



Soroptimist
INTERNATIONAL OF RIVERSIDE, INC.

riversidelines

**SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL OF RIVERSIDE, INC.
FEBRUARY 2026**

**SOROPTIMIST
VISION**

Women and girls have the resources and opportunities to reach their full potential and live their dreams.

**SOROPTIMIST
MISSION**

Soroptimist is a global volunteer organization that provides women and girls with access to the education and training they need to achieve economic empowerment.

**SOROPTIMIST
TAG LINE**

**“INVESTING
IN
DREAMS”**

**SOROPTIMIST
CORE VALUES**

Soroptimist International of the Americas is committed to:

- GENDER EQUALITY: Women and girls live free from discrimination.
- EMPOWERMENT: Women and girls are free to act in their own best interest.
- EDUCATION: Women and girls deserve to lead full and productive lives through access to education.
- DIVERSITY & FELLOWSHIP: Women from varied backgrounds and perspectives work together to improve the lives of women and girls.

**SOROPTIMIST
BIG GOAL**

Invest in the dreams of half a million women and girls through access to education.

**2025-26
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



As is always the case with Soroptimist International of Riverside, our club hit the ground running to start off the new year.

We are in the midst of planning for our third annual Rhinestones, Cowgirls and Auction fundraiser scheduled for February 20th, and our Live Your Dream/Dream It Be It Conference to be held on March 7th. Both committees are hard at work with in-person and virtual meetings. We are also in the selection process for the awards to be presented to deserving women and girls at our April Salute to Service event.

Meanwhile, at our most recent Program Meeting we welcomed Councilman Philip Falcone as our guest speaker who enlightened us as to what Riverside is planning for the year. As he was very instrumental in seeing to it that our History Walk stones were installed in front of the Historic Riverside County Courthouse, it is no surprise that one of his favorite

goals that the city has adopted is "Preserving Riverside's Treasures". As America's 250th birthday is coming up in just 6 short months, nationally there is a movement known as "Save America's Treasures." Our local historic structures can be easily enhanced without great expense, in most cases, such as interpretive signage.

Mr. Falcone expressed his great love for this city and shared the city council's motto: "Get Stuff Done." He candidly answered many questions about issues in our city and expressed his optimistic outlook for the future of Riverside and our country, both of which are worthy of celebration.

It was a pleasure to welcome him and his assistant, Sarai Arellano, to our meeting. We presented them with mementos of the History Walk, including newspaper articles from 1976, when the stones were first installed, the book that was signed by all who were present at the first installation and the dedication that was held on December 9, 2025.

We look forward to seeing how our city will participate in this national celebration, and how SI Riverside will contribute to the cause while helping women and girls reach their full potential.

Note: Photos of Philip Falcone with members of SI Riverside are posted later in this newsletter.

Lynn Scecina DC
2025-26 President



FEBRUARY 2026 CALENDAR



- 3 BOARD MEETING
12:00 PM on ZOOM
- 6 INTERNATIONAL DAY OF ZERO TOLERANCE FOR FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION
- 10 BUSINESS MEETING
12:00 PM, ZOOM and Habitat for Humanity, 2180 Iowa Avenue, Riverside
- 11 INTERNATIONAL DAY OF WOMEN AND GIRLS IN SCIENCE
- 14 V-DAY: GLOBAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION
- 20 RHINESTONES, COWGIRLS & AUCTION FUNDRAISER
Elks Lodge

NO PROGRAM MEETING IN FEBRUARY

MARCH 2026 CALENDAR



- 1 INTERNATIONAL ZERO DISCRIMINATION DAY
- 3 BOARD MEETING
12:00 PM on ZOOM
- 7 LIVE YOUR DREAM: DREAM IT, BE IT CONFERENCE
Riverside Community College

- 8 INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY
- 10 BUSINESS MEETING
12:00 PM, ZOOM and Habitat for Humanity, 2180 Iowa Avenue, Riverside
- 21 INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

NO PROGRAM MEETING
IN MARCH

DATES TO REMEMBER



April 2026
Salute to Service Luncheon

September 30 to
October 2, 2027
SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION
Prague, Czech Republic

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Soroptimist International of Riverside, a club in District 1 of the Golden West Region of Soroptimist International of the Americas, meets on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month. Business meetings are on the 2nd Tuesday and Program meetings are on the 4th Tuesday. Business meetings are hybrid on ZOOM and in person at Habitat for Humanity, 2180 Iowa Avenue, Riverside. Program meetings are in person only at Habitat for Humanity. Meetings will last from noon until approximately 1:15 PM. Please arrive a little early so we may begin promptly at noon.

**FEBRUARY 11, 2026
INTERNATIONAL DAY OF
WOMEN AND GIRLS IN
SCIENCE**



**INTERNATIONAL DAY
OF WOMEN & GIRLS
IN SCIENCE**

The 2026 International Day of Women and Girls in Science arrives at a pivotal moment, highlighting both the remarkable achievements of women in STEM and the persistent barriers that still limit full participation.

Observed globally on February 11th, this year's theme, "From Vision to Impact: Redefining STEM by Closing the Gender Gap," focuses on turning ideas into measurable progress.

UNESCO's 2026 gathering in Paris emphasizes real-world solutions, personal testimonies and inclusive practices that demonstrate how diverse scientific teams strengthen innovation and drive societal advancement.

At the United Nations in New York, the Royal Academy of Science International Trust hosts the 11th IDWGIS Assembly, spotlighting a four-pillar approach that integrates AI, social science, STEM and gender-smart financing to build more inclusive futures.

Together these global observances reinforce a powerful truth: Empowering women and

girls in science is essential for solving the world's most urgent challenges from climate resilience to healthcare breakthroughs.

The day serves as both a celebration and a call to action, urging communities, institutions and leaders to champion the next generation of innovators who will shape our shared future.

**SOROPTIMIST
INTERNATIONAL**



POSITION PAPERS

Soroptimist International's Position Papers outline our global advocacy stance on key issues affecting women and girls. Each paper reflects our commitment to human rights, gender equality and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

**WOMEN AND
TECHNOLOGY**



WHERE THINGS STAND

Human development in recent decades has been accompanied by rapid changes in technology

and an increasing proliferation of digitized devices and services. The pace of change is accelerating due to digitalization and frontier technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), robotics, biotechnology and nano technology. It is evident that frontier technologies will further widen inequalities and create new inequalities as men are still more likely than women to study STEM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)

Since 1975, the UN has sought a more equal representation of the sexes regarding the advantages derived from the introduction of new technologies in how we live, communicate, work and learn. The UN has repeatedly called upon governments, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the International Labor Organization and other relevant United Nations organizations, to:

- a. Devise instruments and tools to involve women in the design and implementation of their programs and projects.
- b. Ensure policies that:
 - Guarantee equal access to education.
 - Eliminate gender disparities in education.
 - Encourage education and vocational training in the fields of science and technology for all women and girls.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, women and girls had access to affordable devices and broadband networks yet did not have the requisite skills to take advantage of this technology to improve their lives. The result? The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the cost of being offline for women and girls in today's

technology-saturated societies as digital literacy and STEM have moved from being optional to essential for them.

Women and girls are now facing what is described as digital poverty: "The inability to interact with the online world fully when and where and how an individual needs to" and they are increasingly being left behind globally as gender gaps regarding digital literacy and STEM education continue to grow.

These gaps are apparent from the lowest skill proficiency levels with the divides growing further along the skills spectrum until, once one arrived at the frontiers of technology, the gaps have become an ocean making existing inequities regarding poverty, race, gender, age, ability and income worse.

A global effort was undertaken with the presentation of the 2020 Report of the Secretary-General: Road Map for Digital Cooperation. The report emphasizes the complex nature of the emerging digital society and its impact on every aspect of human development, societal and personal.

In 2020, on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, governments pledged to harness the potential of technology and innovation to improve the lives of all women and girls and to close the development divide and the digital divide, including the gender digital divide, as well as address the risks and challenges emerging from the use of technologies.

In July 2021, the Human Rights Council adopted a resolution on the promotion, protection and enjoyment of human rights on the

internet, including issues related to access, shutdowns and encryption.

During the sixteenth meeting of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) in December 2021, best practice forums on cybersecurity and on gender and digital rights were established.

Despite nearly 50 years of meetings, conferences, policy discussions, reports, etc., the status of women's presence in the fields of technology is far from parity:

- 259 million more men than women used the Internet in 2022.
- On average women held only 23% of those occupations such as coding and research and development in leading technology companies.
- 60% of the cases of technology-related violence against women were not investigated by authorities.
- Of all the Wikipedia editors online globally, between 84% and 91% percent of them are male.
- Women occupy only 27% of the top management jobs in media companies and 35% of the workforce in newsrooms.
- Women in tech are paid at least 28% less than men with the same education, years of experience and age.

WHERE THINGS NEED TO GO

Soroptimist International and other civil-society partners believe that all women and girls must have full, equal and effective participation and decision-making in public life. The needs for digital equality and digital cooperation as well as dispelling damaging gender constructs involving women and technology remain. The training of women

and girls in new technologies is essential.

Digital literacy and STEM are no longer a luxury but are lifelines for working, learning, keeping in touch and accessing essential services. New technologies are changing the structure of labor markets which provide new and different employment opportunities yet require women and girls to have skills ranging from basic digital fluency to advanced technical skills in science, technology, engineering, mathematics and in information and communications technology. In many countries the level of education of girls and women continues to be much lower than that of boys and men, particularly in technical fields.

In 2022, the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) acknowledged that new and emerging digital technologies have an impact on women's employment opportunities and can accelerate progress towards achieving gender equality as well as bridge digital divides countries. The Commission emphasised the importance of promoting:

- Digital literacy.
- Equal and affordable access to the internet, mobile devices as well as information and communication technologies for all women and girls.
- Equal access for all women and girls to digital training, capacity-building, forecasting and preparedness, including early warning systems.
- Science, technology and innovation strategies to reduce patterns of inequality.

The Commission noted with concern that new technological developments can perpetuate existing patterns of inequality and discrimination, including the

algorithms used in artificial intelligence-based solutions.

JANUARY 13, 2026 NEW YEAR'S TOAST



At our first Soroptimist meeting of 2026, SI Riverside members raised glasses of sparkling cider in a toast to the new year, embracing fresh possibilities and looking ahead to a prosperous, purpose-filled year of community service that uplifts and empowers even more women and girls.

JANUARY 24, 2026 PROGRAM MEETING



SI Riverside President Lynn Scecina (center) with Councilman Philip Falcone (right) and his assistant Sarai Arellano (left)



Councilman Philip Falcone with members of SI Riverside

FEBRUARY 20, 2026 RHINESTONES, COWGIRLS & AUCTION FUNDRAISER



On February 20, 2026, our Rhinestone, Cowgirls and Auction fundraiser will be held at the Elks Lodge in Riverside. Registration will commence at 11:30 AM, followed by lunch at 12:15 PM.

The event will feature a live auction offering a seven-night stay in Las Vegas plus the opportunity to dine with Riverside Mayor Patricia Locke Dawson, Police Chief Larry Gonzalez and the iconic Rose Mayes.

The auction will also include a Basket Drawing with a wide variety of delightful items, Jewelry with a Purpose, Balloons & Bling grab bags, the Red White & Booze drawing and Coffee or Cocktails with a Cowboy.

Please scan the QR code to purchase tickets:



Or go to the SI Riverside website (soroptimistriverside.org) to download the Rhinestones, Cowgirls & Auction invitation and registration forms.

Melanie McKee
RCA Chair

**MARCH 7, 2025
LIVE YOUR DREAM:
DREAM IT, BE IT
CONFERENCE**



**MARCH 7, 2026
RIVERSIDE CITY
COLLEGE**

Planning continues for the Live Your Dream: Dream It, Be It Conference to be held March 7, 2026, at Riverside City College.

Applications have been distributed to 7th and 8th grade AVID girls and will be collected on February 12th.

Outreach to foster youth remains ongoing as part of our commitment to supporting young women who face unique challenges.

We are finalizing last-minute speakers and journals have been donated to support AVID-style note-taking during the conference.

All Soroptimist members are expected to attend. A sign-up sheet for day-of roles (registration, set-up, welcoming students, clean up, dismissal, etc.) will be shared soon.

Thank you for your continued support in making this an inspiring experience for our girls.

Rosa Santos -Lee
LYD Conference Chair

SOROPTIMIST EDUCATION & TRAINING



WHO WE ARE

Soroptimist is a global volunteer organization that provides women and girls with access to the education and training they need to achieve economic empowerment, as this is the most effective path to self-determination. Approximately 66,000 Soroptimists in over 120 countries and territories support community-based and global 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 International of the Americas, headquartered in Philadelphia, PA, is one of five federations comprising Soroptimist International (SI), which is headquartered in Cambridge, England.

The other four federations affiliated with SI are: Soroptimist International of Great Britain and Ireland, headquartered in Cheshire, England; Soroptimist International of Europe, headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland; Soroptimist International South East Asia

Pacific, headquartered in Sydney, Australia; and Soroptimist International Africa Federation.

The Golden West Region of Soroptimist International of the Americas provides administrative support to clubs within its territorial limits, which include San Bernardino and Riverside Counties of California, the State of Arizona (except Yuma County), the State of New Mexico and El Paso County in Texas. The Golden West Region has 34 clubs and nearly 800 members who work to improve the lives of women and girls.

SI Riverside is part of District 1 of the Golden West Region.

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS



No Birthdays in February

JANUARY MEMBERSHIP ANNIVERSARIES



**Pam Bradford
2-13-1990**

**Debbie Kelley
2-07-2022**

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SOROPTIMIST PLEDGE



I pledge allegiance to Soroptimist and to The ideals for which it stands:
**The Sincerity of Friendship,
The Joy of Achievement,
The Dignity of Service,
The Integrity of Profession,
The Love of Country.**
I will put forth my greatest effort to promote, uphold, and defend these ideals, for a larger fellowship in home, in society, in business, for country and for God.

RIVERSIDELINES



EDITOR
Pam Bradford

DEADLINE
Submit articles and photos by the 25th of each month to Pam at:

pambradford@pamsemail.net

FEBRUARY IS CANCER PREVENTION MONTH

**TOGETHER,
WE ARE
TOUGHER
THAN
CANCER**

