

Minnesota Les Dames d'Escoffier (MN LDEI) 2020-21 Board of Director's Year-end Reports

President – Cindy Jurgensen

Helped all committees via email, phone and Zoom, particularly Fundraising.

Wrote thank you notes to all donors.

Attended all Zoom Program meetings and led six bi-monthly board meetings.

Suggested and facilitated a panel for Minnesota's participation in LDEI's March Table Talks, along with other program ideas.

Touched base with members I didn't have frequent contact with on three occasions. A check-in because we weren't meeting in person and in September to encourage annual meeting attendance. I was moved to learn of work problems, surgeries and Covid illnesses. Life was often not rosy for many.

Contributed a monthly President's message for the Newsletter along with other pieces.

Started revision work on the Bylaws with our Treasurer and Membership Chair.

Recommended a pay increase for our Administrative Assistant and conducted her performance review.

Contacted our Sister City (St Louis) when assigned one by LDEI; that relationship not fully realized.

Attended Microgrant check presentation to Dana Smith at MinnyRow.

Arranged for and twice met with one of our philanthropic beneficiaries, Urban Roots, to deliver our donation checks plus wine collected from members for their fundraiser.

Participated in all bi-monthly Chapter Board Liaison meetings, writing recaps for our Newsletter.

Helped contact stragglers for dues renewals.

Wrote article on Member Pam Powell, Owner/Founder of Salad Girl Fresh Organic Salad Dressing Company, at the request of LDEI for their Quarterly magazine.

Solicited board and members' opinions on LDEI's Membership Ratification plan; attended plan meetings.

Attended the fall 2020 LDEI virtual conference.

Participated in seminars LDEI arranged on Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI).

Initiated the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) and Grant board positions.

Advised the Vice President as she put together the 2021-22 board.

Recommendations?

Perhaps offer a template (and word count?) or something to make the writing of annual meeting reports easier for busy board members and easier for the membership to read.

Make sure all board members are comfortable with and understand their roles. I could have been better at that.

Rename from Annual Report to Year-End Report.

Vice President – Kristen Olsen

As vice president, my role this year was to support our President, Cindy, and the Chapter however I could. I was heavily involved in the fundraising committee and helping to organize the various in-person, virtual, and pick-up fundraising events.

I set up a more robust e-commerce system on our Square website to allow us to more easily promote and sell tickets, products, and food for our fundraiser events. I also added a few pages to our main chapter website to showcase some of our new/current members and our grant/scholarship recipients.

I also attended the virtual LDEI annual conference as a voting delegate. It was a great way to learn more about the organization and meet delegates from other chapters.

The toughest part of my role this year was developing the 2021-2022 Slate of Officers. The pandemic and very busy business and personal lives made it difficult to find new and current members who were able to commit to the board.

Treasurer - Lois Tlusty

This report reflects MN LDEI finances **as of September 1, 2021**. A final 2020-2021 fiscal Budget and Finance Statement will be filed after September 30, 2021.

- Total Revenue
 - Income generated is \$51,980.99. This is due to the success of the mini fundraisers, new member and renewal dues and donations.
 - MN LDEI received 5 grants for a total of \$4,650 plus \$350 monetary donations for a total of \$5,000 generous donations from members and friends. This is in addition to donations and sponsors for the fundraisers.
- Total Expenses
 - Expenses through September 1 are \$24,842.20. The following expenses may occur during September: Micro-grant and Urban Roots donations, Administrative Support and LDEI dues.
- 2020-2021 Mini Fundraiser
 - Due to the pandemic, it was decided not to have Damelt! but have several mini fundraisers throughout the fiscal year. The variety and number of fundraisers was very successful and generated more income than was budgeted. Thanks to the Fundraiser committee.
- Donations
 - MN LDEI awarded \$2,500 in scholarships to two recipients.

- Assets
 - A balanced 2020-2021 budget (\$28,800 Income/\$28,800 Expenses) was approved. The budget will come in under budget after all the expenses and donations are completed for the fiscal year. Thanks to all the committee chairs who made this possible.
 - The bank balance as of September 1, 2021 is \$40,655.36.
 - Due to the much higher income than budgeted, the money used from the checking account, due to the pandemic, for the 2019-2020 budget will be replaced.

Social Media and Communications – Nikki Erpelding

The primary goal was to strengthen communications by adding content to our various platforms. Another goal is to highlight Dames and our charity endeavors.

Since we do not have a public Facebook page it makes it difficult to share posts.

Our Dame it page is not an actual page it is a business community site.

295 people like this

316 people follow this

We reach about 65 people a week, with consistent posting that could be increased.

There is a way to add a commerce shop on our Dame it site.

One comment I get a lot is that people are generally not on FB anymore, they have moved to Instagram and tiktok.

Posting, requires creating content and that is what requires time.

Generally, for events we have relied on Kristin, Pam and now Lauren to create content.

*Sharing other Dames posts always get lots of likes.

Email has been the most effective way to date at getting tickets sold for events. -Please talk to Tanya about the open rate.

Instagram, by far our most followed site and should be used to tell our story, promote our Dames and sell our events.

- **197** posts
- **585** followers
- **706** following

Youtube, we have uploaded videos, but we are not using this like we should, we should have an actual site, this could be a great way to showcase the talent of our Dames.

Pinterest, although I set up the site, not a lot of our Dames have been to the page to show interest. This is something that with regular upkeep, it is a really good way to give exposure to our cookbook authors and our events.

ONLY 8 Followers

The new Chair Lauren Voigt will be great, she knows how to do this more than anyone. I suggest however there be a discussion about content, frequency, the different medias, and our goals.

The time required for this chair is about 1-4 hours per week depending on events.

Programs – Amy Lynn Brown, Amalia Moreno- Damgaard

To say it was a strange year for the Les Dames Minnesota programming committee would definitely be an understatement; our role of gathering folks together was clearly hampered by the pandemic. However, we made the most of it with virtual events like a Halloween Party, Port and Chocolate tasting, and a holiday party with centenarian Marjorie Johnson. We even launched a more casual “Coffee and Camaraderie” format of getting together to meet new members and share our current goings on, and had some great conversations that way.

After nearly a year of hosting Zoom-only meetings and celebrations, the Programs and Fundraising committees were able to bring our Dames together for a handful of live events beginning in June with an Urban Roots farm tour and picnic dinner in St. Paul. There was a wonderful wine dinner hosted by Fundraising and Dame Joan Donatelle, and we’ll be ending the year with our 25th anniversary celebration at the end of September. Despite all the challenges Covid-19 brought, Programming managed to end the year on a positive note, financially, pulling in a slight profit after all was said and done.

Fundraising - Andi Bidwell, Audrey Nelson

The Fundraising Committee started this fiscal year in the middle of the Covid-19 Pandemic. The major Dame It! fundraising event had been cancelled in 2020 and knew we couldn’t start planning one for fiscal 2021.

We decided that the only thing we could do to raise money was to host some virtual events. Audrey Nelson and Andi Bidwell agreed to co-chair the Fundraising Committee, and assembled a small group of members together to brain storm what those events could be. As a result, we hosted seven events during the year.

The final total income for the year totaled \$23,570.40, earned from the following seven events listed below and the donations and grants we received:

Event	Profit	Lead Planner(s)
French Dinner for Two in a Box	\$1,925.00	Audrey Nelson
Masks (with culinary and wine designed fabrics)	\$2,084.80	Janice Cole with members who sewed masks: Jeanie Kozar, Lois Tlusty, Diane Jackson
Holiday Party in a Box	\$5,151.45	Nikki Erpelding, Liz Nerud and Merrilyn Tauscher
Virtual Mardi Gras Party	\$2,351.07	Joan Donatelle, Arlene Coco

Dinner for Two from Puerto Rico in a Box	\$2,280.50	Audrey Nelson
Pizza and Salad in a Box	\$1,448.20	Nikki Erpelding, Amalia Moreno-Damgaard and Pam Powell
A Summer Tuscan Wine Dinner	\$6,324.38	Joan Donatelle with support from: Erin Clancy, Pam Powell, Kristen Olson, Cindy Jurgensen, Audrey Nelson, Merrilyn Tauscher, Lauren Voight, Andi Bidwell and our Treasurer Lois Tlusty
7 Events	\$21,488.56	18 Member Volunteers
Donations/Grants	\$ 2,005.00	
Total Profit	\$23,570.40	

Some members volunteered to pack the boxes and hand them out. In addition to all of the names listed above, those members included: Genie Zarling, Robin Asbell and Ramaj Young (who has since moved to Florida). We can't seem to find the records for the Party in a Box event, and so may have missed the names of some volunteers. If you were one of them, please let Andi Bidwell know, and she will amend this report. Paula Zuhlsdorf helped deliver masks.

Detailed reviews for each event are being written and will be stored in the Les Dames Google Drive.

Membership – Merrilyn Tauscher, Paula Zuhlsdorf

It has been a delightfully busy year for Membership. The following women joined our chapter this year:

Julie Hinderks	Angie Heitz	Lauren Voigt
Molly Krinhop	Erin Clancy	Dorothy Stainbrook
Amy Waller	Jo Seddon	Allison Sheardy

Since we did not meet in person due to Covid restrictions, new members were introduced as they attended Zoom meetings for the first time and also via newsletter articles developed by our terrific Newsletter committee. Membership worked alongside Programming to hold two Coffee and Camaraderie events via Zoom in the spring, during which new members were introduced and also offered an opportunity to share about themselves. New members will be introduced in person at the September meeting. We will also welcome a couple new members from 2019-2020, as they may have been missed due to Covid this past year. At this meeting, we will give these women their new-member gifts, including a gift bag of Kerry Gold butter and cheeses. We are pleased to be able to promote and support one of our corporate sponsors in this way.

Since we plan to meet in person this fall, the board discussed having nametags at events as a way to encourage mingling between current and new members as well as for all members to

get to know one another. We researched the pros and cons for permanent/reusable vs disposable nametags and shared this with the executive board; we included a recommendation to proceed with sticky/disposable nametags as they are more practical and cost effective. We will review next summer to decide if we should stay with the paper nametags or invest in permanent nametags. Merrillyn worked with a local printer to design the nametags incorporating the Minnesota Les Dames logo, and plans are in place to have them at our winery fundraising event in August.

Behind the scenes, we put in place a detailed process for bringing on new members. The following documents were rewritten or created in order to standardize the new member process and ensure warm, professional communication each time. Steps include:

1. Sending an Invitation to Explore Membership Letter to members submitting an application or who have been recommended for membership by an existing member.
2. A Membership Information Sheet explaining more about the group and requirements for membership is included with the letter. When appropriate, we invite women considering membership to attend one meeting free of charge.
3. Once the potential member has submitted an application, Membership reviews to see if membership requirements have been met and, if so, emails the application to the board along with a recommendation to approve for membership. If there are no questions or objections, we send the personalized Invitation to Membership Letter to the prospective member, along with attachments: How to Activate Your Membership, LDEI New Member form and the Current Directory. Cc'd on this email are the recommending Dame, treasurer, president, vice president, membership co-chair and the mentor (see below for more info on this.)
4. Once all documents have been returned and dues paid, Membership introduces the new member to the board via email and her information is added to the Membership Tracker.
5. The new member is introduced to the membership at large through the newsletter article/photo and at the first meeting she attends.

To bolster new member mentoring, we wrote a definition of the Mentor role. Making sure every new member has a mentor will provide her with a personal connection to the group from the start.

Since we work closely with our Administrative Assistant regarding the Directory and at several stages of new member process, we listed out Tanya's specific functions and shared that with her. This will facilitate smooth communication with our prospective new members and ensure efficient use of our Admin's time and talents. We also worked with Kristen to fold the separate Membership Google docs (from the last couple years) into the greater chapter Google docs.

We updated the Directory mid-year, and as a result also refined this process. Going forward, members will be informed the Directory is being edited and to send any requests for updates to Membership. We will roll up these changes into one document to share with our Administrative

Assistant. Once these updates are made, membership will proof before Directory is sent to entire membership.

At the end of this year, LDEI passed new requirements for membership, including standardization in the membership process across all chapters. Next year, Merrilyn will work with the board to update our membership process.

We finished our year with 53 members!

Grants – Joan Semmer

The Grant Committee is a new committee for our LDEI chapter. Its objective is to raise money for scholarships and mini grants by asking public and corporate foundations for financial assistance.

To date they have applied for the Minneapolis Foundation's "Racial and Economic Justice Grant", created after the civil unrest following George Floyd's death. It was to help women in the food and beverage industry who were financially affected by the civil unrest following George Floyd's death. This grant application focused on providing mini grants and mentoring. They did not get the grant, but learned two things:

1. The Minneapolis foundation prefers to give money directly to recipients and we were viewed as a pass-through organization.
2. MN LDEI is not viewed as a philanthropic organization. The philanthropic community does not know who we are.

I haven't had any formal grant writing training, but I have participated in Zoom meetings with other LDEI chapter grant writers led by LDEI board member Ingrid Gangestad.

Going forward, the Grant committee's plan is to:

1. Build awareness of MN LDEI as a philanthropic organization.
2. Formalize a list of public foundations in Minnesota with contact information on key players. Start to build relationships.
3. Formalize a list of Minnesota corporations engaged in the food, beverage and hospitality industries. This would include companies such as General Mills, Land O' Lakes, Cargill, Phillips, Radisson, Hormel, and restaurant chains headquartered in Minnesota. Identify who is in charge of their corporate giving and identify their grant cycles. Start to build relationships.
4. Prepare our chapter for involvement in MN "Give to the Max" day this November.
5. Continue to stay linked into the LDEI national focus on grants
6. Build marketing materials to accompany grant proposals.

Micro-Grant - Joan Donatelle, Liz Nerud

One micro-grant was awarded for the 2020-2021 LDEI year.

Micro-Grant Recipient -Dana Smith, MinnyRow Market

\$400.00 is awarded to Dana Smith, co-owner of MinnyRow Market.

MinnyRow Market is located on Main Street in Hopkins. It is a small scale grocery and deli that specializes in locally sourced and ethically produced foods.

The goal of MinnyRow Market is to build community around food and to be a trusted source in the industry. Connecting customers and vendors in new and fun ways.

MinnyRow Market opened in November 2020.

The funds received will go towards the purchase of tables and chairs.

Organizations contacted with Micro-grant information:

Women Who Really Cook

Food and Consumer Science Professionals

WEMN- Women Entrepreneurs of Minnesota

LDEI-MN

Linked-In

FaceBook

Service - BJ Carpenter, Jenny Breen

2021 proved nearly a repeat of 2020 with regard to outside participation at Urban Roots, but les Dames was still able to make a significant contribution in funding their endeavors.

In the past the majority of our donations have covered the cost of badly needed equipment and kitchen upgrades. This past spring we were able to donate \$1,000 which was used as seed money (no pun intended) to help fund the salary of one of their new program facilitators. And on this past Monday, along with Cindy, our outgoing president, I had the pleasure of presenting an additional \$4,000 to help underwrite the paid student internships that are so crucial to their success. As always, the interns and administrative staff were extremely grateful for the assistance they received from us.

Looking toward the future growing seasons, our chapter will likely have the opportunity to contribute in new ways as Urban Roots takes residence in their new kitchen located at 1110 Payne Avenue, not far from their current space on Maria Avenue. This is a fully licensed, commercial kitchen, and as such will be used to expand their lines of prepared food products, and is a better venue for demonstrations and educational purposes.

Academic Scholarship - Susan Peters, Arlene Coco Buscombe, Erin Clancy, Dorothy Stainbrook

The scholarship committee received only four scholarship applications representing two different area institutions of higher education. Two of the applicants were the cream of the crop and the board approved these outstanding young women for a 2021 scholarship. This year's budget allowed us to work with \$2,500 for scholarships. We divided the funds between

the two scholars in this manner: Samantha received \$1,000 and Alyson received 1,500. We have included their contact information in case any of our members would like to reach out to them for congratulations or mentoring.

Samantha (Sami) Maldonado, maldo124@umn.edu, 952-452-4639

Sami was one of our scholarship winners last year and she has continued to impress us with her academic prowess and commitment to a socially just food culture. We find her quite accomplished for her age (20). She is from Minneapolis and is studying at the College of Food, Agricultural, and Natural Resource Sciences (CFANS) at the University of Minnesota, expecting to graduate early in December, 2021. Her GPA is 3.8.

In her essay, Sami says, “I am a firm believer in diversity and equity. I am from a mixed race and mixed nationality family. My mother was born and raised in Minnesota and my father was born and raised in Ecuador. Due to my diverse upbringing, I was instilled to interact with others without prejudice.” This is demonstrated in the leadership roles she has chosen: at the U of M, she is the chapter president for Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Related Sciences (MANRRS) as well as the major representative for the College of Food, Agricultural, and Natural Resource Sciences Undergraduate Student Board. In her community, she collaborates with Growing North Minneapolis and Spark-Y Youth Action Labs, both concerned with local food justice. Sami’s list of extracurricular activities, honors and awards is lengthy.

Until recently, Sami was a day-staff member at the Mill City Farmers Market. She is preparing to spend the summer in Denmark in the Summer Abroad Program where she will be taking a course titled Tasting Culture: Nordic Food, Tradition, and Nutrition.

The scholarship committee continues to be very impressed with Sami’s drive, commitment to her area of study, and how she continues to WOW us with her accomplishments and self confidence. She says, “My self-propelling, compassionate, detail oriented, and curious nature will positively impact the future of food and agriculture.”

Alyson Hornby, ahornby16@gmail.com, 608-520-5721

Alyson is also at the University of Minnesota in the College of Food, Agricultural, and Natural Resource Sciences (CFANS) Department. She is 27 years old and lives in Minneapolis. Her GPA is 3.7 and she expects to graduate with her bachelor’s degree December, 2021. Alyson is dietetic technician at Park Nicollet – Methodist Hospital in St Louis Park.

Alyson’s area of study is dietetics with a special interest in holistic and Eastern approaches to well being. Her extracurricular activities support this area of study: she is an Outreach Officer for the Wellness and Culture Club (formerly known as Student Ambassadors of Food, Nutrition, and Culture); she volunteers at Community Emergency Assistance Program (CEAP) in the food market with additional shifts in the Meals-On-Wheels program; and she volunteers for Help At Your Door by delivering groceries to those in need since June, 2020. Throughout the pandemic, Alyson has shown fearless support for those in need.

Alyson has a solid background in the food service industry (she did stints at French Meadow Bakery & Café, Kelber Catering, The Mill, and Graze). She is currently working as an intern with a nutrition professor and a PhD student from the University of Minnesota in a five-year long community nutrition cohort to reintegrate ancient whole grains into our modern diets, while

working alongside elders and chefs from the Cultural Wellness Centers' Backyard Community Health Hub and from Johnson & Wales in Rhode Island. In the future, she hopes to merge these culinary skills with those of a registered dietician to have her own healing and nutrition practice which she describes as, "a space where clients can come together as a group to learn about how to eat healthier for disease prevention or ease symptoms of disease, how to make cooking healthy meals fun and easy, but also, I want clients to come individually and receive my assistance with their individualized medical nutrition therapy needs."

The scholarship committee endorsed Alyson for a scholarship because of her well thought out plan for how to attain her dream career and the smart steps she is taking in her academics, volunteerism, and vision to make it happen.

Newsletter - Janice Cole, Patsy Noble

Patsy Noble and I took over the newsletter in October of 2020 and put out the November issue as our first issue. It took awhile to familiarize ourselves with the Mailchimp program and we continue to refine and revise each issue as we learn what works best within the Mailchimp program and our group's needs. We still hope to resolve the issues that seem to crop up on the phone version of the newsletter and will continue to work on that in the coming year. We suggested and the board approved adding the paid version of Mailchimp for use by our group which has given us a few more options but hasn't yet helped with the mobile/desktop issues.

We introduced two new features this year: The Inspired section where we hear from a selection of members as to what things from books to movies to food are inspiring them lately and we also feature new trends within our fields, selected by Julie Hinderks.