



*Live*



*Aspire*



*Dream*



SOROPTIMIST  
Best for Women

# Soroptimist 101

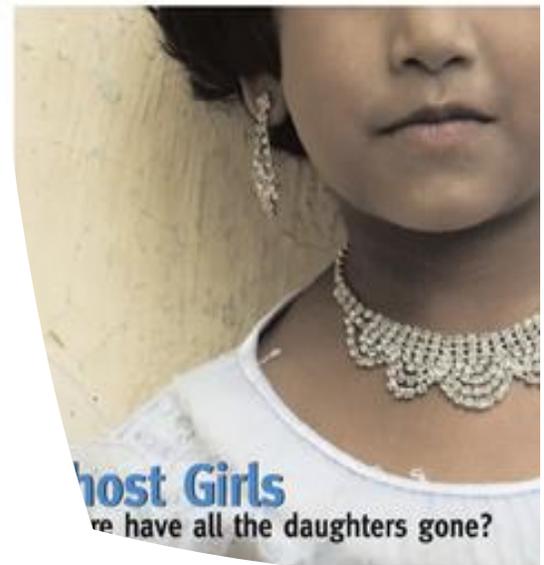
AN OVERVIEW OF SOROPTIMIST

Soroptimist is an international organization for business and professional women who volunteer in their communities.

Nearly 40,000 Soroptimists in 19 countries and territories contribute time and financial support to community-based and international projects benefiting women and girls. The name, Soroptimist, means "best for women," and that's what the organization strives to achieve.

Soroptimists are women at their best working to help other women to be their best.

Soroptimist members belong to local clubs, which determine the volunteer projects conducted in their communities. Club projects range from renovating domestic violence shelters, to providing mammograms to low income women, to sponsoring self-esteem workshops for teenage girls.



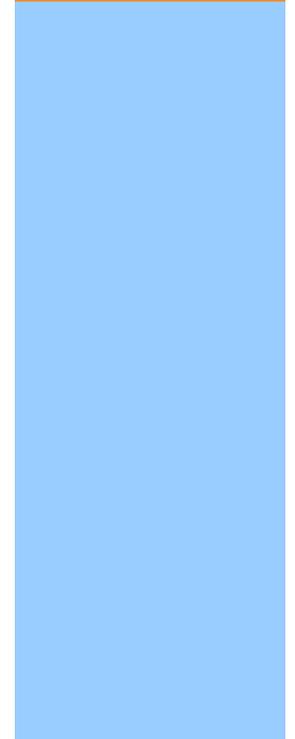
## Live Your Dream.

Launched in conjunction with International Women's Day (March 8), the Soroptimist Live Your Dream campaign inspires women from all walks of life to live their dreams and encourages them to pass on their good fortune to others. International Women's Day is commemorated throughout the world as an occasion to acknowledge women's struggles and celebrate their many accomplishments. Learn more. [www.liveyourdreamcampaign.org](http://www.liveyourdreamcampaign.org)



*“Congratulations on joining  
an organization of business  
and professional women  
who work to improve the  
lives of women and girls,  
in local communities  
and around the world.”*

Welcome.



Welcome to Soroptimist! This booklet will introduce you to our unique programs and the numerous resources available through your membership.

Coming from a variety of cultures, ethnic groups, and ages, we represent a wide array of professionals who are leaders in our communities. We believe in the power of joining together to make the world a better place for women and girls. Soroptimist membership provides a unique opportunity to do meaningful, life-changing work in an atmosphere of fun and friendship. You will be provided with a variety of benefits which include:

**Leadership** ó You will develop new skills, enhance professional capabilities as well as leadership opportunities at all levels of the organization.

**Networking** ó Associating with other women representing a variety of professions facilitates valuable business contacts.

**Convenience** ó Belonging to an association with organized programs and professionally developed resources frees members from administrative constraints, while enabling them to concentrate on providing volunteer service.

**Diversity** – By participating in projects that address the needs of women throughout world, you will come to a better understanding of women from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

**Friendship** ó Cultivating relationships with other women who have similar interests and values is a central aspect of Soroptimist membership

**Fulfillment** ó Working on projects that improve the lives of women and girls leads to personal satisfaction and recognition from the community.

# Resources.

Through your interaction with Soroptimist, you have the ability to be an instrument of change for women throughout the world. As you learn more about Soroptimist, remember to visit our website [www.soroptimist.org](http://www.soroptimist.org) for the most up-to-date information and news. You will find professionally produced resources available in the Members Area. Please bookmark the site and then visit often to stay involved, order sales items, register for convention and learn about the programs of our organization.

Another major member benefit is our award-winning *Best for Women* magazine, which is mailed to each member's home on a quarterly basis. The magazine is full of Soroptimist news and inspirational stories about the women and communities we help through our programs and volunteer service. Members also receive an exclusive monthly electronic newsletter called the "Soroptimist Summary."



One of Soroptimist's key strengths is its ability to provide an international networking forum for business and professional women. To add to this strength, Soroptimist has developed several social networking groups for members. These free online programs are a great place to share ideas.

Joining one or all of the Soroptimist groups is easy! Just visit the following sites and setup your profile.

<http://twitter.com/soroptimist>

[www.youtube.com/siahq](http://www.youtube.com/siahq)

[www.linkedin.com/groupInvitation?gid=80766](http://www.linkedin.com/groupInvitation?gid=80766)

[www.facebook.com/pages/Soroptimist-International-of-the-Americas/69575569890?v=info&viewas=556770770](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Soroptimist-International-of-the-Americas/69575569890?v=info&viewas=556770770)

[www.flickr.com/groups/1095800@N20/](http://www.flickr.com/groups/1095800@N20/)



# Programs.

Soroptimistø mission is to improve the lives of women and girls, in local communities and throughout the world. To accomplish this goal, the organization sponsors several international programs.

## **Soroptimist Women’s Opportunity Awards**

This program was established in 1972 to assist women with primary financial responsibility for their families to obtain the skills training and education necessary to improve their employment status and standard of living for themselves and their family. Our members are constantly inspired by the strength and courage of these women, as we watch them move from lives dominated by despair to those filled with hope. Each year, more than \$1 million is awarded to more than 1,000 women in Soroptimistø 19 member countries and territories. The women receiving these financial awards may use them for any costs associated with their educational efforts, including tuition, books, child care, and transportation.

## **Soroptimists STOP Trafficking**

The goal of this project is to raise awareness in the general population about trafficking and sexual slavery.

## **Soroptimist Workplace Campaign to End Domestic Violence**

This campaign is an ongoing effort to raise awareness about a little addressed domestic violence issue: domestic violence as a workplace concern.

## **Soroptimist Club Grants for Women and Girls**

Club grants are awards given to Soroptimist clubs to start or continue projects in their communities that improve the lives of women or girls.

## **Soroptimist Disaster Recovery Fund**

This fund provides grants to clubs and regions for relief work that benefits women and girls in areas affected by a natural disaster or acts of war.

## **Soroptimist Violet Richardson Award**

This award is a recognition program for young women ages 14-17 engaged in volunteer action within their communities or schools.

## **Soroptimist Ruby Award: For Women Helping Women**

This award honors women who have worked to improve the lives of women and girls through their professional or volunteer work.



*Stephanie Davis*

*2009 Soroptimist Violet Richardson Award Recipient*

“I love being involved and supporting causes I dedicate myself to,” she says. “Although itø hard, I always try to get my friends involved in helping and spreading awareness of causes. It also feels so good to get younger children involved and inspired to take their time to do service work.”

# Sharing the dream.

To keep Soroptimist strong, every member must share the responsibility of introducing our mission to other business and professional women. The best way to continue our tradition of excellence is by participating in community activities and welcoming new members into our organization.



Members from SI/Stoney Creek-Niagara and SI/Hamilton-Burlington, located in Ontario, Canada, walked more than 40 miles to raise money and awareness for breast cancer research.



Charter members of SI/Washoe County, Nevada, United States, started a recruitment campaign, with a goal of 50 members for their charter date. Members worked together with clubs in the area, as well as with region leaders, and headquarters. The club chartered more than 80 members!



Members from SI/Cumberland County, New Jersey, United States, were recognized for their efforts to improve the lives of women and girls in their community through a grant from the local government.

# Changing face of Soroptimist.



Individual Soroptimist clubs are as diverse as our membership. Clubs are increasingly using advanced technologies to communicate, promote their programs and events, and engage new members.

The goal of clubs is to carry out our mission while making membership convenient and relevant to today's demanding professional and personal schedules. The diverse nature of our work, from building domestic violence shelters to providing relief funding to women who have fallen victim to natural disasters, is reflective of the 19 countries our membership encompasses. As the status of women and girls shifts and changes in the world, so do our programs ó ensuring that we are truly an organization of women at their best helping other women to be their best.

1921.

The first Soroptimist club is formed in Oakland, California, by a group of women interested in volunteer service but prohibited from joining all-male service organizations.

1972.

The Women's Opportunity Awards were established to provide cash grants to improve the job skills for women who are the sole source of financial support for their families.

1990s í and into the 21st century.

After more than 80 years providing projects and programs that benefit women all over the world, Soroptimist continues to prove itself as the "best for women" as it focuses solely on improving the lives of women and girls.

# Glossary.

Like many organizations, Soroptimist has terms and definitions unique to our programs and members. To help you learn more about our organization, we have developed a glossary of terms you may use for reference. Following are key terms and classifications our federation uses to provide outstanding programs to women and girls, in local communities and throughout the world.

**Annual Club Campaign** ó Club contributions to the Annual Club Campaign account for about one-third of contributed income necessary to support programs including the Soroptimist Women's Opportunity Awards, the Soroptimist Violet Richardson Award and the Soroptimist Club Grants for Women and Girls. The campaign period runs from June 1 through May 31.

**Convention** ó Held during even-numbered years, conventions provide education, networking, and socializing. In addition to inspiring speakers and workshops, the meeting also offers an opportunity to participate in the decision-making process and meet Soroptimists from around the world

**Founders Pennies** ó A voluntary contribution by members of 6¢ for each year of the life of the Soroptimist organization. These contributions support Soroptimist programs. Regions are recognized annually for 100% club participation for Founders Pennies received from June 1 ó May 31.

**Laurel Legacy** ó Through this recognition program, individuals may choose to name Soroptimist in their will or arrange a planned gift to guarantee that women and girls will continue to receive the help they need through Soroptimist programs.

**Laurel Society** ó A permanent recognition program to honor individuals dedicated to the Soroptimist organization and its mission. The Laurel Society was created to effectively show appreciation to donors for gifts that would ensure continued funding for Soroptimist programs at the \$1,000 or more level.

**Mission Statement** ó To improve the lives of women and girls, in local communities and throughout the world.

**Renaissance Campaign** ó A six year (2004-2010) revitalization campaign addressing four areas of the organization: membership, fundraising, program and public awareness.

**Soroptimist International of the Americas** ó One of four federations of Soroptimist International. Current member countries are: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guam, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Puerto Rico, Taiwan, United States of America, Venezuela. [www.soroptimist.org](http://www.soroptimist.org)

**Soroptimist International of Europe** ó One of four federations of Soroptimist International. Current member countries are: Austria, Belgium, Berlin, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Hungary, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Mali, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Rwanda, St Marino, Senegal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Togo, Turkey, Ukraine. [www.soroptimisteurope.org](http://www.soroptimisteurope.org)

**Soroptimist International of Great Britain and Ireland** ó One of four federations of Soroptimist International. Current member countries are: Anguilla, Antigua, Bangladesh, Barbados, Cameroon, Gambia, Grenada, Guernsey, Hong Kong, India, Isle of Man, Jamaica, Jersey, Malta, Mauritius, Nigeria, Pakistan, Republic of Ireland, Republic of South Africa, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, St. Vincent and The Grenadines, Thailand, Trinidad & Tobago, Turks & Calicos Islands, Uganda, UK of Great Britain & Ireland, Britain & Northern Ireland, Zimbabwe. [www.soroptimist-gbi.org](http://www.soroptimist-gbi.org)

**Soroptimist International of South West Pacific** ó One of four federations of Soroptimist International. Current member countries are: Australia, Fiji, Indonesia, Malaysia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Western Samoa. [www.siswp.org](http://www.siswp.org)

**Soroptimist International President's December 10th Appeal** ó In honor of United Nations Human Rights Day, the Soroptimist International president invites all Soroptimists to join her in making a personal sacrifice and donate money to an international fund to help those living in extreme poverty. The 2009 December 10th appeal, Hopes and Dreams for Everyone, is a project to prevent human trafficking from Moldova by providing life-skills education and sustainable living conditions for vulnerable children.

**Soroptimist International Quadrennial Project (2007-2011)** ó ðProject Sierra ó A Family and a Futureö partners Soroptimist with UK-based Hope and Homes for Children, which assists orphaned and abandoned children in Sierra Leone. The program we are funding focuses on women.

**Soroptimist International of the Americas Regions (28)** ó América Del Sur; Brazil; Camino Real; Desert Coast; Eastern Canada; Founder; Golden West; Japan Chuo, Higashi, Kita, Minami, Nishi; Korea; Mexico/Centroamérica; Midwestern; North Atlantic; North Central; Northeastern; Northwestern; Philippines; Rocky Mountain; Sierra Nevada; Sierra Pacific; South Atlantic; South Central; Southern; Taiwan; Western Canada.

**Soroptimist International of the Americas Strategic Plan** ó A document that states Soroptimist's vision, mission and purpose, core values and strategic outcomes.

*Thank you for becoming part of our dynamic organization!  
We appreciate your time and dedication to the  
Soroptimist mission!*

**For more information:**

[www.soroptimist.org](http://www.soroptimist.org)

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