



SOROPTIMIST
Best for Women

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Soroptimists to award \$38,000 in scholarships to local women *Past recipients say the scholarships have changed their lives*

RENO, NV: Soroptimist International of Truckee Meadows (SITM) will recognize 18 women with \$38,000 in scholarships and awards at the club's 30th annual Women's Scholarship Luncheon at 11:30 a.m. April 22nd at the Atlantis Casino Resort. Tickets for the luncheon are \$16 and can be reserved via email at sitruckeemeadows@hotmail.com. RSVP's are due no later than 5 pm April 20th.

Since the program's inception in 1980, SITM has granted more than \$750,000 to more than 300 Northern Nevada women returning to school to advance their careers and provide a better life for their families. Many scholarship recipients are single mothers or heads of household who are returning to community college, university, technical or trade school. The scholarship awards are largely based on financial need and vary in size depending on the recipient's educational goals and financial situation. Most scholarships are for more than one year, ensuring the winner has a steady stream of income to finish her schooling.

Past scholarship winners says the awards were critical to their efforts to build security and stability for their families. April Perkins of Reno was a single mother of four, homeless and a victim of domestic violence but she knew she could – and had to – do better for her family. With the help of community agencies and a scholarship from SITM, she now works as a Certified Nursing Assistant while she pursues a degree in Radiological Technology.

“Without the help of the scholarships I received, I know for sure that I wouldn't be where I am today and that my children and I would have been stuck in poverty,” Perkins said. “Now my children will know a life of happiness without abuse and hunger and I am sure that our future is bright.”

Scholarship Committee Co-Chair Pam Robinson said that it is important that scholarship recipients get ongoing support so they can have confidence in being able to complete their educational goals.

*Improving the lives
of women and girls,
in local communities
and throughout
the world.*

“Many of these women have faced challenges that most of us can’t even imagine, so part of our mission is to be sure to provide that ongoing support throughout the educational process so that they know they can finish,” she said.

Scholarships are awarded to women pursuing both bachelor’s and master’s degrees and awards range from \$500 for one semester to \$6,000 for additional semesters, depending on the woman’s educational goals and financial needs.

There are two scholarship categories. The Jack Simon Memorial Scholarships are awarded to graduate students, in memory of Jack Simon, the late husband of former SITM president Jeanne Baxter and a longtime supporter of SITM and its efforts to advance the status of women and girls. The undergraduate scholarships are awarded in memory of Mary Gojack and Nancy Gomes. Nancy Gomes served for years in the Nevada Legislature advocating for women and children and was one of the first female trustees on the Washoe County School Board. Mary Gojack was a charter member of SITM, who worked at night while pursuing a degree in political science and later serving in the Nevada Legislature. She is the inspiration for the club’s focus on awarding scholarships to women returning to school.

At the luncheon, SITM also will recognize this year’s Women’s Opportunity Award winner. Women’s Opportunity Award winners are the primary breadwinners for their families who are seeking to improve their employment status by gaining additional vocational skills training or pursuing an undergraduate degree. The winner goes on to compete at the regional and national level of Soroptimists and can receive as much as \$10,000 in awards.

Soroptimist International of Truckee Meadows (SITM) is a local chapter of Soroptimist International, a worldwide organization of women in management and professions working through service projects to advance human rights and the status of women and girls. SITM achieves its mission through a variety of projects including local adult and youth scholarship programs and as a Partner in Education with Libby Booth Elementary School. The club also has an international project, building and maintaining a dormitory for girls in Thulipokhari, Nepal, to attend school. SITM provides scholarships for the Nepal girls education project and funds an animal assistance loan program for the village.

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