

Rotary Club of Little Rock Rotary



Rotary Tuesday, July 27, 2021

**Great Hall, William J. Clinton Presidential Center
and
Virtual via Zoom**

In person - registration required

Please note that our meetings are mask-optional. We recommend, in accordance with the CDC and health agencies, that if you are not fully vaccinated, you wear a mask.

Virtual - no registration required

11:30 a.m. Pre-Meeting Entertainment: Pandora

12:00 noon Program: Stacy Croom-Raley, President & CEO, Children's Equity Coalition

Staci Croom-Raley is a mom, lawyer, advocate for women, children, and families, and the President and CEO of Children's Equity Coalition, a 501c3 educational corporation headquartered in Little Rock, AR. Children's Equity builds partnerships, products, and pathways so that every child can be ready on day one for school success and beyond.

After a career in law and government, Croom-Raley decided to pursue her passion for advocacy on a career path she never imagined, filled with philanthropic endeavors and some of the most well-recognized, mission-driven organizations. Her professional portfolio includes leadership roles at Boys Town, USA, Boys and Girls Clubs, Goodwill Industries, and Tenet Health. She earned a Master of Science in Educational Leadership from the University of Memphis and a Juris Doctorate from the University-Little Rock, Bowen School of Law. Since 2009, she has received five gubernatorial board appointments from under the Huckabee, Beebe, and Hutchinson Administrations and was recently named one of 26 Social Justice Leaders in the US to join the American Express Converge Academy Cohort for 2021.

Today, Ms. Croom-Raley complements her professional career with civic engagement as a member of Club 99, Little Rock Junior League, and serving on the board of the Arkansas Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association, and principal for The Croom Firm, a boutique consulting firm mentoring for young professionals of color.



Zoom Meeting Login for Tuesday, July 27, 2021

Topic: RCLR Meeting 7.27.2021 Stacy Croom-Raley
Time: Jul 27, 2021 11:30 AM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting
[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85175026667?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85175026667?pwd=OGdOcm9ZWjBEVGVU2eVRhVTZxS2VuZz09)
[pwd=OGdOcm9ZWjBEVGVU2eVRhVTZxS2VuZz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85175026667?pwd=OGdOcm9ZWjBEVGVU2eVRhVTZxS2VuZz09)

Club Meeting

Little Rock
Meets at Great Hall William J. Clinton Presidential Library
1200 President Clinton Avenue
Little Rock, AR 72201
Time: Tuesday at 11:30 AM

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Club Leaders



[Kristina K. Bolhouse](#)
President



[Denver R. Peacock](#)
President - Elect



[Natalie Ghidotti](#)
President - Nominee



[Jeff L. Hildebrand](#)
iPast President



[Jason Chacko](#)
Secretary



[Sylvia Murchison](#)
Treasurer



[Leigh Ann Biernat](#)
Treasurer - Elect



[Tammie S. Davis](#)
Sergeant-at-Arms



Meeting ID: 851 7502 6667

Passcode: 253677

One tap mobile

+13126266799,,85175026667#,,,,*253677# US (Chicago)

+19294362866,,85175026667#,,,,*253677# US (New York)

Dial by your location

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 929 436 2866 US (New York)

+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

Meeting ID: 851 7502 6667

Passcode: 253677

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/kcL37cnHiY>

Club 99 Signature Focus Announced

Adopted by RCLR Board of Directors 6.22.2021

Learn more about this at Rotary, Tuesday, July 27, 2021

Overview Club 99 Board Presentation June 22, 2021

The Club Projects Strategy Task Force was created in May 2021 to determine a more succinct, intentional focus for Club projects and to develop a more strategic vision of how our Club sponsors initiatives in our community. The Task Force met in May to begin discussing the idea of a ♦signature♦ focus area to drive much of our giving and use of the Club♦s Special Funds account to support. This will be a long-term strategy that would offer a variety of ways for our Club and members to support - via donations, volunteer opportunities, mentoring, committee involvement and more.

The Task Force recommend a focused effort on literacy in our community, with the goal to ensure that every child in Little Rock is able to read by the end of 3rd grade.

Why Literacy? Only 34% of America♦s 4th graders read at grade level - with Arkansas at an even greater percentage. Children who aren♦t reading proficiently by 4th grade are four times more likely to drop out of high school, according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress. And this is just one of a host of issues that arise for children and their communities when kids aren♦t reading by 3rd grade. High school dropouts suffer from lowered employment prospects and a much higher potential to be living below the poverty lines. However, the impact also affects the communities around them.

- Over half of high school dropouts are on public assistance.
- Young women who dropout of high school are 9 times more likely to become single mothers.
- Nearly 83% of incarcerated persons are also high school dropouts.
- Over 60% of individuals who dropped out of high school are rearrested for repeat criminal activity.
- A 10% increase in high school graduation rates in at-risk communities could result in a 9% decline in criminal arrest rates.

Why third grade? Third grade is when students switch from ♦learning to read♦ to ♦reading to learn.♦ If children are not reading on grade-level by this point, they will have a difficult time navigating their entire educational path, struggling through math, science, and other courses that would prepare them for success in our 21st century economy and position Arkansas to become a top state in education and economic outcomes.

Why should Club 99 help? Research tells us that schools and communities with strong engagement from parents, caregivers and mentors are four times more likely to see improvements in reading. It takes community help to make this happen, and our members (many of whom are leading top businesses and organizations in our state) have a vested interest in ensuring Little Rock increases its economic vitality, decreases crime and ensures all of our citizens are given equal opportunities to get ahead.

The Dunbar Connection Club 99 has a running start in making a significant contribution to the goal of Little Rock children reading by the 3rd grade. Our efforts at Dunbar Middle are a great model of infusing community support into a school in order to assist administrators, teachers and parents in supporting students. There are ways to build on what we are accomplishing at Dunbar to broaden our literacy efforts. Idea Generation At our first Task Force meeting many ideas were discussed as ways to begin to build out a strategic focus on this effort. Some of these include:



Mitchell D. Bettis
Club Director



Ellen Cockrill
Club Director



Elizabeth G. Clogston
Club Director



T. Martin Davis
Club Director



Wanda G. Hoover
Club Director



Walter D. Lomax III
Club Director



Ashvin P. Vibhakar
Club Director



Joyce E. Taylor
Club Director



Jessica Marie Wilson
Club Director



Karen H. Fetzer
Club Executive Secretary



Lael Foster
Secretary



George W. Booker II
Club 99 Foundation Chair



Suzanne Peyton
Club 99 Foundation Trustee

- Determining other organizations who are working in this same space and beginning to bring them together to determine specifically where Club 99 should place its efforts.
- Engaging Catholic High School's Reach Club for potential tutors
- Focusing on after-school care ♦ bringing in food scarcity issues
- Possible annual fundraiser with a Literacy Award given that highlights a program in our community working on this issue
- Modeling a private-public partnership like our Dunbar project to help move the needle

Task force members include: Natalie Ghidotti, Chairman, Karen Fetzer, Denver Peacock, Hank Kelley, Mitch Bettis, Ellon Cockrill, Jeff Hildebrand, Elizabeth Clogston, Tammie Davis, Wanda Hoover, Ashvin Vibhakar, Jason Chacko, and Viji Kuruvilla.



Cynthia Van Veckhoven
Club 99 Foundation
Treasurer



James K. Gibbs
Club 99 Foundation
Trustee



Michael Marquez
Club 99 Foundation
Trustee



Sonya Schmidt Murphy
Club 99 Foundation
Trustee



Matt Olson
Club 99 Foundation
Trustee



John L. Ostner, CLU
Club 99 Foundation
Trustee



Kim Ellis
Club 99 Foundation
Trustee



Sonya Schmidt Murphy
Assistant Governor

Birthdays

Kent W. Taylor
July 26th

Louis Henson
July 28th

Mary Catherine McNulty
July 29th

Clay McKinney
August 1st

Greg Hatcher
August 1st