

GIRLS GROUP

BY: BETSY MILLER, GIRLS GROUP CHAIR

Greetings and Happy Spring/Summer from the JLAA Girls Group Committee! This year marked the third year in our relationship with the outstanding ladies of Girls Group. It is amazing to see these young women mature into college-ready adults. Their enthusiasm and creativity have been an inspiration to us all.

Girls Group is an Ann Arbor non-for-profit that serves at-risk teen girls. Their goal (and they have 100% success so far) is to ensure that each member graduates from high school and attends college. Girls in the program work with mentors who provide support with classwork, SAT/ACT preparation, college tours and even basic health check-ups. Above all, the girls benefit from close and trusting relationships with their mentors and with each other. Our Junior League committee hosts events for Girls Group one Friday a month throughout the school year. For example, our February event was “Project Runway” where the girls worked in teams to design and create a look based on a fashion icon or inspiration of their choice. The girls did a FANTASTIC job! We saw everything from classic looks inspired by Michelle Obama to the off-beat styles of Niki Minaj.



Throughout the year, the Junior League worked with a number of local business owners to co-host Girls Group events. Our community partners generously gave their time and donated products to help our Friday sessions come alive. We would specifically like to thank the following:

- **Bryant Stuckey, owner and head pastry chef of Decadent Delight in Ann Arbor**, who demonstrated and judged a lively (and tasty) cake decorating event (think “Cake Boss”) in September of 2011. The girls enjoyed hearing Bryant’s career story, how he transformed what was once a baking hobby into a successful pastry business. He also provided culinary inspiration in the form of a delicious “Creme Brulee cake”, true genius!



- **Nancy Young, owner of Delicate Beauty Therapeutics in Ann Arbor**, who educated the girls on basic skin care techniques and how to give professional skin consultations. Nancy was very generous to donate skin moisturizers, cleansers and gift bags of beauty products.

- **Players and Managers of the University of Michigan Women’s Basketball Team** who spoke with the girls about the demands of college life and how to balance schoolwork and athletics. The team also competed alongside Girls Group members in an “NCAA Tournament”-Style Pictionary Battle. As an added bonus, the Girls were treated to a U of M Women’s Basketball Game in December.

- **Robert Campbell, owner of Jamaican Jerk Pit in Ann Arbor**, who taught us how to make a traditional “jerk” marinade and gave a lively talk on Jamaican culture and the origins of Caribbean food. Robert shared the personal story of his journey to United States, his time in college and graduate school, and how he achieved his goal and passion to open a Jamaican restaurant. Robert also provided Jerk Chicken and Fried Plantains, a delicious treat for a Friday afternoon!

As we wrap up our third and final year of this meaningful community project, we are excited for the members of Girls Group, for the amazing college experience that lies ahead and beyond. We are proud to be associated with the staff and mentors of Girls Group. Their dedication, compassion and commitment to each Girls Group member is truly inspiring.

