



**SOROPTIMIST®**  
**Investing in Dreams**



**2026**  
**Founder Region**  
**Soroptimist International of the Americas**

**Fiftieth Annual**  
**Conference Proceedings**

**San Ramon Marriott**  
**2600 Bishop Drive, San Ramon, CA**  
**May 1-3, 2026**



***Elise Balgley, Governor***

**The Fiftieth Annual Founder Region Conference Proceedings**

The fiftieth annual Founder Region Conference was held on May 1-3, 2026, at the San Ramon Marriott in San Ramon, CA.

### **Friday, May 1, 2026, Legislative Advocacy Program**

Registration opened at 8:00am. The Trade Fair opened at 8:00am.

Governor Elise Balgley opened the Legislative Advocacy session at 10:00am. She welcomed all to the Legislative Advocacy presentation that will focus on “Empowerment & Women’s Health: Supporting Women Through Stress, Loss and Life’s Challenges”.

When posting our pictures this weekend, Governor Elise requested all to use our biennium hashtag #soroptimistputtingthepuzzlettogether. You may also include the SIA hashtag which is #SIARegionConference2026.

Governor Elise introduced the Platform Party.

#### **To my far right on the upper tier:**

La Krisha Dillard-Mental Health Consultant

Chandra Lynn-Glow Living

Natasha Paddock-Family Support Center, Inc.

Anna Sabio-John Muir Behavioral Health

#### **To my far left on the lower tier:**

Legislative Advocacy Committee Member, Shantee Baker, SI/El Cerrito

Legislative Advocacy Committee Member, Sandra Simms, SI/Waikiki Foundation, Inc.

Legislative Advocacy Committee Member, Angie Haramoto, SI/Maui

Legislative Advocacy Committee Member, Dana Holve, SI/Vacaville Twilight

Legislative Advocacy Committee Chair, Phyllis Gordon, SI/The Delta

#### **To my far right on the lower tier:**

Legislative Advocacy Committee Member, Jennifer Barton, SI/Central Solano County

Legislative Advocacy Committee Member, Susan Boreliz, SI/24/680 (Walnut Creek)

Please stand and welcome our Official Visitor, SIA Secretary/Treasurer Gail Dekreon, SI/San Francisco

And I am Elise Balgley, your Founder Region Governor for the 2024-2026 biennium

Governor Elise then turned the meeting over to Legislative Advocacy Chair Phyllis Gordon.

### **Practitioners that presented**

-**Amy Martinez of Singing Bowls** is a musician, educator, and sound healing practitioner blending artistry, mindfulness, and community connection. A bilingual singer-songwriter with two studio albums and international performances, she leads sound healing ceremonies for gatherings such as Ecstatic Dance in Berkeley. She currently serves as Visual and Performing Arts Coordinator for Davis Joint Unified School District.

-**Andrea Gaudet of Morning Stretch** is Principal of Diablo Ballet School, a Dance for Parkinson's Core Teacher, and PEEK (Performing Arts Education & Enrichment for Kids) Associate. With 30+ years of teaching experience, she performed as a soloist with Ballet Idaho and Sacramento Ballet, dancing in classic ballets and works by George Balanchine.

-**Stephanie Helberg of Tapping, CHT, QHHT**, is a shamanic practitioner, certified consulting hypnotist, and Reiki and crystal healing practitioner. Trained in the Amazon, Portugal, India, and Turkey, she specializes in Soul Retrieval and Quantum Healing Hypnosis. A teacher with The Great Mysteries Society, Stephanie helps clients access their true self through shamanic tools and heart wisdom. Stephanie is a member of SI/Antioch.

### **Morning Panelists that presented**

-**La Krisha Dillard, MS**, is a mental health consultant and trainer with 30 years of experience specializing in Peer Coaching, Mindfulness, Trauma-Informed Care, ACEs, and Early Childhood Trauma and Parenting. La Krisha is Co-Director and Co-Founder of the Black Women in Early Childhood Collective (BWECC), a corporation focused on Trans-Generational Trauma with BIPOC communities, Adverse Child Experiences, and Cultural Competencies in ECE.

-**Chandra Lynn, MBA**, is a certified transformation coach, speaker, and author of the Amazon #1 bestselling book Root-

to-Rise: How to Love Life. Her book has been praised by Kirkus Reviews as “inspiring guidance for personal transformation,” and by Dr. Deepak Chopra, who wrote, “If you want a simple step-by-step guide for a fulfilled life, this is the book.”

-**Natasha Paddock, MSW**, is a Social Worker and nonprofit CEO with over 20 years of executive leadership experience, holding a B.A. in Psychology from the University of the Pacific and an MSW from California State University, East Bay. In 2023, she was appointed CEO of C.O.P.E. Family Support Center, Inc., a Bay Area nonprofit strengthening families through integrated services, and elected California Director to the National Board of NASW, where she advocates for social justice and equity.

-**Anna M. Sabio, MSW, LCSW** is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and Director of Therapeutic Services at John Muir Behavioral Health Center in Concord, California. Ms. Sabio oversees therapeutic programs supporting individuals navigating a wide range of behavioral and mental health challenges, grounded in a holistic, patient-centered approach that emphasizes empowerment, dignity, and evidence-based treatment.

Q and A followed.

Governor Elise thanked the presenters and panelists. She announced that we will take a 15-minute break to allow the hotel staff to set up for lunch. We will reconvene at 12:30pm. Please visit our Founder Region & Fellowship sales tables, and Trade Fair. Our lunchtime keynote speaker will be Linda Witong, Soroptimist International Advocacy Advisor. Later we have more presentations so be sure to return for our afternoon session.

Conference Coordinator Kris was asked to make her announcements.

### **Recessed 12pm**

### **Reconvened 12:40pm**

Governor Elise welcomed all back from break and gave a cell phone reminder.

On each of the tables there is an envelope with tickets. Envelopes like these will be on the tables during each meal. The tickets are \$5.00 each, or 3 for \$10.00. The lucky winner will receive a \$50.00 bill from Treasurer Holly. The money we raise during lunch today will go toward our Region Dream Programs.

Governor Elise invited A. B. Priceman, President of SI/Noyo Sunrise to provide the Inspiration.

She thanked President A.B. and SI/Noyo Sunrise for being one of the host clubs for the 2026 conference.

Governor Elise invited Laurie Garrison, President of SI/Eel River Valley to provide the Welcome.

She thanked President Laurie and SI/Eel River Valley for being a host club for conference this year.

### **LUNCH**

Governor Elise turned the program over to Chair Phyllis who introduced our keynote speaker Linda Witong.

**Linda Witong**, SI Advocacy Advisor: Research & Violence, is a retired prosecutor and a distinguished advocate for women's rights, human trafficking prevention, and international justice. She currently serves as an SI Advocacy Advisor for Research and Violence with Soroptimist International, and as a Board Member of the Alliance of NGOs on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in Vienna, Austria. She has served as a Research Consultant for the UN Commission on the Status of Women in New York and has participated in UN advocacy on issues including torture by non-state actors, the climate crisis's impact on human trafficking, gender-related violence, and early and forced child marriage. A member of Soroptimist International of Novato, Linda has chaired the Founder Region Legislative Advocacy Committee, organized community forums on human trafficking in Marin County, and moderated panels at region conferences.

Governor Elise thanked Linda for her presentation.

Governor Elise welcomed Chair Phyllis back to the podium to introduce our afternoon program.

### **Afternoon Panelists**

**-Mary Doane** is Supervising Instructor of Education Programs at Zen Caregiving Project. She is dual-certified to teach the Compassion Cultivation Training (CCT™) program by Compassion Institute and by the Center for Compassion and Altruism Research and Education (CCARE) at the Stanford University School of Medicine. She is also certified to teach the Cultivating Emotional Balance program and to serve as a Mindfulness Mentor. Mary is a graduate of Mills College and of the Buddhist Chaplaincy Training program at Sati Center for Buddhist Studies.

**-Lorie Gehrke** is a Certified Grief Educator, statewide SIDS advocate, and Vice Chair of California's SIDS Advisory Council. She is the founder of Mariposa Living, where she explores how grief, life transitions, and archetypal patterns shape who we become over time. She holds an A.B. from UC Berkeley, is a Certified Nutrition Consultant through Bauman College, and received her Grief Educator certification through David Kessler.

**-Barbara Hockett, RN, MS Ed.** holds a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and a Master of Science in Education, with a distinguished background spanning nursing, public health, education, and healthcare management. She teaches Community Health Nursing at California State University, East Bay, bringing decades of real-world experience into the classroom. Ms. Hockett served on the Central San Board of Directors for 20 years, spearheading a regional educational partnership with 18 Water/Wastewater Districts and expanding operator training programs throughout the region.

Q and A followed.

### **Support During Sessions**

**-Catherine Cheyette, PhD, LCSW** has over three decades of experience in psychotherapy and clinical supervision. Based in Berkeley, California, she has maintained a private practice since 1994, providing weekly individual and couples therapy grounded in psychodynamic and psychoanalytic approaches. Catherine holds a PhD in Clinical Social Work from the Chicago Institute of Clinical Social Work, a Master of Social Work from Columbia University, and a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the University of Maryland.

Committee Member Susan Boreliz led the membership in a physical exercise that all enjoyed.

Governor Elise thanked Legislative Advocacy Chair Phyllis, the committee members and speakers who worked so hard to make our program today memorable.

A QR code was shared to access support, guidance, and resources for everything we explored together today.

Governor Elise invited all to attend a No-Host Cocktail Reception at 6:00pm in the Ballroom Foyer to meet the Fellowship recipients. The Fellowship Awards Gala & Dinner will begin at 7:00pm. Tomorrow's Fellowship Business Meeting starts promptly at 8:30am followed by the Founder Region Business Meeting. Breakfast is on your own. The Trade Fair will be open until 5:00pm today.

Our Table Drawing today collected \$1,121.00. A winning ticket was drawn and the winner was given \$50.00.

Governor Elise asked Conference Coordinator Kris if there were any announcements.

The membership was treated to a Taiko Performance by Diablo Taiko. They invited members to join them and experience playing the Taiko drums which many thoroughly enjoyed.

### **Recess 3:20pm**

Parliamentarian Sylvia conducted the delegates briefing followed by the pages and timekeepers briefing.

### **Reconvene 7:00pm**

Governor Elise welcomed everyone to the 50th Annual Founder Region Conference and asked everyone to silence their

cell phones.

She announced that we have the Girl Scout Troop of San Ramon #30491 to present the flags and lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Governor Elise thanked the Girl Scout Troop of San Ramon #30491 for being here with us tonight. We are honored to have you present our flags.

Governor Elise invited Ms. Candace Anderson, Contra Costa County District II Supervisor to the podium to provide the community welcome.

Governor-elect Jackie thanked Ms. Candace Anderson on behalf of Soroptimist International of Eel River Valley, Soroptimist International of Humboldt Bay, Soroptimist International of Noyo Sunrise, Soroptimist International of The Redwoods and all the members of Founder Region.

Governor Elise then announced the Platform Party.

**On the top tier to my far left:**

Fellowship Director, District IV, Tess Albin-Smith, SI/Noyo Sunrise

2026 Fellowship Award Recipient, Josefa Munoz

2026 Fellowship Award Recipient, Allie Hall

Fellowship Treasurer, Danelle Tegarden, SI/Eureka

**On the top tier to my far right:**

Fellowship Director, District III, Laurie Gallian, SI/Sonoma Valley

2026 Fellowship Award Recipient, Leyi “Joy” Zhou

2026 Fellowship Award Recipient, Johanna Ortega-Reyes

Fellowship Director, District II, Kay Kelley, SI/Rio Vista

**On the bottom tier to my far left:**

2026 Fellowship Award Recipient, Kuuleianuhea Awo-Chun

Fellowship Director, District V, Cindy Rasmussen, SI/Waikiki Foundation, Inc.

2026 Fellowship Award Recipient, Breanna Willard

Fellowship President, Vicki Ham, SI/Willits

**On the bottom tier to my far right:**

Fellowship Director, District I, Amelia Benko, SI/The Tri-Valley

2026 Fellowship Award Recipient, Arianna Bunnell

Please rise and join me in recognizing our 2026 Conference Official Visitor, Soroptimist International of the Americas, Secretary/Treasurer Gail Dekreon, SI/San Francisco

In our audience, we also have SIA Executive Director/CEO Michelle Burnett

And I am Elise Balgley of SI/The Tri-Valley, pleased and proud to be your Founder Region Governor

The inspiration was given by District V Fellowship Director Cindy Rasmussen and Kay Kelley, District II Fellowship Director, gave the welcome.

Governor Elise announced that on each of the tables there is an envelope with raffle tickets inside. The tickets are \$5.00 each, or 3 for \$10.00. The winner will receive \$50.00 from Fellowship Treasurer Danelle. The money raised during this evening’s dinner will benefit Founder Region Fellowship.

**DINNER**

Following dinner, Governor Elise turned the meeting over to Fellowship President Vicki Ham.

President Vicki welcomed all to the Founder Region Fellowship Awards Dinner and Gala. Tonight we gather to celebrate 8 exceptional recipients from the University of California at Berkeley and the University of Hawaii at Manoa. To date, we have provided 385 women with more than \$1.9 million in funding to help them achieve their doctoral degrees. Following

tonight's awards, that total will surpass \$2 million.

As a token of our appreciation for your continuing support, each of you will find a purple and white Fellowship collapsible fan at your table this evening.

One of the goals of the Fellowship board is to make our members aware of the importance of leveling up in Fellowship, whether one wins a Fellow, achieves a level through monthly giving, or pays \$1,000.00 outright. During the 2020–2022 biennium, then-President Cheryl Poncini and her board introduced the current pin design, in which the gemstone signifies the level achieved. The first-level pin features no gem, while subsequent levels are represented by different colored gemstones.

President Vicki then recognized all Fellows by asking them to stand and noted the different levels of Fellows with their gemstones:

Level 1 Fellows: no gem

Level 2 – 5 Fellows: Turquoise, Amethyst, Topaz, and Cobalt Blue

Level 6 – 10 Fellows: Emerald, Rose, Peridot, Ruby, and Crystal

Level 10 – 15 Fellows: Sapphire, Tanzanite, Fire Opal, Black Diamond, and Aurum (which is gold)

Tonight, we have a member who recently contributed to not only leveling up to Level 14 but also to Level 15 our Aurum gem. Cheryl Poncini, we would like to thank you for creating this gem recognition program for the pins, but also for your continued contributions to the Fellowship program. Cheryl, please approach the podium to receive your levels 14 and 15 pins and certificates from District I Fellowship Director Amelia Benko.

To each and every one of you, know that your impact to our program is immeasurable and we offer our most sincere appreciation for your generosity.

President Vicki recognized the past Fellowship Presidents:

Mary Ann Redden, SI/Antioch, President 2004-2006, “Getting it Done Together”, awarded 10 recipients with \$80,000.00 in grants.

Barbara Lanier, SI/El Cerrito, President 2008-2010, “Reach for the Stars”, awarded 15 recipients with \$130,000.00 in grants.

Bobbi Enderlin, SI/Benicia, President 2016-2018, “Education Creates Shining Stars”, awarded 20 recipients with \$200,000.00 in grants.

Pam Parker, SI/St. Helena, President 2018-2020, “Empowering Change through Education”, awarded 17 recipients with \$170,000.00 in grants.

Cheryl Poncini, SI/Oakland-The Founder Club, President 2020-2022, “Education Inspires BIG Dreams”, awarded 14 recipients with \$140,000.00 in grants.

Kris Chorbi, SI/Eureka, President 2022-2024, “Bee” the Dream Through Education, awarded 17 recipients with \$170,750.00 in grants.

She gave a background of Founder Region's identifying project of Fellowship, which was incorporated on March 17, 1986.

The 2026 recipients were each introduced by a Fellowship board member:

President Vicki Ham - Breanna Bullard, Clinical Psychology, UC Berkeley

District I Director Amelia Benko – Arianna Bunnell, Computer Science, UH Manoa

District I Director Amelia Benko – Sara Stone, Educational Leadership, UC Berkeley (SI/East Bay, Cathy Jastram Award)

District V Director Cindy Rasmussen – Kuuleianuhea Awo-Chun, Education, UH Manoa

District III Director Laurie Gallian – Johanna Reyes Ortega, Political Science, UC Berkeley

Treasurer Danelle Tegarden – Allie Hall, Fungal Ecology, UH Manoa

District II Director Kay Kelley – Leyi (Joy) Zhou, Social Work/Social Welfare, UC Berkeley

District IV Director Tess Albin-Smith – Josefa Munoz, Marine Biology, UH Manoa

President Vicki congratulated all the recipients. They each received a check for \$10,000.00.

She announced the Table Drawing tonight will benefit Founder Region Fellowship and raised \$1,105.00. A winner was drawn and received a \$50.00 bill. As more than \$1,000.00 was raised, a Fellow was drawn. Winner of a Fellow was Jean Aldinger of SI/St. Helena.

President Vicki thanked everyone for supporting the Fellowship Program. She thanked everyone for their trust in her. This has been a wonderful opportunity, and I am so very grateful.

President Vicki turned the program over to Governor Elise.

Governor Elise thanked President Vicki, Treasurer Danelle, and Directors Amelia, Kay, Laurie, Tess and Cindy.

Governor Elise congratulated the Fellowship recipients and thanked all the members who support Founder Region Fellowship.

She called up Conference Coordinator Kris for any announcements.

Governor Elise announced that we are in recess until 8:30am tomorrow morning when we will begin our day with the Founder Region Fellowship Business Meeting in this same location. Breakfast is on your own and reminded Delegates to bring their voting cards to the morning meetings.

She thanked everyone for being such an important part of our Fellowship program and to enjoy the rest of their evening and to have a good night.

### **Recess 9:30pm**

### **Saturday, May 2, 2026, Fellowship Business Meeting**

President Vicki welcomed everyone to the 78<sup>th</sup> Annual Founder Region Fellowship Business Meeting and called it to order at 8:30am.

Fellowship President Vicki had closed the nominations for the 2026-2028 Fellowship Board during the Fellowship Business Meeting.

Minutes of the Fellowship Business Meeting may be found on the Fellowship website.

## Saturday, May 2, 2026, Founder Region Business Meeting

Governor Elise called the Founder Region Business Meeting to order at 9:31am. She reminded members to silence their cell phones.

She then introduced the Platform Party.

### **On the top tier to my far left:**

District V Director Teri Lynn Sato, SI/Waikiki Foundation, Inc.

District IV Director Crystal Arbuthnot, SI/The Redwoods

### **On the top tier to my far right:**

District I Director Laura Koehler, SI/The Tri-Valley

District II Director Dana Holve, SI/Vacaville Twilight

District III Director Nancy Koski, SI/Santa Rosa

### **On the bottom tier to my far left:**

Nominating Committee Chair, Barbara Lanier, SI/El Cerrito

Laws and Resolutions Chair, Lillian Meyers, SI/Sonoma Valley

Region Secretary, Kristal Koga, SI/The Marianas

Parliamentarian, Sylvia Crafton, SI/The Marianas

### **On the bottom tier to my far right:**

Region Treasurer, Holly Hayashi, SI/Honolulu

Region Governor-elect, Jackie DeVries, SI/Vacaville

With us in our audience we have Soroptimist International of the Americas, Executive Director/CEO Michelle Burnett

Also in the audience is Ilana Hirsch, SIA Associate Director, Fund Development

Please rise as I introduce and recognize our Official Visitor, Soroptimist International of the Americas Secretary/Treasurer, Gail Dekreon, SI/San Francisco

And, I am Elise Balgley, SI/The Tri-Valley, proud to be your Founder Region Governor.

Credentials Chair Shirley Lipa gave the first credentials report.

### **Founder Region Credentials Report #1:**

Clubs in Founder Region: 46

Clubs Eligible to Vote: 46

Clubs Not in Good Standing: 0

Clubs Registered: 40

Total Clubs Voting: 40

Delegates Registered

Region Officers: 4

District Directors: 5

Club Delegates: 113

Total Delegates: 122

**Quorum for Opening Session: 62**

Governor Elise repeated the credentials report and asked if there were any questions.

Governor Elise called for the vote and Founder Region Credentials Report #1 was adopted by the delegates.

Governor Elise called upon Secretary Kristal to read the Conference Standing Rules. Secretary Kristal noted that the Standing Rules are printed in our 2026 Founder Region Official Conference Program. In the interest of time and with no objections, the Standing Rules were not read. Secretary Kristal moved for the adoption of the Standing Rules, there was a second, Governor Elise called for the vote and the Standing Rules were adopted.

Governor Elise called upon Secretary Kristal for the adoption of the Official Conference Program.

Secretary Kristal moved for the adoption of the Official Program subject to changes that may be necessary to expedite the business of the Conference. There was a second, Governor Elise called for the vote and the Official Program was adopted.

Governor Elise asked first time attendees to rise and be recognized. They received a memento that was handed out by the District Directors. On their name badge there is a teal ribbon that identifies each as a first-time attendee.

Governor Elise then announced the pages and timekeepers. Laura Middlemiss of SI/Humboldt Bay and Alene Webb of SI/Humboldt Bay will assist at the microphones, and Sharon Redd and Lisa Dallum, both of SI/Humboldt Bay are the timekeepers. She thanked them for accepting the duties as pages and timekeepers. In addition, a big thank you to our stewards: Sheila Bearden of SI/Humboldt Bay who will be supporting her, Patti Dutton of SI/Humboldt Bay will be supporting Governor-elect Jackie and Fellowship President Vicki and Leigh Pierre Oetker will be supporting Official Visitor Gail and Executive Director/CEO Michelle. Governor Elise thanked them for their help.

Governor Elise recognized and thanked the members of the host clubs' committee.

## **GREETINGS AND CORRESPONDENCE**

Governor Elise asked all to look at the program for special greetings from our Official Visitor, SIA Secretary/Treasurer Gail Dekreon and ED/CEO Michelle Burnett. Governor Elise then invited ED/CEO Michelle to the podium to give her welcome.

## **FINDINGS - INVITATION TO HOST CONFERENCE 2027, 2028, 2029**

Governor Elise announced that in the Call to Conference the Invitation to Host Region Conference in 2028 and 2029 was included. Previously selected were the clubs who will host Region Conference in 2027.

Secretary Kristal announced that SI/American Canyon 2018, SI/Benicia, SI/Oakland-The Founder Club and SI/Vallejo have been approved to host the 2027 Conference.

She then announced that SI/Central Oahu, SI/Honolulu, SI/North Oahu, and SI/Waikiki Foundation, Inc. have offered to serve as host clubs for the 2028 Founder Region Conference.

District V Director Teri invited all to attend the 2028 Founder Region Conference in beautiful Honolulu, Hawaii.

Secretary Kristal moved that we accept the invitation of SI/Central Oahu, SI/Honolulu, SI/North Oahu, and SI/Waikiki Foundation, Inc. to serve as host clubs for the 2028 Founder Region Conference. Governor Elise called for the vote and the motion passed.

Governor Elise shared that in the Call to Conference the Invitation to Host Region Conference in 2029 was included. Since no clubs have volunteered to serve as host clubs for the 2029 Conference, she would like to invite clubs to volunteer for this important, rewarding, and fun opportunity. Please consider partnering with clubs in your nearby area. Many successful collaborations have happened at past conferences. Please think about this great opportunity and talk to Secretary Kristal so we can discuss this later in the afternoon.

Governor Elise asked if there were any updates to the credentials report previously given. There were none. The previous report remains.

Governor Elise pointed out that the microphone to her right is microphone one and the microphone to her left is

microphone two. Laura Middlemiss and Alene Webb will assist you at the microphones. Sharon Redd and Lisa Dallum will be the timekeepers.

## **NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT**

Barbara Lanier, Chair of the Nominating Committee, presented the Nominating Committee Report. She thanked her committee members, Bev, Karen, Madalienne, Sue, and Carmela.

She then read through the nominees for the 2026-2028 Founder Region Board.

### **FOUNDER REGION BOARD**

For Founder Region District I Director Jennifer Chiarelli - SI/Martinez

For Founder Region District II Director Dana Holve – SI/Vacaville Twilight

For Founder Region District III Director Nancy Koski – SI/Santa Rosa

For Founder Region District IV Director Crystal Arbuthnot – SI/The Redwoods

For Founder Region District V Director Lisa Ma - SI/Honolulu and Paulette Williams - SI/Waikiki Foundation, Inc.

For Founder Region Treasurer Holly Hayashi – SI/Honolulu

For Founder Region Secretary Jan Schults – SI/The Delta

For Founder Region Governor-elect Kristal Koga – SI/The Marianas

Governor Elise conducted the process of closing nominations for the 2026-2028 Founder Region Board.

Governor Elise announced each nominee and asked if there were any nominations from the floor after each name was read. There were none and thus declared the nominations closed after each name was read.

President Vicki asked all candidates to please line up to her left. Each nominee has two minutes to speak. When you have one minute the green card will be raised. When you have thirty seconds the white card will be raised. When time is up the red card will be raised. She also announced that the Founder Region Fellowship Business Meeting is reconvened.

President Vicki introduced each Fellowship Nominee.

Governor Elise introduced each Region Nominee.

Each candidate had an opportunity to address the membership.

Governor Elise thanked all for their willingness to serve in leadership positions for the 2026-2028 biennium.

## **FOUNDER REGION FELLOWSHIP ELECTION**

Fellowship President Vicki conducted the Fellowship Election

According to Article V, Section 5.2 Elections (a) of the region bylaws, Voting shall be by ballot unless there is only one candidate for office; in such event voting shall be by voice vote. We will therefore vote for those candidates who are running UNOPPOSED by voice beginning with the nominee for Founder Region Fellowship Director, District II.

ALL (CLUB) delegates, region board members and Fellowship board members may vote for the Fellowship director candidate of their respective districts.

Will the delegates for District II please stand?

All those in favor of electing Debi Schrader as the Fellowship Director, District II please raise your voting card and say Aye. Those who are opposed please say NO. The Aye's have it – the chair declares Debi Schrader the Fellowship Director, District II.

Will the delegates for District III please stand?

All those in favor of electing Nancy Weber as the Fellowship Director, District III please raise your voting card and say Aye. Those who are opposed please say NO. The Aye's have it – the chair declares Nancy Weber the Fellowship Director, District III.

Will the delegates for District IV please stand?

All those in favor of electing Loretta Tognoli as the Fellowship Director, District IV please raise your voting card and say Aye. Those who are opposed please say NO. The Aye's have it – the chair declares Loretta Tognoli the Fellowship Director, District IV.

Will the delegates for District V please stand?

All those in favor of electing Teri Lynn Sato as the Fellowship Director, District V please raise your voting card and say Aye. Those who are opposed please say NO. The Aye's have it – the chair declares Teri Lynn Sato the Fellowship Director, District V.

ALL CLUB delegates, region board members and Fellowship board members may vote for the Fellowship Officers – Treasurer and President.

Delegates – you will NOT have to stand.

All those in favor of electing Cara Begley as Fellowship Treasurer, please raise your voting card and say Aye. Those who are opposed please say NO. The Aye's have it – the chair declares Cara Begley the Fellowship Treasurer.

Congratulations Debi, Nancy, Loretta, Teri Lynn, and Cara

As there is more than one candidate for the District I Fellowship Director position, delegates for District I will vote by ballot during our lunch break.

As there is more than one candidate for the Fellowship President position, all delegates will vote by ballot during our lunch break.

## **FOUNDER REGION ELECTION**

Governor Elise conducted the election of the Founder Region Board.

According to Article V, Section 5.2 Elections (a) of the region bylaws, Voting shall be by ballot unless there is only one candidate for office; in such event voting shall be by voice vote. We continue to vote for those candidates who are running UNOPPOSED for the Founder Region Board by voice.

All CLUB delegates and region board members may vote for the district director candidate of their respective districts.

Will the delegates for District I please stand?

All those in favor of electing Jennifer Chiarelli as the District I Director, please raise your voting card and say Aye. Those who are opposed please say NO. The Aye's have it – the chair declares Jennifer Chiarelli the District I Director.

Will the delegates for District II please stand?

All those in favor of electing Dana Holve as the District II Director, please raise your voting card and say Aye. Those who are opposed please say NO. The Aye's have it – the chair declares Dana Holve the District II Director.

Will the delegates for District III please stand?

All those in favor of electing Nancy Koski as the District III Director, please raise your voting card and say Aye. Those who are opposed please say NO. The Aye's have it – the chair declares Nancy Koski the District III Director.

Will the delegates for District IV please stand?

All those in favor of electing Crystal Arbuthnot as the District IV Director, please raise your voting card and say Aye. Those who are opposed please say NO. The Aye's have it – the chair declares Crystal Arbuthnot the District IV Director.

All CLUB delegates and region board members may vote for Region Treasurer, Region Secretary, and Governor-elect. Delegates – you will not have to stand.

The first vote will be for Region Treasurer.

All those in favor of electing Holly Hayashi as the Region Treasurer, please raise your voting card and say Aye. Those who are opposed please say NO. The Aye's have it – the chair declares Holly Hayashi the Region Treasurer.

The next vote will be for Region Secretary.

All those in favor of electing Jan Schults as the Region Secretary, please raise your voting card and say Aye. Those who are opposed please say NO. The Aye's have it – the chair declares Jan Schults the Region Secretary.

The next vote will be for GOVERNOR-ELECT.

All those in favor of electing Kristal Koga as the Region Governor-elect, please raise your voting card and say Aye. Those who are opposed please say NO. The Aye's have it – the chair declares Kristal Koga the Region Governor-elect.

As there is more than one candidate for the District V Director position, delegates for District V will vote by ballot during our lunch break.

Congratulations Jennifer, Dana, Nancy, Crystal, Holly, Jan and Kristal.

Chair Barbara thanked the membership for submitting nominations.

Governor Elise thanked Barbara and her committee for all their hard work.

**Recess 10:52am**

**Reconvene 11:02am**

Governor Elise introduced our Official Visitor SIA Secretary/Treasurer Gail Dekreon, SI/San Francisco. She is a 23-year member and a retired superior court judge. Her presentation is entitled "Transformation Through Leadership, Stories That Connect Us."

## **OFFICIAL VISITOR REPORT**

SIA Secretary/Treasurer Gail shared that when we open the doors for others, we help them to do the same. Strong leadership provides motivation. Encouragement you give can be their spark. We should stand up for what is right. We need to make difficult unpopular decisions. We need to admit when we are wrong; have accountability. Empower team members by delegating work, this is transformational leadership. One woman rising and lifting others while she climbs. Every soroptimist mentors someone. Changing one person's life can change generations. Our purpose remains the same no matter where we are located. For one LYD winner, the award was not just aid, it was a lifeline. She urged all to attend SIA's Leadership Roundtable July 23, 2026.

Governor Elise thanked Official Visitor Gail. Founder Region would like to thank you for your dedication to our

organization by making a donation to the Laurel Society in your name.

Governor Elise asked Credentials Chair Shirley to give the Founder Region Credentials Report.

**Founder Region Credentials Report #2:**

Clubs in Founder Region: 46

Clubs Eligible to Vote: 46

Clubs Not in Good Standing: 0

Clubs Registered: 40

Total Clubs Voting: 40

Delegates Registered

Region Officers: 4

District Directors: 5

Club Delegates: 114

Total Delegates: 123

**Quorum for Opening Session: 62**

Governor Elise called for the vote and Founder Region Credentials Report #2 was adopted by the delegates.

## **REGION BYLAWS AMENDMENTS**

Governor Elise reviewed the discussion process in preparation for voting on the Proposed Amendments to the Bylaws.

The timekeepers for this session are Sharon Redd and Patti Dutton. Laura Middlemiss and Alene Webb will assist at the microphones.

Discussion time for each proposed amendment is ten minutes. If a delegate wishes for the discussion time to be extended beyond the ten minutes as provided in the standing rules, such delegate will need to make a proper motion to extend the time within the initial ten-minute period.

Delegates can speak FOR or AGAINST an issue for a maximum of two minutes. Any member can speak to an amendment but only Founder Region Delegates can make a motion or other point of order. Delegates have priority at the microphone verses a non-delegate member.

The timekeepers will hold up colored cards to indicate the amount of time remaining. The GREEN CARD will go up when you have one minute remaining The WHITE CARD will go up when you have thirty seconds remaining. The RED CARD will be raised when your two minutes has expired and the delegate must STOP. When the ten minutes have been exhausted the timekeeper will so indicate with the RED STOP card and the sound of a bell.

There are signs at each microphone that will assist the chair in recognizing you. The signs say: FOR, AGAINST, INFORMATION and AMENDMENT. Please ask the page to hold up the sign that best describes what you want to address to the chair. When you address the chair and the delegates, please state your name and the club to which you belong. If you wish to address something other than those provided on the cards, please just state your purpose after your name and club.

There are duplicate motion forms on each table for any motions or amendments. Please write out your motion or amendment and give it to a page who will deliver it to the chair.

The next order of business is the consideration of the proposed amendments to Founder Region Bylaws. At this time Lillian Meyers, chair of the Founder Region Laws and Resolutions committee, will read the proposed amendments, and you can also view them on the screen. If there is no objection, the chair will not repeat the entire proposal. There being no objection the action is adopted.

Chair Lillian read the proposed Founder Region Bylaws Amendments.

**Founder Region Board  
Proposed Bylaws  
Amendment  
2025-2026**

**FOUNDER REGION BYLAWS:  
ARTICLE VII – Board of Directors  
Section 7.9 – Board Meetings**

CURRENT LANGUAGE	PROPOSED LANGUAGE
<p><b>Section 7.9</b></p> <p>In the event of an emergency requiring the cancellation of an in-person board meeting, the board of directors may undertake any regular business of the region at meetings held electronically (preferably by audiovisual means) provided the means of communication allows all persons participating in the meeting the ability to hear and speak to each other.</p> <p>In the event of a non-emergency situation, any individual board member may seek approval from the Region Governor to attend a region business meeting electronically (preferably by audiovisual means) upon presentation of an acceptable reason for inability or great hardship to attend in person.</p>	<p><b>Section 7.9</b></p> <p>In the event of an emergency requiring the cancellation of an in-person board meeting, the board of directors may undertake any regular business of the region at meetings held electronically (preferably by audiovisual means) provided the means of communication allows all persons participating in the meeting the ability to hear and speak to each other.</p> <p>In the event of a non-emergency situation, any individual board member may seek approval from the Region Governor to attend a region board meeting electronically (preferably by audiovisual means) upon presentation of an acceptable reason for inability or great hardship to attend in person.</p> <p><b>The November Founder Region board meeting will be held electronically via an audiovisual platform.</b></p>
<p><b>PROPOSED BY:</b> 2024-2026 Founder Region Board</p>	
<p><b>ADVANTAGES:</b> To allow for less travel during a busy holiday season when travel and family commitments are high. Potential Board candidates may view board service as more manageable when travel requirements are reduced. May encourage greater interest in leadership roles and increase the pool of qualified candidates for board positions.</p>	
<p><b>FINANCIAL IMPACT:</b> No venue rental fee will be incurred. No mileage reimbursements for November meeting. No travel-related expenses (airline tickets/transport) for District V Director and any other Region Officers from District V.</p>	
<p><b>RATIONALE:</b> Allowing the November Board meeting to be held electronically supports volunteer work-life balance. This flexibility enables the Region to conduct business efficiently without placing additional burdens on volunteers. The August Board Meeting allows officers and directors to connect, plan, and finalize Region business in a setting that encourages open communication, teamwork, and bonding as elements that require an in-person environment. The February Board Meeting focuses on finalizing Conference plans and often includes hands-on projects or program planning that are best accomplished in person. The final Board Meeting of the year is held at the Conference as a shorter, in-person session including the SIA official visitor and silent observers (if any). This balance of three in-person meetings and one virtual meeting ensure fiscal responsibility while preserving the interpersonal connections that strengthen the Region's leadership, collaboration, and decision-making process.</p>	

Governor Elise announced that the question is on the amendment to the Founder Region bylaws, as read by Chair Lillian.

Founder Region Governor-elect Jackie spoke in favor of the amendment.

There was no discussion.

Governor Elise stated as there is no discussion we are ready for the vote. As this requires a two-thirds vote, all those in favor of adoption of this amendment please raise your voting card. Those opposed raise your voting card. **THE AYES HAVE IT AND YOU HAVE ADOPTED THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO Founder Region Bylaws ARTICLE VII – Board of Directors Section 7.9 – Board Meetings.**

**Founder Region  
Proposed Bylaws Amendment  
2025-2026  
FOUNDER REGION BYLAWS:  
ARTICLE VIII – Committees**

CURRENT LANGUAGE	PROPOSED LANGUAGE
<p>ii. Committees of at least one (1) member from each District, including a chair, shall be appointed by the Region Governor to promote and administer Soroptimist programs in concert with the Region and Federation. The Program Committee shall incorporate <b>Live Your Dream, Dream It, Be It-Career Support for Girls, Violet Richardson, Soroptimist Celebrating Success</b> and "S" Club.</p>	<p>ii. Committees of at least one (1) member from each District, including a chair, shall be appointed by the Region Governor to promote and administer Soroptimist programs in concert with the Region and Federation. The Program Committee shall incorporate <b>Live Your Dream: Education and Training Awards for Women, Dream It, Be It-Career Support for Girls, Violet Richardson, and "S" Club.</b></p>
<b>PROPOSED BY:</b> 2024-2026 Founder Region Board	
<b>ADVANTAGE:</b> Corrects bylaws to reflect current programs by eliminating Soroptimist Celebrating Success and includes full title of Live Your Dream program according to SIA Procedures document: Live Your Dream: Education and Training Awards for Women.	
<b>FINANCIAL IMPACT:</b> None	
<b>RATIONALE:</b> The current language includes Soroptimist Celebrating Success, and this program is no longer in effect in SIA or Founder Region, and correctly states full title of Live Your Dream program for consistency with SIA procedures manual.	

Governor Elise announced that the question is on the amendment to the Founder Region bylaws, as read by Chair Lillian.

Founder Region District I Director Laura spoke in favor of the amendment.

There was no discussion.

Governor Elise stated as there is no discussion we are ready for the vote. As this requires a two-thirds vote, all those in favor of adoption of this amendment please raise your voting card. Those opposed raise your voting card. THE AYES HAVE IT AND YOU HAVE ADOPTED THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO Founder Region Bylaws ARTICLE VIII – Committees, ii.

**Founder Region Proposed  
Bylaws Amendment  
2025-2026  
FOUNDER REGION BYLAWS:  
ARTICLE IV – Officers  
Section 4.2**

CURRENT LANGUAGE	PROPOSED LANGUAGE
a. To be eligible for the office of Governor-elect, the member shall have served on the Region Board within <b>six</b> years prior to the term for which they are being nominated.	a. To be eligible for the office of Governor-elect, the member shall have served on the Region Board within <b>ten</b> years prior to the term for which they are being nominated.
<b>PROPOSED BY:</b> 2024-2026 Founder Region Board	
<b>ADVANTAGE:</b> To allow for a larger pool of nominees for the office of Governor-elect.	
<b>FINANCIAL IMPACT:</b> None	
<p><b>RATIONALE:</b> The current language restricts the pool of eligible nominees for Founder Region Governor-elect to six years, representing only three biennium terms. Expanding eligibility to ten years broadens opportunities for qualified members whose work or family commitments may have changed since their prior board service. This amendment preserves and leverages valuable leadership experience, ensuring that the Region continues to benefit from the wisdom and institutional knowledge of seasoned members.</p> <p>Allowing additional time for eligibility encourages experienced leaders to re-engage when circumstances permit, promoting continuity, stability, and depth within Founder Region's leadership. Moreover, because some elected board members do not intend to seek higher office, extending the eligibility period effectively increases the number of potential candidates thereby strengthening the Region's leadership pipeline and ensuring a more diverse and competitive field for future elections.</p>	

Governor Elise announced that the question is on the amendment to the Founder Region bylaws, as read by Chair Lillian.

Founder Region Governor-elect Jackie spoke in favor of the amendment.

There was no discussion.

Governor Elise stated as there is no discussion we are ready for the vote. As this requires a two-thirds vote, all those in favor of adoption of this amendment please raise your voting card. Those opposed raise your voting card. THE AYES HAVE IT AND YOU HAVE ADOPTED THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO FOUNDER REGION BYLAWS: ARTICLE IV – Officers Section 4.2.a.

Governor Elise thanked President Vicki, the delegates, Chair Lillian, and Parliamentarian Sylvia for doing such a great job.

Governor Elise then recognized Treasurer Holly Hayashi for the Treasurer's Report.

## **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Treasurer Holly reported that two financial reports, the Balance Sheet Report and the Budget vs. Actual Profit and Loss Report is reported monthly and have been submitted to the board and reviewed. These reports are from July 1, 2025 to March 31, 2026. If anyone would like a copy, they may request one from her. Treasurer Holly moved for the adoption of the financial reports as presented.

Governor Elise called for the vote and the motion passed. The financial reports have been adopted.

Governor Elise thanked Treasurer Holly for her report.

Governor Elise invited Fundraising Chair Joy Swank to give the Laurel Society Honors and Recognition.

## **LAUREL SOCIETY HONORS AND RECOGNITION**

Chair Joy reported that there are 194 Laurel Members in Founder Region. 80 Stargazers in the Region. You can give monthly to the Laurel Society through Stargazers monthly giving. 3 Members leveled up on their Laurel Society this weekend, Director Crystal Arbuthnot, Director Teri Lynn Sato and SI/Humboldt Bay made a donation to honor a member.

Governor Elise thanked Chair Joy.

Governor Elise asked Credentials Chair Shirley if there were any changes to the last credentials report. There were none. The credentials report previously adopted remains.

## **APPOINTMENT OF TELLERS**

Governor Elise announced that the following members have accepted appointments as tellers for the elections by ballot:

1. Bev Gomer
2. Karen Jameson
3. Madalienne Peters
4. Sue Finch
5. Carmela Rapadas

## **ELECTION PROCEDURES**

Governor Elise noted that although the Founder Region Governor-elect, Region Secretary, Region Treasurer and District I, II, III and IV Directors have been elected by voice vote, as they were unopposed, you will still find them on the printed ballot. District V is the only District voting for a District Director. All District V CLUB delegates and region board members from District V may vote for the District V Director.

President Vicki announced that all District I CLUB delegates and Region and Fellowship board members from District I, may vote for the District I Fellowship Director. All delegates may vote for Fellowship President.

Delegates, please proceed to the voting room and make sure you have your name badge visible and your credentials card with you. There will be two people at the entrance door to verify your name tag and credential card. They will direct you to your district registration area, where you will be registered, given a ballot and directed to the balloting area. After receiving and completing your ballot, please fold your ballot and deposit it in the correct box (marked with your district number on it). Vote for one candidate per office.

President Vicki announced the first 3 winners of the puzzle game. They were Judy Moon of SI/Martinez (gifted to Juliana Chiarelli), Barbara Young of SI/Santa Rosa, and Allyne Brown of SI/Ukiah.

Governor Elise asked Conference Coordinator Kris for any announcements.

Governor Elise announced that we are in recess until 12:30pm when we reconvene to enjoy your District Directors' Luncheon where we will recognize our clubs and members and have some fun. Presidents, please meet your District Director in the lobby before lunch for the President's Processional. Please be sure to visit the Trade Fair tables, Founder Region, Fellowship, and SIA tables.

### **Recess 12:05pm**

### **Reconvene 12:52pm**

Governor Elise announced that we have lots of excitement coming your way but before we begin, please respect other attendees and our guests by silencing your cell phones.

She introduced those members who currently make up the Platform Party.

#### **On the bottom tier to my far left:**

Region Membership Chair, Angie Haramoto of SI/Maui

Region Fundraising Chair, Joy Swank of SI/Vacaville

Region Secretary, Kristal Koga of SI/The Marianas

Region Parliamentarian, Sylvia Crafton of SI/The Marianas

#### **On the bottom tier to my far right:**

Region Treasurer, Holly Hayashi of SI/Honolulu

Region Governor-elect, Jackie DeVries of SI/Vacaville

Please rise as I introduce and recognize our Official Visitor, Soroptimist International of the Americas Secretary/Treasurer Gail Dekreon of SI/San Francisco

And, I am Elise Balgley, very pleased and proud to be your Founder Region Governor

She announced that on each of the tables there is an envelope with raffle tickets inside. The lucky winner will receive \$50.00 from Treasurer Holly. The money we raise during lunch will go toward our Region Dream Programs. She requested for all to place their meal ticket in front of them for the waitstaff to collect.

Our lunch session today is hosted by your district directors. We've continued the tradition of having our directors proceed in with their club presidents or a club representative, thereby recognizing not only our amazing directors but also our awesome club presidents.

### **DISTRICT DIRECTORS' LUNCHEON**

Governor Elise announced each of the Directors and their Presidents or Representatives as they entered in order:

District I Director - Laura Koehler and with her, representatives from the EIGHT clubs that make up District I – Soroptimist International of ...

24/680 (Walnut Creek) – President Lenore Colarusso

Benicia – Presidents Devon O'Shea and Robin Silver

The East Bay – President Donna Whitehouse

El Cerrito – President Candy Capogrossi

Martinez – President Jennifer Chiarelli

Oakland-The Founder Club - President Kenya Broadnax

Richmond – President Judy Christiansen

The Tri-Valley – Presidents Kelly Knaabe and Michele Garcia

District II Director - Dana Holve and with her, representatives from the NINE clubs that make up District II – Soroptimist International of ...

American Canyon 2018 – President Kristin Einberger

Antioch - President Denise Picard

Central Solano County - President Debbie Peralez  
The Delta - President Sonia Freytes  
Dixon - President Barbara Rigdon  
Rio Vista - President Evelyn Nodal  
Vacaville – Presidents Yvonne Thrasher and Debi Schrader  
Vacaville Twilight - President Kim Radford  
Vallejo - President Karen Jameson

District III Director – Nancy Koski and with her, representatives from the ELEVEN clubs that make up District III – Soroptimist International of ...

Calistoga - President Marion Villalba  
Clear Lake - President Olga Martin-Steele  
Mendocino-Sonoma Coast - President Karen Scott  
Napa - President Sarah Goff  
Novato - President Kris Wiley  
Oakmont Wine Country - President Denise Bickert  
Santa Rosa - President Helen Sager  
Sonoma Valley - President Maddy Leader  
St. Helena – President Anna Beard  
St. Helena Sunrise - President Janet Todd  
Windsor - President Amy Whiteley

District IV Director - Crystal Arbuthnot and with her, representatives from the TEN clubs that make up District IV – Soroptimist International of ...

Arcata - President Peggy Dimmick  
Crescent City - President Linda Perry  
Eel River Valley - President Laurie Garrison  
Eureka - President Carol Crossley  
Fort Bragg - President Lorraine Murphy  
Humboldt Bay - President Mary Wallaker  
Noyo Sunrise - President A. B. Priceman  
The Redwoods - President Corinne Stromstad  
Ukiah - President Allyne Brown  
Willits - President Kitty Norris

District V Director – Teri Lynn Sato and with her, representatives from the EIGHT clubs that make up District V – Soroptimist International of ...

Central Oahu - President Janice Ishiara  
Guam - President Grace Bordallo  
Honolulu - President Emari Hunn  
The Marianas - President Carmela Rapadas  
Maui - President Carole Zoom  
North Oahu - President Cross Crabbe  
The Northern Mariana Islands - President Tania David  
Waikiki Foundation, Inc. - President Paulette Williams

While not all club presidents could attend conference, the most important thing is that we thank the people who said “Yes” to a leadership role in their club, let’s give them a standing ovation.

The inspiration was given by District II Director Dana Holve. District I Director Laura Koehler gave the welcome.

## **LUNCH**

Governor Elise announced that we will begin with each director drawing the name of one of the clubs in her district. The

club that wins the drawing in each district will receive a donation of \$250.00 to Club Giving in the club's name.

DI - Winner of the drawing SI/Oakland-The Founder Club

DII – Winner of the drawing SI/The Delta

DIII – Winner of the drawing SI/Sonoma Valley

DIV – Winner of the drawing SI/Arcata

DV – Winner of the drawing SI/Northern Mariana Islands

Governor Elise then introduced SIA Executive Director/CEO Michelle Burnett who gave her presentation.

ED/CEO Michelle confirmed that SIA staff are there to support the members. The feedback SIA receives is considered when making board decisions. Please report your BGAP, LYD, DIBI projects so it can be counted toward our Big Goal. BGAP 22,000 last year alone. In 2024-2025 \$3.4 million Dream Awards were given. Last year 24,000 girls were served through DIBI. Convention club fees have been eliminated as of next year. But there will be a lesser fee that is for costs associated with the Federation business meeting. Clubs can attend virtually. A club is only required to do two projects, LYD and DIBI. All other projects are optional. Stop, Start, Continue, Adjust: stop to review current work, start new ideas, continue what's working/mission aligned, adjust legacy projects your club loves but tweak it to be mission aligned. She asked clubs to do this at your next meeting.

Governor Elise thanked ED/CEO Michelle for her presentation.

She then called upon Elections Chair Barbara Lanier to provide the results of our elections.

## **FOUNDER REGION ELECTION RESULTS**

Chair Barbara stated for Founder Region District V Director: Eligible to vote 15, Cast 15, Illegal 0, Needed to win 8, Lisa Ma 14, Paulette Williams 1.

Governor Elise repeated the results and declared Lisa Ma the District V Director.

Governor Elise declared the Founder Region Board for 2026-2028 as follows:

District I Director – Jennifer Chiarelli

District II Director – Dana Holve

District III Director – Nancy Koski

District IV Director – Crystal Arbuthnot

District V Director – Lisa Ma

Region Treasurer – Holly Hayashi

Region Secretary – Jan Schults

Governor-elect – Kristal Koga

Governor Elise shared that the table raffle today collected \$1,151.00. The lucky winner received a \$50.00 bill.

## **FOUNDER REGION FELLOWSHIP ELECTION RESULTS**

Chair Barbara stated for Founder Region Fellowship District I Director: Eligible to vote 25, Cast 23, Illegal 0, Needed to win 12, Kenya Broadnax 17, Susan Yeazel 6.

Chair Barbara stated for Founder Region Fellowship President: Eligible to vote 120, Cast 116, Illegal 0, Needed to win 59, Tess Albin-Smith 32, Elise Balgley 14, Kay Kelley 70.

President Vicki repeated the results for Founder Region Fellowship District I Director and declared Kenya Broadnax the Fellowship District I Director.

President Vicki repeated the results for Founder Region Fellowship President and declared Kay Kelley the Fellowship President.

President Vicki declared the Founder Region Fellowship Board for 2026-2028 as follows:

Fellowship Director, District I – Kenya Broadnax

Fellowship Director, District II – Debi Schrader

Fellowship Director, District III – Nancy Weber

Fellowship Director, District IV – Loretta Tognoli

Fellowship Director, District V – Teri Lynn Sato

Fellowship Treasurer – Cara Begley

Fellowship President – Kay Kelley

President Vicki declared the Founder Region Fellowship Business Meeting closed.

Governor Elise thanked Chair Barabara and her committee.

## **NEW MEMBER INDUCTION**

Governor Elise performed a new member induction. Lenise Devers was inducted into SI/Oakland-The Founder Club. Her sponsor was Portia Stewart.

### **Break 2:12pm**

### **Reconvene 2:25pm**

Fellowship President Vicki then announced the 6 remaining winners for the puzzle game. Michelle Klimesh-SI/Eel River Valley, Bobbi Enderlin-SI/Benicia, Lydia Justice-SI/The Tri Valley, Cara Begley-SI/Antioch, Amanda Reed-SI/Eureka, Bev Gomer-SI/Martinez.

Governor Elise asked all to please respect other attendees and our guests by silencing your cell phones.

Governor Elise then introduced each Region Chair to give the Pillar Presentations.

## **PHILANTHROPY/FUNDRAISING PILLAR SESSION**

Evolving Trends: How to Tap into New Fundraising Tactics presented by Chair Joy Swank.

AI is a handy tool when it comes to planning events. It helps us figure out the best dates and formats for our initiatives. It can offer tips for setting realistic fundraising goals based on past fundraising events or similar local fundraisers. Mobile giving apps such as GiveLify, PayPal Giving Fund, Donorbox, and OneCause are a few options. They help streamline giving, increase donor engagement. Leverage social media. It's essential for engaging members, telling our story and attracting sponsors. Peer-to-peer fundraising greatly expands our reach by empowering supporters to raise funds on our behalf. Facebook Fundraisers are a fantastic tool for this. Supporters can create personal fundraising pages tied to our mission, such as setting up a fundraiser for their birthday, encouraging friends to donate in lieu of gifts. Target communication by utilizing multiple channels, including emails, social media, phone calls and text messages, while being mindful of frequency to avoid overwhelming your supporters.

## **ENGAGEMENT/MEMBERSHIP PILLAR PRESENTATION**

Infusing JOY into Membership presented by Chair Angie Haramoto.

It is no surprise that interpersonal issues can be very draining. If you are facing these, your club president or region governor can be of service. If your time with Soroptimist is solely focused on things that don't feel fun for you, it certainly can zap your joy. No matter how enthusiastic you and your club are about starting something new like a member recruitment strategy, a new fundraising event, or a first-time Dream It, Be It project, it can be difficult to make connections to launch something or get everyone on board with something new. Adding in novelty will help make meetings and events more memorable, especially for potential members who may be more likely to join. Make new members feel valued from day one. We can also celebrate and recognize all members publicly and privately. Consider doing occasional learning style

meetings where a member knowledgeable about a certain aspect of Soroptimist presents to the rest of the club. Lead ice breakers and discussion prompts, these are especially helpful to get new members into the fold. Try a costume theme for a fundraiser or a regular meeting, or play a brief game or do a quick chair yoga stretch as a group before any meetings that you know will be long.

Governor Elise gave permission for the ballots to be destroyed.

## **RECOGNITION/PUBLIC AWARENESS PILLAR PRESENTATION**

Club Identity & Global Brand: How They Work Together presented by Governor-elect Jackie who stood in for Chair Sue Pretzer.

Our global brand is what connects every Soroptimist club around the world. When clubs align with this global brand, they benefit from the strength and reputation of the entire organization. People may meet your club locally, but they trust it more quickly because it's clearly part of something bigger. Your club identity is what makes your club special. It's shaped by your members, your community and the projects you care most about. No two clubs are exactly alike—and that's a strength. Brand guidelines aren't meant to be restrictive—they're meant to help. By using approved logos, colors and fonts, your materials instantly connect to Soroptimist. You still get to highlight your members, your events and your community impact. The key is consistency, not sameness. And if branding has ever felt overwhelming or unclear, you're not alone—that's exactly why more tools and guidance are being developed. SIA provides brand and style guidelines, along with customizable Canva templates and publicity kits, to help clubs incorporate local flair into their publicity materials while staying aligned with the SIA brand. The SIA marketing team is actively working on a customizable variation of the Soroptimist logo specifically for club use. This option is still in development, but the goal is simple: to make it easier for clubs to stay fully on brand and clearly show what makes your club unique. This logo variation is being designed with real-life club needs in mind for materials such as event flyers, banners, social media graphics, and other local publicity tools. You're not just representing your club, you're representing a global organization with a strong, trusted reputation. That shared credibility benefits everyone. The big takeaway is this: you don't have to choose between being unique and being consistent. When your club identity aligns with SIA's global brand, your message becomes clearer, stronger and more effective.

## **IMPACT/PROGRAM PILLAR PRESENTATION**

Big Goal Accelerator Projects: Eligibility Deep Dive presented by Governor-elect Jackie.

Big Goal Accelerator Projects are club or region led projects that directly advance SIA's Big Goal. Projects must: Serve women and girls with obstacles to their success who are NOT part of the Dream Programs; Increase access to formal education or economic empowerment; Be Soroptimist led; Be reported to SIA. Obstacles must be more than gender alone—such as poverty, teen parenting, language barriers, foster care, substance use disorder, or homelessness. When we speak of education, it refers to a structured program that helps women or girls obtain a certificate, diploma, or degree such as vocational or technical training; High school completion or equivalency; College or university degrees; Workplace training that leads to better job opportunities. This type of education directly increases a woman's or girl's ability to get a job, earn more income, and build long-term stability. Educational activities share information or raise awareness. They may be helpful and informative, but they do not usually lead to a certificate, degree, or job qualification. Projects must be driven by your club. If your club has a scholarship for a school in another country, this could be considered eligible if your club is in charge of reviewing applications, choosing the girl/woman with obstacles, and the scholarship funds are applied directly to her tuition. Reports must be submitted through the online reporting form before June 30. What is NOT eligible includes: Awareness raising projects; Beautification projects; General social empowerment; Supporting projects for other organizations, including monetary donations or grants; Dream Programs work; Planting trees with scouts to raise awareness of environmental issues. There are three general categories of eligible Big Goal Accelerator projects: Giving scholarships or awards to provide funding for college, technical/vocational school, advanced degrees; Removing obstacles by providing necessary items for education like computers, internet, transportation, paying fees for college-preparation exams, college applications, entrance exams, or professional licensure; Providing education or classes focused on job training, skills training, applying for financial aid/college, computer training, career mentorship. If Live Your Dream Award applicants aren't eligible, you can support them through a different scholarship and report it. Another way to start a project is to provide items required for education or work such as licensure or testing fees, textbooks, gas cards or bus passes, professional clothing or uniform pieces or menstrual products. When planning think about reach, you can help two

low-income girls with laptops or host a skills workshop for 50 low-income girls. Don't abandon projects you love, tweak a project you already have to make it a BGAP.

Governor-elect Jackie asked all to look at the posters displayed in the foyer that were created by clubs featuring their projects. She said there were 25 Big Goal Accelerator projects that were reported by March 31 to SIA. Each of these clubs received a certificate. Fellowship also turned in their project and it was approved.

SI/24/680 (Walnut Creek)  
SI/Rio Vista (3)  
SI/St. Helena  
SI/Richmond  
SI/Sonoma Valley  
SI/The Redwoods  
SI/The Delta (2)  
SI/Willits  
SI/Central Solano County (2)  
SI/Vacaville Twilight (2)  
SI/Vacaville (2)  
SI/Vallejo  
SI/Dixon  
SI/Rio Vista  
SI/American Canyon 2018  
SI/Waikiki Foundation, Inc.  
SI/Eel River Valley  
SI/Calistoga  
Fellowship

Governor Elise thanked each for their presentation and congratulated the clubs.

She then invited SIA Secretary/Treasurer Gail to give her presentation.

### **OFFICIAL VISITOR PRESENTATION - "Building a Culture of Transformational Leadership: Inspiring Impact"**

Secretary/Treasurer Gail said that what connects all of us is one powerful, shared purpose: improving the lives of women and girls. Transformational leadership isn't defined by a title but by the impact you create. Transformational leadership is about creating positive, lasting change, in people, in our clubs, in our communities and even in our own homes. It's about influence more than authority. Empowerment more than control. Purpose more than position. Every Soroptimist is a leader because the work we do is truly transformational. It's collaborative. It's compassionate. And it's courageous. Leadership does not require a microphone. It often shows up in small, everyday moments of encouragement. Each of us brings leadership strengths such as organizing, encouraging, advocating, or connecting others. You don't have to do everything. You just have to do something. Barrier's women face: Self-doubt, fear of failure, imposter syndrome and external expectations. Transformational leaders shift one's thinking. Leadership doesn't start with certainty; it starts with willingness.

Governor Elise thanked Secretary/Treasurer Gail for her presentation.

### **NEW MEMBER SPONSOR DRAWING**

Treasurer Holly announced that we have 92 new member sponsors in our drawing this year. Lillian Meyers of SI/Sonoma Valley will receive a Laurel Society donation of \$1,000.00 to be donated in her name.

### **JULIA "BESS" COMBS AWARD**

Treasurer Holly announced that Founder Region Clubs are doing well with a region member retention of 98%. We look at the net membership change between the end of the last fiscal year and March 31 of the current fiscal year. To make this fair, we

use the percentage change.

Top 5 Julia Bess Combs			
5	Mendocino-Sonoma Coast	28%	
4	Novato	32%	
3	North Oahu	33%	
2	Clear Lake	40%	
1	Calistoga	50%	Julia “Bess” Combs Awardee

Governor Elise congratulated SI/Calistoga and thanked Treasurer Holly for keeping our records up to date and accurate. Soroptimist International of Calistoga will receive a certificate of recognition as well as a \$500.00 donation made in their club name to Club Giving.

Governor Elise mentioned that the Call to Leadership Training is available in the program and on our region website. This year we are offering 4 opportunities to attend Leadership Training. Three will be in-person events with our first one to be held on June 6th at the Concord Senior Center, the second will be on June 13th at the Red Lion Hotel in Eureka, which is the same weekend as our Memorial Grove event near there. There will be a Zoom Leadership Training on June 26. District V in person Leadership Training will be in Honolulu this year, on October 18. All members are welcome to attend whichever event fits within your schedule, regardless of which district in which you reside.

## FELLOWSHIP PRESENTATIONS

Fellowship Directors announced new or level up fellows from each District.

### District I:

Tamra Weston – SI/24/680 - First Level  
Jennifer Chiarelli – SI/Martinez – Third Level  
Felicie Standley – SI/Oakland-The Founder Club - First level  
Tracy Zelle-Bennett – SI/Richmond - First Level  
Laura Koehler – SI/The Tri-Valley - Second level

### District II:

Denise Picard – SI/Antioch – First Level  
Meryl Wiernik – SI/The Delta – First Level  
Clara Oakes – SI/Vacaville – Second Level  
Mary Dickey – SI/Vacaville – Ninth Level

### District III:

Maddy Leader (in honor of Colleen Ganaye) – SI/Sonoma Valley - Third Level  
Sandy Springfield – SI/Santa Rosa – First Level

### District IV:

Rachael Thacker – SI/Eureka – First Level  
Patricia Thomas – SI/Humboldt Bay – First Level  
Jahna Michaelson (member who died last March from breast cancer) – SI/Noyo Sunrise - First Level

### District V:

Leona Soto – SI/Central Oahu – Second Level  
Janice Ishiara – SI/Central Oahu – Third Level  
Teri Lynn Sato – SI/Waikiki Foundation, Inc. – Fourth Level

Governor Elise then asked Conference Coordinator Kris if she had any announcements.

## OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE 2026-2028 FELLOWSHIP BOARD AND FOUNDER REGION BOARD

President Vicki announced the 2026-2028 Founder Region Fellowship Board and asked them to come to the front to be recognized:

Founder Region Fellowship Director, District I Kenya Broadnax - SI/Oakland-The Founder Club  
Founder Region Fellowship Director, District II - Debi Schrader - SI/Vacaville  
Founder Region Fellowship Director, District III - Nancy Weber - SI/Novato  
Founder Region Fellowship Director, District IV - Loretta Tognoli - SI/Ukiah  
Founder Region Fellowship Director, District V - Teri Lynn Sato - SI/Waikiki Foundation, Inc.  
Founder Region Fellowship Treasurer Cara Begley - SI/Antioch  
Founder Region Fellowship President Kay Kelley - SI/Rio Vista

Governor Elise announced the 2026-2028 Founder Region Board and asked them to come to the front to be recognized:

Founder Region District I Director Jennifer Chiarelli  
Founder Region District II Director Dana Holve  
Founder Region District III Director Nancy Koski  
Founder Region District IV Director Crystal Arbuthnot  
Founder Region District V Director Lisa Ma  
Founder Region Treasurer Holly Hayashi  
Founder Region Secretary Jan Schults  
Founder Region Governor-elect Kristal Koga  
Founder Region Governor Jackie DeVries

Governor Elise announced that we are in recess until 7:00pm this evening. Please enjoy no host cocktails from 6:00pm to 7:00pm in the Ballroom Lobby and then join in the fun as we honor our Past Governors, we will install the new 2026-2028 boards and enjoy some entertainment and, of course dance the night away with great music!

**Recess 4:20pm**

**Reconvene 7:00pm**

## **DINNER HONORING PAST GOVERNORS AND REGION ENTERTAINMENT**

Governor Elise asked all to please respect other attendees and our guests by silencing your cell phones.

She congratulated and thanked all of the members for the wonderful job they have done the past two days attending our programs and sharing in the business of the region. Your attention, participation and support of our programs is greatly appreciated.

## **RECOGNITION OF PAST GOVERNORS**

Governor Elise announced that there is a red Past Governor ribbon worn by several special women we have in attendance. She asked for everyone's attention as she invited into the ballroom the Past Governors of Founder Region:

Mary Ann Redden, member of SI/Antioch – Founder Region Governor from 2002-2004, her theme was “Achieve Growth By Sharing”. Escorted by Governor-elect Jackie DeVries.

Sue Finch, member of SI/Eel River Valley, Founder Region Governor from 2006-2008, her theme was “Creating Magic Through Soroptimist”. Escorted by District IV Director Crystal Arbuthnot.

Amelia Benko, member of SI/The Tri-Valley, Founder Region Governor from 2008-2010, her theme was “Making a Difference Matters”. Escorted by District I Director Laura Koehler.

Dona Gaddis-Wolf, member of SI/Antioch, Founder Region Governor from 2012-2014, her theme was “Sharing the Light of Soroptimist Service”. Escorted by District II Director Dana Holve.

Bobbi Enderlin, member of SI/Benicia, Founder Region Governor from 2014-2016, her theme was “Share The Joy Of Soroptimist Service”. Escorted by District III Director Nancy Koski.

Pam Parker, member of SI/St. Helena, Founder Region Governor from 2016 to 2018, her theme was “Soroptimists Are

Shining Stars”. Escorted by District IV Director Crystal Arbuthnot.

Sylvia Crafton, member of SI/The Marianas, Founder Region Governor from 2018-2020, her theme was “Empowering Change”. Escorted by Founder Region Secretary Kristal Koga.

Kris Chorbi, member of SI/Eureka, Founder Region Governor from 2020-2022, her theme was “Dream BIG for the Future”. Escorted by Founder Region Treasurer Holly Hayashi.

Vicki Ham, member of SI/Willits, Founder Region Governor from 2022-2024, her theme was “BEE the Dream”. Escorted by District V Director Teri Lynn Sato.

Thank you, Past Governors for all that you have done, and continue to do for Founder Region. A donation to the Laurel Society will be made in your honor.

The inspiration was given by District IV Director Crystal Arbuthnot. The welcome was given by District III Director Nancy Koski.

A video was shown honoring the past Governors of Founder Region.

Governor Elise shared a little history on Founder Region.

She then thanked all our wonderful Past Governors who are with us tonight, those who could not make the journey to be with us, and those who are watching over us. They will never be forgotten. We respect and love each and every one of you! Please join me in giving our beloved Past Governors a standing ovation and to welcome our Official Visitor, SIA Secretary/Treasurer Gail Dekreon.

Governor Elise then recognized our current leaders.

Founder Region Fellowship Board Members please stand and be recognized and thanked for a job well done.

Fellowship Director, District I – Amelia Benko

Fellowship Director, District II – Kay Kelley

Fellowship Director, District III – Laurie Gallian

Fellowship Director, District IV – Tess Albin-Smith

Fellowship Director, District V – Cindy Rasmussen

Fellowship Treasurer – Danelle Tegarden

Fellowship President – Vicki Ham

And now, let us recognize and thank our current Founder Region Board Members for what they are doing and will continue to do.

Founder Region District I Director – Laura Koehler

Founder Region District II Director – Dana Holve

Founder Region District III Director – Nancy Koski

Founder Region District IV Director – Crystal Arbuthnot

Founder Region District V Director – Teri Lynn Sato

Founder Region Treasurer – Holly Hayashi

Founder Region Secretary – Kristal Koga

Founder Region Governor-elect – Jackie DeVries

And I am Elise Balgley, your Founder Region Governor

Governor Elise reminded all about our table raffle. The winner will receive a \$50.00 bill from Treasurer Holly. The money we raise during dinner tonight will go towards our Region Dream Programs. Thank you in advance for your generosity. And don't forget to put your meal ticket in front of your place setting.

## **DINNER**

Governor Elise gave her outgoing Governor remarks.

AND NOW IT IS TIME TO INSTALL OUR 2026-2028 Founder Region Fellowship and Founder Region Boards.

Founder Region members have been extremely generous in raising \$1,185.00 during our Table Raffle tonight. The lucky winning ticket was drawn and the winner received a \$50.00 bill.

Governor Elise then asked Conference Coordinator Kris if she had any announcements.

Governor Elise shared that after our entertainment and dancing we will recess until 8:30am tomorrow morning when we will gather for our Memorial Service and Awards Program. If you are a representative in the memorial program, please report outside the double doors at 8:15am. The host clubs will be there to give you instructions. We ask that all other members be here in the ballroom and seated by 8:15am so we can begin our memorial service promptly at 8:30am.

And please be sure to deliver your club's raffle basket to the ballroom at 7:30am tomorrow.

### **Recess 8:45pm**

### **Sunday, May 3, 2025, Celebration of Service Memorial and Dream Awards Program**

Governor Elise reconvened the conference at 8:32am with the Celebration of Service Memorial in remembrance of members we lost this year. A slide show with photos of the members we have lost was shown.

Judi Parent Smith, SI/Antioch, 33-year member  
Brooke Bovo, SI/Benicia, 10-year member  
Patricia A. Butler, SI/Benicia, 15-year member  
Carla Galhager Schaefer, SI/Benicia, 32-year member  
Beverly Hood, SI/Eureka, 34-year member  
Colleen Ganaye, SI/Sonoma Valley, 42-year member  
Alice Strand, SI/Sonoma Valley, 30-year member  
Janet Lockhart, SI/The Tri-Valley, 20-year member  
Rose Foster, SI/Ukiah, 57-year member  
Buff Fleming, SI/Vacaville, 34-year member  
Priscilla Andreiev, SI/Vallejo, 1-year member  
Belva Gibson, SI/Vallejo, 57-year member  
Honore McIlhatten, SI/Vallejo, 28-year member

To add to this beautiful tribute to our departed members, Laura Middlemiss, SI/Humboldt Bay, beautifully sang "Wind Beneath My Wings".

Governor Elise thanked Laura for a fitting and beautiful tribute.

Governor Elise bid a farewell to our dear Soroptimists whom together, these women had over 336 years of Soroptimist Service. So long as we remember them and continue their work, these women are not gone and will never be forgotten. The music played as we read the names of our remembered Soroptimist today is the Soroptimist Symphony. The music and lyrics are provided in the Founder Region History Book, posted on the region website. We play this during our memorial service each year so our Soroptimist Symphony will live on and never be forgotten, like those we have honored here today.

The 2026 Redwood Memorial Grove Service will be held Sunday, June 14, 2026. All members are encouraged to attend this inspiring and moving service. Please join us as we remember our beloved members.

A special thank you to Conference Coordinator Kris Chorbi and the members of our host clubs for coordinating the logistics of our Memorial Celebration of Service this morning.

She then shared that our Guam and Northern Mariana Islands clubs have been affected by a horrific typhoon. She encouraged clubs to reach out to them and consider sending a monetary donation to assist in the recovery efforts.

On each of the tables there is an envelope with tickets inside. The lucky winner will receive a crisp, new \$50.00 bill from Treasurer Holly. The money we raise today will go towards our Region Dream Program Awards. Guests and recipients were informed that there is no obligation to participate in this raffle drawing.

## **BREAKFAST**

Governor Elise reminded all to please respect other attendees and our guests by silencing your cell phones.

The inspiration was given by District V Director Teri Lynn Sato. The welcome was given by Governor Elise.

Governor Elise presented the Platform Party.

### **On the upper tier to my far left:**

District V Director Teri Lynn Sato

District IV Director Crystal Arbuthnot

District III Director Nancy Koski

### **On the upper tier to my far right:**

District I Director Laura Koehler

District II Director Dana Holve

### **On the bottom tier to my far left:**

“S” Club Chair, Dawn Shepherd, SI/Vacaville

Past Live Your Dream Award recipient Jaclyn Pledger

Live Your Dream Chair, Maida Herbst, SI/Sonoma Valley

Governor-elect Jackie DeVries

### **On the bottom tier to my far right:**

Founder Region Treasurer Holly Hayashi

Founder Region Secretary Kristal Koga

Please rise and join me in welcoming our Official Visitor, Soroptimist International of the Americas Secretary/Treasurer Gail Dekreon

And, I am Elise Balgley, for a little while longer your proud and happy Founder Region Governor

Governor Elise asked members to turn in all Dream Program ticket stubs at this time to the Fundraising Team.

Governor Elise introduced Governor-elect Jackie, who will be the moderator for our Dream Program Awards this morning. In addition to her duties as Governor-elect, Jackie acts as the Founder Region Program Chair. As Program Chair she administers the Violet Richardson Award and acts as the direct liaison with the Live Your Dream, Dream It, Be It and “S” Club Outstanding Senior Award Committee Chairs.

Governor-elect Jackie welcomed everyone to her favorite day of conference. Where we celebrate all of our amazing awardees. We also honor our deceased members, who dedicated their lives to our programs, so this is a fitting way to honor them today. We begin our awards with a young woman from one of our “S” clubs - a role model to other members of her school as she gives back to the community. You will then hear from young women in high school who are following the footsteps of Violet Richardson, doing what counts! We welcome back a former Live Your Dream Recipient - Jaclyn Pledger as she catches us up on what her life has been like since receiving her award. Finally, we have the Live Your Dream presentations. Women who have faced obstacles in their lives but rose above them to show us resiliency, grace under adversity, and determination.

To start our awards program, Governor-elect Jackie called up “S” Club Chair, Dawn Shepherd from SI/Vacaville, to present the “S” Club Outstanding Senior award.

## **“S” CLUB OUTSTANDING SENIOR AWARD**

Chair Dawn announced that the winner of the “S” Club Outstanding Senior award is Alyssa Boham, sponsored by SI/Humboldt Bay. Alyssa is a senior at St. Bernard’s Academy in Eureka. The “S” club liaison is Patti Dutton. Chair Dawn asked Patti and Alyssa to join her at the Podium and asked Alyssa to tell us about her “S” Club work.

Chair Dawn thanked Alyssa and presented her with a check for \$500.00, a Book of Sues-isms, and a certificate.

## **VIOLET RICHARDSON AWARD**

Governor-elect Jackie gave an overview of the Violet Richardson Award. It is a recognition program for young women between the ages of 14 and 18 who make their community and world a better place by volunteering. Their volunteer efforts vary from tutoring to fighting drugs, crime and violence, from fighting against discrimination to promoting healthy lifestyles. These young women make the world a better place and are an inspiration to us all.

She thanked her committee, who had the difficult job of choosing this year's Region winners.

District I, Carol Dipple, SI/ El Cerrito

District II, Jan Schults, SI/The Delta

District III, Laurie Gallian, SI/Sonoma Valley

District IV, Dyann O'Brien, SI/Eureka

District V, Rene Tokunaga, SI/Central Oahu

Governor-elect Jackie announced that each of our district winners received a certificate from Founder Region and a check for \$500.00. And this Book of Sues-isms!

Governor-elect Jackie asked each winner to come to the podium and give a short speech.

Violet Richardson Award winners:

District I, Emily Ng, sponsored by SI/Oakland-The Founder Club

District II, Hansini Tirumalashetty, sponsored by SI/The Delta

District III, Gracianna DeFina, sponsored by SI/Napa, unable to attend

District IV, Bliss Blackburn, sponsored by SI/Crescent City

District V, Aleizay Rose Angel, sponsored by SI/Maui, unable to attend

Governor-elect Jackie thanked all the clubs for supporting this program and congratulated all the winners.

## **LIVE YOUR DREAM AWARD**

Governor-elect Jackie announced that we are honored this morning to be joined by Jaelyn Pledger, a former Live Your Dream winner sponsored by SI/Vacaville in 2017. Jaelyn will give us an update on what she has been doing since winning her award.

Governor-elect Jackie thanked Jaelyn and asked her to help draw our LYD incentive winners for next year.

Governor-elect Jackie shared that because we did so well with our awards, 128 LYD awards this year, we will once again be giving 3 incentive awards to be used to fund one more LYD award next year. The 3 winners drawn were: SI/Vacaville, SI/Vacaville Twilight, and SI/American Canyon 2018.

SI/The Delta was called up to receive their incentive award from last year.

Governor-elect Jackie then invited up another former Live Your Dream winner, our own Maida Herbst, Chair of the Live Your Dream Committee.

Chair Maida thanked her committee:

District I, Jennifer Chiarelli, SI/Martinez

District II, Judy Lloyd, SI/Central Solano County

District III, Nancy Giltner, SI/Napa

District IV, Debbie Coles, SI/Arcata

District V, Wendy MacDonald, SI/Maui

Chair Maida thanked the region level judges.

Chair Maida shared that for the 25-26 year Founder Region clubs awarded 128 women \$254,750.00 - our highest number ever in both awards and dollars. Add to that the \$27,000.00 we are awarding today and the total is over \$300,000.00.

She then introduced the 2026 Founder Region Live Your Dream awardees. The winners were invited to speak.

District I, Erica Harris, SI/24/680 (Walnut Creek)

District II, Dallas, SI/Vallejo

District III, Ashley Hall, SI/Napa

District IV, Rosella Moon, SI/Noyo Sunrise, unable to attend, her video was shared

District V, Juana, SI/Waikiki Foundation, Inc.

Governor-elect Jackie shared that along with the certificates and check we also have a small token to keep with you to remember we are all cheering you on. A KEYCHAIN With the message: "Go confidently in the direction of your dreams! Live the life you have imagined!" AND A cute little book on inspiring messages that I hope will remind you that you have hundreds of Soroptimists cheering you on and wishing you all the best in your journey. I'd also like to thank and acknowledge the family and friends who have accompanied our Live Your Dream Award recipients today and for the families who support those awardees who could not be with us today.

Chair Maida shared that she won the club then region LYD award in 1980. She said her father encouraged her to join Soroptimist.

Chair Maida shared that each of our recipients here received \$2,000.00 from Founder Region and \$3,000.00 from Soroptimist International of the Americas for a total of \$5,000.00. She then congratulated our Region Winner from District IV, Rosella Moon, sponsored by SI/Noyo Sunrise who will be sent a check for \$7,000.00 and will go on to judging at the Federation Level. The additional \$2,000.00 is from Founder Region. Chair Maida congratulated all the winners and told them to Live Your Dream.

Governor-elect Jackie thanked Chair Maida and her committee. She then shared an inspirational poem written by her club's member, Marsha.

Governor-elect Jackie thanked the members of Founder Region for their generous support of ALL our awards given here today, The "S" Club Outstanding Senior Award, the Violet Richardson Awards, and the Live Your Dream Awards.

## **DREAM IT, BE IT**

Governor-elect Jackie spoke on Dream It, Be It as Chair Jackie Arnold could not attend. Governor-elect Jackie thanked all the clubs who participated in the Dream It, Be It, program this year. So far this year 8 projects have been turned in. Be sure that you report your projects before the June 30 deadline. She announced that in District III, Nushi is working on a large project that any club may participate in, Clubs may contact her directly.

District Directors assisted to pass out the certificates to the clubs that submitted their projects early. They were SI/Vacaville, SI/Vallejo, SI/Vacaville Twilight, SI/Central Solano County, SI/Central Oahu, SI/Honolulu, SI/The Delta, and SI/Martinez.

Governor-elect Jackie urged clubs to reach out to Chair Jackie Arnold or the District Representatives for assistance.

Governor Elise congratulated each one of the recipients. She thanked Governor-elect Jackie, LYD Chair Maida, and "S" Club Chair Dawn for such a wonderful and inspiring presentation of our Dream Program Awards.

## **ATTENDANCE REPORT**

Registration Chair A.B. Priceman presented the 50th Annual Founder Region Conference Attendance Report.

International Officers: 0	Club Delegates: 113
Federation Officers: 2	Other Soroptimists: 90
Region Officers: 4	Guests: 54
District Directors: 5	
Fellowship Officers: 2	
Fellowship Directors: 5	<b>Total in Attendance: 275</b>

Governor Elise announced that as we are nearing the end of our program and conference, our award recipients and their families may take this opportunity to leave if they would like.

Governor Elise announced that the table drawing today collected \$1,266.00 which will go towards our Region Dream Programs. The lucky winner received \$50.00.

SI/Noyo Sunrise was invited to come up and hold their drawing.

Governor Elise welcomed back Fundraising Chair Joy who will distribute certificates and will announce the winners and procedures for picking up the baskets. If you hear your name or club name called for a winning basket, PLEASE WAIT UNTIL OUR PROGRAM HAS COMPLETELY FINISHED AND WE HAVE RECITED THE SOROPTIMIST PLEDGE before proceeding to the basket area tables. The committee will have a check-off list so this can be done in an orderly fashion.

## **CLUB GIVING**

Chair Joy announced that 25 of 45 clubs contributed to Club Giving in time to be recognized today, in total \$36,912.34 was donated. Certificates were distributed by the District Directors.

District I: SI/24/680 (Walnut Creek), SI/Benicia, SI/East Bay, SI/El Cerrito, SI/Martinez, SI/Oakland-The Founder Club  
District II: SI/Antioch, SI/Central Solano County, SI/Rio Vista (2), SI/Vacaville, SI/Vacaville Twilight, SI/Vallejo  
District III: SI/ Napa, SI/Novato, SI/St. Helena, SI/Santa Rosa  
District IV: SI/Arcata, SI/Crescent City, SI/Eel River Valley, SI/Eureka, SI/Noyo Sunrise  
District V: SI/Central Oahu, SI/Honolulu, SI/Maui

## **RAFFLE TICKETS**

Chair Joy announced the winner of the drawing for the clubs who sold all their tickets. SI/Mendocino-Sonoma Coast will receive \$250.00 in their name to Club Giving. The total raised was \$12,190.00. She thanked all the Treasurers.

Chair Joy thanked her committee: Lisa Schibler, Dawn Shepherd, Heather Ellison and Wendy MacDonald.

She then announced the basket winners.

Governor Elise asked Conference Coordinator Kris to share any announcements.

Conference Coordinator Kris asked the Marriott staff to come out and be recognized by name. They received a warm round of applause. She then thanked the host clubs - SI/Eel River Valley, SI/Humboldt Bay, SI/Noyo Sunrise, and SI/The Redwoods. She thanked Credentials Chair Shirley Lipa, Floor Chair Lisa Dallum, Registration Chair AB Priceman, Trade Fair Chair Corinne Stromstad, Treasurer Cara Begley and AV Chair Kris Wiley. She reminded clubs to pick up their posters and take them with you.

## **CLOSING REMARKS**

Governor Elise gave her closing remarks. She thanked the following:  
SIA ED/CEO Michelle

Official Visitor, SIA Secretary/Treasurer Gail  
Region Committee Chairs and Members  
Pillar Chairs  
Pages, Timekeepers and Stewards  
Credentials Chair Shirley Lipa. We also thank Debbie Scaife.  
Registration Chair A.B. Priceman  
Floor Chair Lisa Dallum  
Trade Fair Chair Corinne Stromstad  
Audiovisual Chair Kris Wiley  
Conference Treasurer Cara Begley

To the host clubs, we would like to present you with your Host Club Certificates, and a donation will be made to SIA Club Giving in each club's name. SI/Humboldt Bay, SI/The Redwoods, SI/Noyo Sunrise, SI/Eel River Valley  
Conference Coordinator Kris  
Members of the Region board - Directors Laura, Dana, Nancy, Crystal, Teri, Treasurer Holly, Secretary Kristal, Parliamentarian Sylvia, and Governor-elect Jackie  
Finally, to all of you who attended this conference. You are why we do this and without you, it wouldn't mean anything.

### **ONLINE SURVEY**

Governor Elise announced that a QR code to download our online survey is in the Conference program and it will be posted on the Conference page of the Region website.

### **SOROPTIMIST PLEDGE**

Governor Elise asked the presidents or representatives for the host clubs for the 2027 Conference to come forward, SI/American Canyon 2018, SI/Benicia, SI/ Oakland-The Founder Club and SI/Vallejo. Please join them as they lead us in the Soroptimist Pledge, which can be found on the back of your program and on the screen.

Being no further business, the 50th Annual Founder Region Conference was adjourned at 12:13pm.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Kristal Koga, Founder Region Secretary**