



# JUNIOR LEAGUE OF DENVER FOUNDATION

## 2023-2024 JLD FOUNDATION BOARD

### Biographies



#### **Kali Handford | President**

Kali Handford is a California-native turned Coloradan. Kali is currently serving as President of the Junior League of Denver Foundation, which manages more than \$8 million in nonprofit assets solely benefitting the Junior League of Denver. She served as JLD President in 2017-2018. She is a Board member of Sewall Child Development Center, a JLD partner through Kids Connect. In her day job, Kali is a small business entrepreneur. She previously worked in strategic partnerships and demand generation for a tech start-up that grew up and has her MBA and MS Marketing degrees from University of Colorado. In her spare time, you will find her in a Pilates class, jogging around Wash Park, rooting for the CU Buffs, trying a new restaurant or on an outdoor adventure with her husband, son and bulldog fur-baby.



#### **Julia Lazure | Vice President**

Julia Kneeland Lazure joined the Junior League of Denver in 2011 to engage in civic leadership, give back to the community and meet other women in the Denver metro area. She served as President in 2019-2020 and previously served on the JLD Board of Directors as President-Elect, Finance & Operations Council VP, Community VP-Elect and Community VP. Additionally, Julia has served on the JLD Foundation Board member since 2017.

Julia earned her JD from the University of Colorado School of Law and BSBA in Accounting from Creighton University. She is a partner at Kneeland & Lazure Law, LLC, where she works with individuals and families to navigate major changes in their lives so they can have peace of mind and plan for their futures in the areas of estate planning, business, divorce and custody. Prior to joining Kneeland & Lazure Law, Julia worked at Denver District Court as the Family Court Facilitator and served as a judicial law clerk. Julia volunteer guest lectures and provides trainings at Denver District Court and serves on the planning committee for the Alternative Dispute Resolution Annual Continuing Legal Education Conference. In her free time, she and her husband enjoy spending time with their two daughters, skiing, running, reading and traveling.



#### **Melanie Lewis Dickerson | Secretary**

As a Portfolio Director for Community Solutions, Melanie works directly with communities and partners to build and improve systems to end homelessness using data, quality improvement and problem-solving tools from multiple sectors. She is a leader on the Built for Zero team, where she oversees a portfolio of large-scale change partnerships in the United States and abroad. Prior to joining Community Solutions in 2014, Melanie spent six years with the City and County of Denver where she served as the Partnerships Manager for Denver's Road Home, focusing on policy development, regional collaboration and strategic partnerships.

In the community, Melanie is a Past President of the Junior League of Denver (2020-21), Metro Denver Homeless Initiative and Mile High Young Professionals. She is a graduate of the 2015 Downtown Denver Leadership Program and Leadership Denver Class of 2017. Melanie was also named one of Colorado's Top 25 Most Influential Young Professionals by *ColoradoBiz Magazine* in 2020 and one of *Denver Business*

*Journal's* 2022 "40 Under 40" class. She is a Summa Cum Laude graduate of Mississippi State University with a degree in Political Science and a graduate of the University of Colorado Denver with a Master of Public Administration where she was awarded the John C. Buechner Scholarship. When not at work, Melanie enjoys live music, community engagement and spending time with her husband, Josh, daughter, Carter, son, Haskell and goldendoodles, Houser and Marley.



**Kimberly Eckert | JLDF Treasurer & Investment Committee Chair**

Kimberly was raised in rural Montana and, after graduating from the University of Montana, spent 10 years in New York City working in investment banking and investment management, with a brief hiatus to New Hampshire to earn her MBA from the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth. She moved to Denver in 2011 to be closer to the mountains where she continued her career in the natural resources industry. She currently runs her own natural foods start-up, Eva's Energy, and is the CFO of a thermal power generation start-up, Transitional Energy. Highlights of her Junior League career include Building for the Future Co-Chair, Publications Chair and reading tutor with the TutorMate program. In her free time, Kimberly can be found skiing, climbing 14ers, or hiking with her dog, Spencer.

She volunteers with the International Rescue Committee as a Family Mentor, coordinates the Tuck Alumni Chapter of Colorado and volunteers with friends at various nonprofits in Denver as opportunities arise.



**Claire Juneau | JLD President**

Claire Juneau joined the Junior League in Winston-Salem, NC and transferred to Denver in 2014. While she has been a League member for eight years now, her relationship with Junior League began well before she joined in 2013. Claire's grandmother was a League member in North Carolina. Her mom is a Past President of Junior League of Miami and currently a Sustaining member in Nashville, TN. Claire has many memories of being surrounded by amazing League women and always knew positively impacting her community would be a top priority!

Claire graduated from Wake Forest University (Go Deacs!) in 2011 with a BA in Elementary Education. While living in North Carolina, Claire taught second grade at Morgan Elementary School during its inaugural years as a Winston-Salem Forsyth County Public School. Claire relocated to Denver after her husband, Dan, matched for his residency in Internal Medicine at the University of Colorado. In Colorado, Claire taught preschool at The Goddard School-Meridian and transitioned into administration as the Assistant Director. She is currently a Substitute Teacher for Boulder Valley Public School District and volunteers as a Social Committee Member for the Broadlands neighborhood HOA.

Following Claire's Transfer year with the JLD, she was a member of the Read2Kids Committee, Provisional Course Committee: advisor (two years), step-up chair and chair, Membership Coordinator Co-Chair and, Membership VP, President-Elect, and most recently, President. Claire lives in Broomfield with her husband and sons, Grayson and Elliott. She enjoys working alongside amazing League members, dessert, spooky movies, inspirational books, organizational and creative projects and staying active.



**Carson Maczuzak | President-Elect**

Carson Maczuzak joined the JLD in 2013, a year after she and her husband moved to Denver. She joined to meet other women, give back to the community, and learn more about her new home. Junior League has always been part of her life as her mother and grandmother were both League members. During her time in JLD, Carson has served on the Sponsorship Committee, as a Provisional Advisor, as Done in a Day Chair and Community Council. All the experiences and opportunities presented through JLD have had a meaningful impact on her and she appreciates continuing to serve our community through JLD. Carson attended Miami University-Ohio and graduated with degrees in Diplomacy & Foreign Affairs and Spanish. After college, she moved back to her hometown of Austin, TX

to begin her career in nonprofit work with the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. Carson began working for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation in 2018 as a Development Director where she focuses on raising funds to support

the organization's mission. She and her husband, Matt, enjoy exploring Colorado and spending time hiking with their two pups, Hilde and Garth.



**Amy McDermott | JLD Finance & Operations VP**

A Colorado native, Amy McDermott joined the JLD in 2019, bringing with her a passion for serving Colorado communities and nearly two decades of professional nonprofit experience. She has enjoyed meeting other community-minded women while serving on the Personal Development, New Member and Professional Development Committees.

Amy's dedication to helping others and her passion for organizational development are evident in her current role, as the Executive Director of the Colorado Association of REALTORS® Foundation. Amy manages all internal operations of the Foundation, drives community engagement and volunteerism efforts across the state, and leads grantmaking initiatives. Under her leadership, the Foundation provided almost \$1.3M in relief grants to nearly 600 families who lost their homes in the Marshall Fire.

Previously, Amy worked in executive level fundraising, operations and communications roles for nonprofits supporting military families as well as urban charter schools. As the wife of a still-active Navy officer with nearly 30 years of service, issues affecting military families, especially junior enlisted families, are of particular focus for Amy and her husband in their community service. Outside of work and volunteering, Amy enjoys interior design, gardening, reading, theater, traveling, and spending time with her husband, 11-year-old daughter, and their gigantic teenage golden retriever.



**Lindsey Talafuse | JLD Immediate Past President**

A Colorado native, Lindsey has been in the Colorado real estate business since 2009. She owns and operates a real estate team within Keller Williams and sits on the Board of Directors for Keller Williams Lone Tree. Lindsey is a graduate of Colorado State University with a Bachelor's in Business Management. Lindsey's passion outside of real estate is giving back in her community. In her personal time, Lindsey enjoys riding and showing horses, golfing and spending time with her husband and two daughters. Lindsey has been in the League since 2013-14 and joined Fundraising Council in 2014-15, her first Active year. She has spent her time in the League on Mile High Holiday Mart, including serving as the event co-chair for two years, along with committee member placements on the Merchant and Operations Committees. Lindsey served as Fundraising VP, followed by President in 2022-23. She has a love for fundraising and helping the League fulfill its Mission!



**Janelle Lind | Member-at-Large & Communications Committee Chair**

Janelle has been the COO and VP of Operations and Transition for a financial securities firm for over a decade. She spends her days working with financial advisors and state and federal regulators to make sure client investments are properly supervised. She is a problem solver at heart, always looking for a win-win situation for advisors and compliance (and yes, that is possible).

Janelle is a Colorado girl, raised in Denver and a graduate of the Metropolitan State University of Denver where she earned a B.A. in History and an Associate's Degree in Speech Communication and Business Management. She earned a Master's Degree in Nonprofit Management from Regis University in 2008. When she is not occupied at the office, Janelle gives back as much as possible. She spends her Thursday nights at the USO Denver giving back to our military and their families, helps with medical mission in South America with Operation Smile and various other local projects such as Honor Flights, Habitat for Humanity and the JLD. When she's not working or giving back, you can find Janelle outside in Colorado's rugged mountain ranges, talking Disney with her eight amazing godchildren, traveling this incredible world or playing soccer.





**Becky Schaub** | Member-at-Large & Philanthropy Committee Chair

Becky was raised in Colorado Springs and holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from University of Kansas. After graduating from KU, she moved to Denver and earned a Master of Science in Finance from University of Denver, Daniels School of Business. Seven years in the securities industry was a hard-earned career that she decided to leave behind in order to stay home with her children. For the past 10+ years, she has been a stay-at-home mom, splitting her time between raising a family and finding her passion serving the community as a volunteer.

Becky serves in different capacities on committees both at her children's school and in the community. She is involved with JLD, Denver Botanic Gardens, Denver Art Museum and The Garden Club of Denver. Becky, her husband Brian, and their two children, Carson and Whitney, enjoy spending their free time in Steamboat Springs skiing, hiking, and enjoying the mountain air. She also loves cheering on the Denver Broncos and working up a sweat on her Peloton. Becky has found a true passion in philanthropy and serving organizations that strive to help others pursue education and family support. She has recently engaged with organizations that embrace preservation of culture and arts in Denver.



**Kate Cihon** | Member-at-Large

Kate Cihon joined the Junior League of New York City in 2003 to meet like-minded women after moving to the largest city in America. After joining, Kate served on the New Lease on Life Committee, which provided tools and resources to women incarcerated in the medium security women's prison located in Manhattan's Chelsea neighborhood. This committee solidified the value of the trained volunteers the Junior League provides to community organizations in need of programming and resources.

After relocating back to her home state in of Colorado in 2010 – Kate transferred to the Junior League of Denver. Kate served on the Cookbook Committee, three years on the Board of Directors and the Nominating Committee. Kate was raised in Colorado Springs

and holds a Bachelor of Science in Journalism and a Bachelor of Arts in French from the University of Colorado. Kate began her career in New York City working in public relations at Estee Lauder and Victoria's Secret Beauty. After eight years in New York, she moved back home to join the family business of Financial Planning and Employee Benefits Administration.

While she's not working or volunteering with JLD, Kate is very involved in her industry association, The National Association of Insurance and Financial Advisors and serves as the Denver Association President. Kate, her husband Matt, and their two children, Reed and Darcy, enjoy all that Colorado life has to offer including skiing, hiking and cheering on the Denver Broncos and CU Buffaloes.



**Jana Cuneo** | Member-at-Large

Jana Cuneo is a retired healthcare fundraising professional who transferred to the Junior League of Denver in 2018 from the Junior League of Sacramento (JLS) to be near family. Jana served as president of the JLS and was recognized in 2013 as Sustainer of the Year for her work in establishing a JLS Endowment Fund and serving on the Fund's first Board of Directors. Earlier in her JLS career Jana was instrumental in establishing the Sacramento Region Community Foundation, which today has an asset balance in excess of \$173 million. In her professional life Jana served as the Major Gift Officer at Sacramento Medical Center Foundation and Director of Development for California Pacific Medical Center Foundation in San Francisco. Jana earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Social Science at California State Polytechnic University and is a Certified Fundraising

Executive (CFRE).

**Melissa Demos | Member-at-Large**

Melissa Demos has a long track record in the financial services industry working for various financial institutions throughout her 40-year career. She has worked both in a direct loan generation role as well as portfolio management and credit approval roles. She came to Colorado in 1996 working for Colorado National Bank (now US Bank), primarily lending to the media and telecommunications sector, followed by Compass Bank (now PNC Financial Services Group Inc.) in a credit role. Most recently, she served as a regional credit executive for Vectra Bank Colorado, an affiliate of Zions Bank Corporation out of Salt Lake City, Utah. She retired from this role in 2019 and now volunteers with the

Junior League Foundation Board as well as Mile High United Way's Women United. She is married to husband, Mike and has two stepchildren, Carrie and Peter Demos, of Brooklyn, NY.

**Caryne Mesquita | Member-at-Large**

A Denver native, Caryne joined the JLD in 2013 to work together with like-minded women, giving back right here in her hometown. She has participated in the Leadership Institute, served as the General Meeting Chair, Board Secretary, Fundraising VP and the 103rd JLD President. All of these opportunities have left an indelible mark on her and she continues to thoroughly enjoy seeing the impact our inspiring members make in the community. Having graduated with both her BA and Master's degrees from Clemson University, she is a proud alum and served as President of the Colorado Clemson Club. Caryne led the campaign to create the first endowed scholarship for students attending Clemson from Colorado. She also enjoys being a community volunteer, especially with the Denver Santa Claus Shop.

In her role as the Manager of the Account Executives in the West for Nelnet Campus Commerce, she works collaboratively with her team and clients on problem solving, streamlining processes and maximizing their implemented solutions. In her free time, she enjoys traveling, football, spending time with family and friends, and being a true foodie, is always up for culinary adventure.

**Lacreteria Nichols | Member-at-Large**

Meet Lacreteria (Taylor) Nichols — a born-and-raised Seattlite (and big Seahawks fan) who has called the Mile High City her home since 2014. As a passionate advocate for women's empowerment, she found the Junior League of Denver in 2016 and fell in love with its commitment to nurturing future women leaders. Within the League, Lacreteria has worn many hats, from assisting with the search for JLD's new home on the Building Committee, to promoting all of the League's accomplishments via the Communications Council as Vice President, editor and assistant editor of ink, JLD's quarterly newsletter.

Armed with a BA from Washington State University (Go Cougs!), Lacreteria spends her days as a public relations professional, creating effective and engaging communications for companies including Microsoft, Sling TV, DISH, Vail Resorts, and Zoom. Lacreteria has also spent time volunteering for Gamma Phi Beta Sorority, training and supporting advisor boards and collegiate leaders around the country. In her free time, you'll likely find Lacreteria in the company of her charming husband and precocious four-year-old son, Hatley, striking a (yoga) pose, delving into the pages of a gripping novel, jet-setting or road-tripping to new destination, and creating delicious messes in her kitchen for her food blog, Shore & Stone.



**Jennifer Pomeroy Fronk | Member-at-Large**

Jennifer is a newer member of the Junior League of Denver's (JLD) Foundation Board, though she is certainly not new to the JLD. Having first joined the JLD in 1989, she transferred to the Junior League of Toronto after moving to Canada in 1993. While in Toronto, she held several leadership positions including VP of Community Action. After spending almost 13 years in Canada, Jennifer returned to Denver and transferred back into the JLD. Though Jennifer is a Colorado native, she was able to join the illustrious Fun Club, where she served as Chair in 2016-2017, and remains an active member today.

Other Board experience includes, but is not limited to, Design Review Board at Marabou Ranch in Steamboat Springs, CO; YPO Rocky Mountain Youth Next Generation Champion; and presently, serving as a Trustee at Lewis and Clark College.

Jennifer has two adult children, Hillary and Spencer, along with a new son-in-law, Brett. Gratefully, they are all living in Denver and able to be together quite often. In her spare time, she and her husband Rudi enjoy skiing, biking and riding their horses in Steamboat Springs. Of course, most importantly, Jennifer enjoys walking, swimming and just hanging out with their two yellow labs - Fiona and Fletcher Fronk.



**Tamara Rook | Member-at-Large**

Tamara began her Junior League service in 2001 in the Minneapolis League and has served in a variety of roles since this time. After relocating to Denver in 2006 she joined the Denver League as a transfer member and served as a transfer advisor. In 2009 Tamara took a break from the League when her son was born to focus on her family and career as a global leader in the medical device industry. She was excited to return to the League in 2020 as a Sustainer where she served as an Actives Plus advisor and most recently served as the VPE and VP of the Sustainer Council. Tamara is very proud of rebuilding our Sustainer Council and looks forward to the opportunity to serve on the Foundation Board. Community service has been a personal focus for Tamara as she continues to balance her commitments to family, career and the League.