add the first 10K race to the Cherokee County region. Race events included a 1 mile Fun Run, and Peachtree Qualifying 5K and 10K races. Thanks to the support of our community, sponsors, and runners, the event raised over \$10,200 to meet the needs of children in our community.

Avery Elementary chorus led by director David Boggs returned to the event singing holiday carols adding a festive spirit. Santa Claus was also at the race to take pictures with the runners. Many League Members and runner participants also dressed in holiday attire.

Each year the Service League awards \$1,000 to the top participating school in the County. This year's recipient was Sixes Elementary School.

Thank you to the over 300 registered runners and sponsors for participating.

The 2024 Reindeer Run for the Children will be December 7, 2024 at Etowah River Park.



# GALA & BENEFIT

JANUARY 27, 2024 | THE WHEELER HOUSE

The Service League's Annual Gala and Benefit was held on January 27, 2024. A portion of the evening's proceeds benefited Cherokee FOCUS and their Cherokee Works program. Over 150 guests attended the event. Synovus Bank again served as the event's presenting sponsor.

In addition to dinner and dancing, the evening's program recognized our sponsors, educated attendees about the League's work over the past year, and honored League members who have committed ten years of service to children in our community.

The third Heritage of Hope Award was presented to Dr. Brian Hightower for his commitment to improving the lives of children in our community. In addition to the winner, other finalists including Megan Allen & Virginia Stephens were recognized at the event.

Thanks to the hard work of the Gala & Benefit Committee and the support of our sponsors, this year's Gala & Benefit raised over \$19,000 and resulted in a donation of over \$6,500 to Cherokee FOCUS.

## HERITAGE OF HOPE AWARD



Ms. Megan Allen, Dr. Brian Hightower, and President Marcey Stein representing Ms. Virginia Stephens

SERVICE LEAGUE

# Gala & Benefit





# WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

## 2024-2025 Provisional Members

In March the League welcomed 19 new members who will serve the next year as provisional league members before being voted to full membership. We appreciate these ladies commitment to serve the children of Cherokee County for the next ten years!



Mindy Apple



Margaret Clifton



Melissa Day



Aimee Didzbalis



Michelle Ewald



Hilary Fosse



Hailey Gagner



Tori Gay



Erica Jorgensen



Megan McDonald



Rachel Murphy



Bethany Nelson



Reagan O'Connor



Ashley Perkins



Andrea Rafanelli



Elizabeth Selkey



Jessica Testa



Shauna Murphey



Tamara Bishop

# SPONSOR RECOGNITION

Sponsorships at League fundraisers enable sponsors to support the mission of the League and assist hundreds of children in our community. All sponsorship dollars remain in Cherokee County. The positive impact our sponsors make to our mission reaches children in every part of Cherokee County.

## RIVERFEST ARTS AND CRAFTS FESTIVAL

### *Gold*

Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, Canton Tourism, Family Life Publications, Cherokee Tribune, and A-JAC Electricians

### *Silver*

Knox Bridge Dental Care, Publix Super Markets Charities, NMT Sports, 10.10 Construction, Renasant Bank, Cherokee Charter Academy, Leaf Guard, and Wellstar Health System, Lyndon Academy, Gunnin Land Survey, AroundAbout Local Media, and Barr Cabinets

### *Transportation*

Page Relocation

### *Bronze*

Amicalola EMC-grant, Kessler Law Firm, Harmony Orthodontics, Cherokee Children's Dentistry, Grisham Poole & Carlile, and Cobb EMC-grant, Waste Management, and CATS

### *Children's*

ProntoTrack, Three Sisters, T-Mobile, Sequoyah Library System, and Chick-fil-A

### *Riverfest Associate*

Georgia Mountain Dermatology, JP Haynes Lumber Co., Nesnick Chiropractic, Canton First UMC, Preschool Scentbound, and Rising Hill Church

## GOLF FORE THE CHILDREN

### *Gold*

Express Oil Change, The Kesler Law Firm, P.C., Scott Huskins Funeral & Cremation, Fowler Insurance, Buck, Allstate Insurance, Speights Law, PC

### *Silver*

Focus 1 Associates, MAYNT LLC, Amplify Roofing

### *Bronze*

LGE Community Credit Union, Harmony Orthodontics, Tin Cup Realty

### *Hole*

Corrective Chiropractic Woodstock, Walmart Health, Nesnick Total Health, IceBox Woodstock, Yawn Publishing, LLC, Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, Bojangles, Longhorn, IceBox

## REINDEER RUN FOR THE CHILDREN

### *Runner Recognition Sponsors*

Northside Hospital, Kessler law firm, Byrd Insurance, Etowah Construction

### *School Presentation Sponsors*

Allstate - Kelly Scott, Credit Union of Georgia, Cherokee Children's Dentistry, Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, H&H Electric and Security, LLC, Family Life, AroundAbout Local Media

### *Mile Marker Sponsors*

Relentless Sports Academy, Harmony Orthodontics, Club Pilates Canton

### *Starting Block Sponsors*

Knox Bridge Dental, Orange Theory, Mid City Pharmacy, Dan Patterson DDS

## **GALA AND BENEFIT**

### ***Presenting***

Synovus

### ***Table***

Zack Bobo Real Estate, Burns Law Group  
Speights Law Group

### ***Gold***

Shake Up Atlanta

### ***Silver***

Family Life

### ***Bronze***

North Georgia Angle House

## **CORPORATE SPONSOR**



## **THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS**

The Service League greatly appreciates every organization who has supported our work. Generous sponsors are essential to our work and enable us to continue to serve the children of Cherokee County.



[serviceleague.net](http://serviceleague.net)