

“Friendsgiving”

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# The Chain



**LINKED TO**  
*Connect, Create, Collaborate*

**NOVEMBER 2025**

## HAPPY FOUNDERS' DAY!

*The Season Of  
‘Friendsgiving’*





Happy  
Friendship  
Month

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# WESTERN AREA DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Greetings Link Sisters,

## Happy Friendship Month!

I am so proud to greet you during this time. As we link hearts and hands this month, I want us to continue to think of those less fortunate than us and those who are challenged by circumstances and disasters not in their control and find themselves in need.



We are dedicating our **Friendship Month** to helping **those who need our aid**. We are calling it **"Friendsgiving"** locally and globally. We know our chapter members give to the communities they serve – donating during the holidays, volunteering in pantries, food banks, homeless shelters, and wherever they find a need. We want to capture that support and celebrate it via social media. Please prepare to share the highlights of your chapter's efforts this holiday season with our Western Area National Trends and Services Chair, Stephany Powell, who is documenting our collective impact. Snapshots of giving can be shared with Western Area Communications Chair Marsha McFadden for The Chain ([TheWACHain@gmail.com](mailto:TheWACHain@gmail.com)).

Globally, we know that Hurricane Melissa has brought significant damage to Jamaica. I am pleased to report that all students, faculty, and staff of our beloved Mt. Carey Baptist Basic Infant School have been accounted for and will need our support as the roofs of both the lower and upper classrooms were destroyed. A detailed giving plan is being designed by National and coordinated by Western Area Program Coordinator Chrystle Swain along with Western Area International Trends and Services Chair TJ Day.



From our most recent national pilgrimage to Ghana to attend the Global Black Women's Summit in Africa, we have embarked upon our **"Friendsgiving"** across the African diaspora by assisting the **WO-YEE-BRA** program. This program addresses what is known as period poverty, but notably with an entrepreneurial component. The Western Area has already joined The Links, Incorporated and donated 10 sewing machines. Needles, thread and other sewing accessories are welcome from our members. Our help will enable the Wo-Yee-Bra participants to make menstrual pads, and sell them. TJ Day will be our point of contact to give you detailed giving information.



Thank you for embracing **"Friendsgiving"** this season. On behalf of the Executive Board members of Team Nonstop Excellence, thank you for continuing to open your hands and hearts in blessing those who need our aid this season.

Yours in friendship,  
Karen Cole  
Western Area Director

*Karen Cole*  
Western Area Director

# NATIONAL TRENDS & SERVICES

## Contributions to Our Communities

- Donations of food, gifts, and clothing
- Assistance to community shelters, senior centers, and hospitals



**NOVEMBER, 2025**



# “Friendsgiving”

Strengthening Our Bonds of Friendship in Our Chapters and Beyond



Donations to The  
Women of Ghana  
Chapter Giving to the women of Ghana  
through Wo Ye Bra Entrepreneurship  
program

INTERNATIONAL TRENDS & SERVICES

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## FRIENDSHIP CORNER

# Reflections on Sisterhood In Celebration of Friendship Month

Sisterhood in The Links, Incorporated is a divine inheritance—a sacred bond that calls us to lead with love, serve with compassion, and walk in deep connection. It is not built merely through shared service or meetings, but through the quiet, powerful moments in which we choose one another. When we lift each other. When we listen with our whole hearts. When we remember that we are never walking alone.

Throughout the Western Area, our Chapter Presidents reflected on sisterhood as something living—something that breathes across generations and evolves with purpose and grace. Friendship is not simply a formality of membership; it is the heartbeat of who we are.

“Friendship is a blessing—a sanctuary where love shows up without being asked.”

Many shared that sisterhood is where they find refuge and restoration—the place where tears are held tenderly, and joy is celebrated fully. Some described sisterhood as courage—the assurance that when one rises, we all rise. Others reflected that sisterhood is simply the Golden Rule embodied—leading with compassion, gentleness, and sincerity.

There are friendships that have blossomed across decades—as fresh as a newly planted herb garden and as deep as the Grand Canyon. These relationships do not merely support service—they make service joyful. They turn leadership into shared purpose. They transform obligation into devotion.

Sisterhood has also been likened to a water well—life-giving, restorative, and sacred. A source we must tend and protect. And some Sisters offered that friendship is the overflow—the grace and wisdom we offer to nourish one another’s spirits.

This truth rises at the heart of every reflection:

“Sisterhood is our inheritance. Friendship is our practice. Love is our legacy.”

### A Call to Carry Forward

As we celebrate Friendship Month, we do not close a chapter—we open our hearts wider. Let us honor friendship not only in November, but in the everyday acts of intentional care that sustain our bonds and deepen our connections.

And may we remember: This is not the end of the celebration—it is the beginning of a renewed commitment.

- To reach out when a sister’s spirit is heavy.
- To respond with grace when misunderstanding arises.
- To show up with tenderness, even when we are stretched thin.
- To celebrate each other fully, freely, and joyfully.

Because sisterhood is not a month—it is a way of living.

May we be women who water the well, so that the Sisterhood we inherited remains strong, nourishing, and ever-flowing—for us, for those who came before us, and for those who will one day follow.

Not only in November, but every single day we are blessed to be Linked in Friendship, Connected in Service.



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BY JASMINE C. HOUSTON  
WA Communications Committee  
Beverly Hills West (CA) Chapter

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### *With Deep Appreciation to Our Contributing Chapter Presidents*

Albuquerque (NM) – Sheritta Washington  
Angel City (CA) – Deonne Burgess  
Beverly Hills West (CA) – Zna Portlock Houston  
Dallas (TX) – Charlotte McKenzie  
Denver (CO) – Jennifer “Jen” Collins  
El Paso (TX) – Avemaria Smart  
Greater Seattle (WA) – Jovonia Taylor-Hayes  
Gulf Coast Apollo (TX) – Pleshette Johnson-Wiggins  
Mid-Cities (TX) – Alice R. Davis  
Monterey Bay (CA) – Starra Hill  
Phoenix (AZ) – Eula Saxon Dean  
Sacramento (CA) – Teresa Aldredge  
San Bernardino Valley (CA) – Michelle Webley  
Stockton (CA) – Karen Rea  
Town Lake (TX) – Wanda Nelson  
Tucson (AZ) – Dinah McGlory

# FRIENDSHIP CORNER

## The Voices of Our Chapter Presidents



Sisterhood means the coming together of like-minded women who are committed to serving a purpose greater than themselves. To make a friend, you must first show yourself friendly. Service flows from the heart, and whatever is in your heart will shine through in your actions. I love my sisters deeply, so serving with and for them comes naturally.

Being a Chapter President is not just a role — it's an honor and a blessing.

*Sheritta Washington*

ALBUQUERQUE (NM) CHAPTER



Friendship within The Links Incorporated has inspired me by surrounding me with women who lead with grace, strength, and purpose. Their support and wisdom have reminded me that leadership is rooted in collaboration, not competition. This sisterhood has sustained me through challenges and strengthened my commitment to serve with heart and integrity.

*Deanne Burgess*

ANGEL CITY (CA) CHAPTER



"Sisterhood is like a water well providing a life-sustaining source of support and nourishment that must be maintained and shared reciprocally to remain healthy and vibrant...don't let the well run dry."

*Zna Portlock Hanstone*

BEVERLY HILLS WEST (CA) CHAPTER



Sisterhood is the unwavering bond that unites our organization in purpose and power while making a difference in our community.

The friendships built within our organization has given me strength and solace that inspires and uplifts me on those challenging days, to keep going, keep doing the work.

We are intentional with focus on our Core Values, which has been an added bonus and blessing to blend friendship, impact, and fun across intergenerational connections as we serve together in our community.

*Charlotte McKenzie*

DALLAS (TX) CHAPTER



Sisterhood, in its essence, is a profound bond of mutual respect, shared vulnerability, and unconditional love that transcends blood relation. I keep friendship at the heart of service by fostering joy, laughter, and lightheartedness, focusing on the human connection, and always listening deeply. My decision to become Denver (CO) Chapter President was driven by the assurance that the strong bond and support of my Link Sisters would help me navigate any challenges.

*Jennifer "Jen" Collins*

DENVER (CO) CHAPTER



"Sisterhood is the embodiment of the natural ability to always treat your sister as you would like to be treated- "The Golden Rule". It is called "My Sisters' Keeper". A sister has compassion at the forefront of her interactions with her sisters that makes the relationship authentic."

Avemaria Smart, El Paso (TX) Chapter

*Avemaria Smart*

EL PASO (TX) CHAPTER



"Friendship is a Blessing - This is a space where we have deep connections that go beyond surface. A safe space where my sister has my back, my front and my sides, when I'm in the valley. An amazing space that we honor and hold sacred, while our vessels are being filled. It's a true blessing to have a space called Friendship."

*Devonina Taylor-Hayes*

GREATER SEATTLE (WA) CHAPTER



"Together, We Lead" is the mantra of the Gulf Coast Apollo (TX) Chapter, which aligns with the inclusivity of friendship and sisterhood within my sphere of influence. These two bookends (friendship and sisterhood) blossom in this environment and inspire me to transverse myriads of program initiatives and community mandates along with my Link sisters. Life's moments are fleeting in any endeavor, but I am constantly snuggled into a warm cocoon of hugs, well wishes and genuine words of encouragement at the helm of this dynamic chapter.

*Pleshette Johnson-Wiggins*

GULF COAST APOLLO (TX) CHAPTER

# FRIENDSHIP CORNER

## The Voices of Our Chapter Presidents



“Sisterhood in The Links, Incorporated is a privilege that comes with membership. While we may not all be friends, we are all sisters. Therefore, we are there for one another whenever one calls. We are working for a common goal and ideally building lasting friendships along the way.

*Alice R. Davis*  
MID-CITIES (TX) CHAPTER



“Sisterhood is about lifting each other up, holding space for growth, and always knowing you’re not alone. Sisterhood is not just a relationship - it’s a chosen family rooted in love and solidarity.

*Starra Hill*  
MONTEREY BAY (CA) CHAPTER



“Friendship is what shows up in the heart that seeks to share from the cup of overflowing love, grace, and wisdom to uplift and feed the hungry soul in another sister’s spirit.”

*Eula Saxon Dean*  
PHOENIX (AZ) CHAPTER



“The sisterhood of the Sacramento, California, Chapter of The Links, Incorporated, is unbreakable. Our friendships are as fresh as a newly planted herb garden and same as deep as the Grand Canyon, with friendships spanning more than 40 years. I am sustained as a leader in our chapter because our members genuinely care about one another. I am uplifted in prayer and given grace, love, comfort, and compassion, which sustain me throughout my journey in Linkdom.

*Teresa Aldredge*  
SACRAMENTO (CA) CHAPTER



“Our sisterhood reminds me that leadership is not about standing alone, but about standing together drawing strength from the wisdom, grace, and friendship of remarkable women.”

*Michelle Wobley*  
SAN BERNARDINO VALLEY (CA) CHAPTER



“The Links Sisterhood has been a living, evolving force that continues to enrich my life and the lives of others across the globe. Through National Assemblies, Area Conferences, and international travel with fellow Links, I’ve gained a deeper appreciation for the organization’s remarkable history and purpose.

Meaningful conversations with experienced members have inspired me to embrace the passion, innovation, and courage of the Millennium, NexGen and future generations who will carry our legacy forward with pride and grace.

*Karen Reas*  
STOCKTON (CA) CHAPTER



“Friendship is reflected when someone fulfills a need for another person without being asked and without expecting anything in return. The action denotes that the recipient is valued by the giver.

*Wanda L. Nelson*  
TOWN LAKE (TX) CHAPTER



“Sisterhood is the gentle heartbeat that unites strangers, fostering a bond of compassion and strength coming together for a shared purpose.

*Dinah McGlory*  
TUCSON (AZ) CHAPTER

**If You’re a Chapter President  
Who Would Like To Share a  
Reflection , Please Send to:  
[TheWACHain@gmail.com](mailto:TheWACHain@gmail.com)**

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## LOS ANGELES (CA) CHAPTER

# THE FRIENDSHIP TRAIN ROLLS ON: CELEBRATING 75 YEARS OF COMMUNITY IMPACT



The Los Angeles (CA) Chapter of The Links, Incorporated marked a milestone with its 75th Anniversary Luncheon, honoring seven decades of friendship, service, and leadership. Under the guidance of Chapter President Lisa Nicholas, the afternoon reflected elegance, energy, and community spirit. Guests enjoyed a reception featuring the histories of both the chapter and the Western Area before Chair Deborah Beavers-Watford and Co-Chairs Renette Anderson and Nedra Austin welcomed attendees into the diamond-studded ballroom of the Beverly Hilton Hotel.



A stirring performance of *I, Too, Am America* by the Inner-City Youth Orchestra of Los Angeles (ICYOLA) showcased young artists nurtured through the chapter's support.

Recognition was central to the program. National President Ethel Isaacs Williams and Western Area Director Karen Ragland Cole joined in saluting the "History Makers"—organizations that partnered with the chapter in its earliest days and continue to share its mission. Councilmember Heather Hutt, on behalf of the City of Los Angeles, presented a Resolution commending 75 years of impact. The chapter also recognized valued partners including AARP, Toyota, and The Society Incorporated, Los Angeles Chapter. Special tribute was given to Platinum Members Jackie Ryan and Melanie Harewood, whose enduring commitment reflects the chapter's strength. Supported by Diamond Sponsor Kaiser Permanente, with co-sponsors The Stovall Foundation and the City of Los Angeles, the luncheon became more than a commemoration. It reaffirmed a promise that the Friendship Train will keep rolling forward, carrying a legacy of service.

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## OAKLAND BAY AREA (CA) CHAPTER & SAN FRANCISCO (CA) CHAPTER BRIDGING 75 YEARS OF FRIENDSHIP AND SERVICE



The Oakland Bay Area and San Francisco Chapters return to the historic Mark Hopkins to celebrate a milestone of service, sisterhood, and impact. On September 21, 2025, the Oakland Bay Area and San Francisco Chapters of The Links, Incorporated, celebrated their 75th Anniversary at the Mark Hopkins Hotel, where both chapters were chartered in 1950.



The celebration, chaired by Alice Morris, Barbra Ruffin Boston, Marsha Peterson, and Pam Stevenson, honored history while inspiring the future. Guests embraced the elegance of the 1950s, echoing the grace of our founders.

In 1950, Lorraine Rickmond, our first Western Area Director, emerged as the guiding spirit of the Oakland Bay Area Chapter. Encouraged by friend Lillian Brown, she helped bring The Links to the West Coast, drawing inspiration from a symbolic train that began on the East Coast, paused in Los Angeles, and arrived in the Bay Area, with the dream that friendship and service could transform communities.

For 75 years, that dream has been realized on both sides of the bridge. The Oakland Bay Area and San Francisco Chapters have uplifted youth, advanced education, supported the arts, championed health, and advocated equity—leaving an indelible mark across Bay Area communities.

The celebration included remarks from National President Ethel Isaac Williams and Western Area Director Karen Ragland Cole, who reminded us our legacy is alive in the transformative work we continue today. Seventy-five years later, that train is still rolling, thriving, serving, and building a lasting legacy.

# Walk For Healthy Living Annual Walk-A-Thon



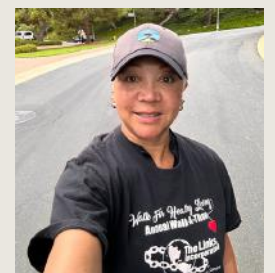
## SOUTHERN METROPLEX (TX) CHAPTER

The 30th Annual Walk for Healthy Living, hosted by the Southern Metroplex (TX) Chapter took place at the beautiful Midlothian Community Park. This inspiring event drew 34 registered participants, ranging in age from just 1 year old to 64 years, all proudly representing the African American community. Among the attendees, many embraced the challenge of walking a 3.5-mile route, embracing the spirit of health and wellness. The day was more than just a walk; it was an opportunity for education and empowerment, featuring vital Heart Health awareness sessions and practical basic CPR training. Together, this gathering celebrated community, health, and the importance of proactive care in a vibrant, supportive atmosphere.



## DALLAS (TX) CHAPTER

With commitment to friendship, service, and healthy living, the Dallas (TX) Chapter pulled double-duty in order to celebrate and participate in the National 30th Anniversary of the Walk For Healthy Living. Members of the Chapter showed up early on the morning of September 27th in full force to kick-off the 13th year of their STEAM Academy. This year marks a record-breaking number of scholars signed up for the STEAM Academy which offers life-changing experiences and exposure to STEAM. After a full morning of STEAM Session One, Dallas Links then laced up their green Chucks to commemorate the occasion and initiative. Even Dallas (TX) members traveling out of town participated in the fun and walked for their health. All determined and committed to have a healthier lifestyle!



# Walk For Healthy Living Annual Walk-A-Thon



## SAN DIEGO (CA) CHAPTER

On September 27, the San Diego Chapter of The Links, Incorporated proudly celebrated the 30th Anniversary of our signature “Walk for Healthy Living” at Mission Bay Park. This milestone event, part of our national health and wellness initiative, brought together members, partners, and the community in a spirit of purpose and unity. We were honored to collaborate with STY Facet and Steele Canyon High School, engaging in a meaningful discussion with students about the importance of incorporating exercise into daily routines and reinforcing the power of intergenerational connection and community engagement. A Connecting Link also joined us, reinforcing the power of families linked in fitness. Together, we amplified the message that walking is more than a simple activity—it is a transformative tool to reduce co-morbidities, manage stress, and improve mental health. The day was a true reflection of our mission: advancing the health and well-being of our communities through impactful programs that educate, inspire, and uplift.



## CHANNEL ISLANDS (CA) CHAPTER

The Channel Islands (CA) Chapter is a small chapter located in Oxnard, California, chartered in 1982." Our chapter serves the counties of Ventura and Santa Barbara. Our community has two military bases and welcomes military families. We were delighted to participate in celebrating the 30th Anniversary of our "Walk for Healthy Living." The chapter is committed to empowering its members so they can, in turn, effectively empower the community.



## HAWAII (HI) CHAPTER

The Hawai'i Chapter of The Links, Incorporated along with community friends celebrated the 30th Annual Walk for Healthy Living in sunny Hawai'i. We walked a mile, collectively taking in 21,000 steps, and completed our walk with affirmations and closing stretches.



# Walk For Healthy Living Annual Walk-A-Thon



## INGLEWOOD PACIFIC (CA) CHAPTER

The Inglewood Pacific (CA) Chapter held its Walk for Healthy Living on Saturday, September 27, 2025, at the Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area Yvonne B. Burke Sports Complex in Los Angeles, CA in honor of the 30th Annual Anniversary of the National Impact Day. The Health and Human Services (HHS) Facet planned and executed a fun event full of fresh air, camaraderie, and a large dose of healthy exercise.

The importance of incorporating stretching as a component of all exercise activities was demonstrated by Link Camille Dunbar, owner of the bar method Long Beach. In addition, the committee also collected \$1000 in donations which will be used to support the Scholarship efforts overseen by the Services to Youth (STY) Facet.

Links Chapter Members were pleased to welcome our esteemed Western Area Director, Karen Cole, to the walk and pledged their commitment to a healthier lifestyle.



## OAKLAND BAY AREA (CA) CHAPTER

Oakland Bay Area (CA) Chapter, The Links, Incorporated 30th Anniversary Walk for Healthy Living Shines at Lake Merritt! Congratulations to HHS Chair Beryl Potter and the entire HHS Committee for hosting an unforgettable Walk for Healthy Living at Lake Merritt! With perfect weather, we were out in full force with signs, smiles, and those stylish green tutus; our presence was felt across the lake. Participants completed a pre-survey, tracked heart rates with pulse oximeters, and counted steps. As sisters, we bonded walking together, celebrating healthy living while strengthening our connections. We're proud to partner with John Muir, Elizabeth House, and the Alameda County Registrar of Voters. Special thanks to NTS/Legislative Chair Theresa Cox for leading voter registration through "Link Up the Vote."

The celebration concluded with food and fellowship at Portals, a joyful reminder of how the Oakland Bay Area members continue to uplift our community through friendship and service.



# Walk For Healthy Living Annual Walk-A-Thon



## BEVERLY HILLS WEST (CA) CHAPTER



The Beverly Hills West (CA) Chapter marked the 30th anniversary of The Links, Incorporated Walk for Healthy Living with our annual 5K Walk/Run led by Tri-Chairs Nicole Duncan, Lisa Thompson and Maryella Satinover, at Santa Monica Beach. Hosted by our Health & Human Services Facet, led by Chair Erika Littleton-Grant this first Impact Day of the program year gathered members, families, and community partners. The celebration included giveaways, yoga with Jasmine C. Houston and sound bath session led by Lisa Thompson, and a health pavilion sponsored by our Black K.A.R.E. initiative led by Chair Lisa Grant. Our Legislative Affairs Resolution Committee (LARC) sisters led by Tri-Chairs Lauren Trosclair Duncan, Sydney Kamlager Dove, and Meredith Hightower also supported civic engagement with Link Up the Vote resources. One of our Dr.Me! students crossed the finish line first and enjoyed walking with their parents and members of the community. With 40 years of chapter sisterhood to honor, we exercised and celebrated health together!



## SAN ANTONIO (TX) CHAPTER

Celebrating 30 years of Healthy Living, the San Antonio (TX) Chapter—together with Connecting Links, Heir-O-Links, and guests—enjoyed a community walk in Olmos Park followed by a relaxing yoga session.



# Walk For Healthy Living Annual Walk-A-Thon



## OAKLAND BAY AREA (CA) CHAPTER

Oakland Bay Area (CA) Chapter, The Links, Incorporated 30th Anniversary Walk for Healthy Living Shines at Lake Merritt! Congratulations to HHS Chair Beryl Potter and the entire HHS Committee for hosting an unforgettable Walk for Healthy Living at Lake Merritt! With perfect weather, we were out in full force with signs, smiles, and those stylish green tutus; our presence was felt across the lake. Participants completed a pre-survey, tracked heart rates with pulse oximeters, and counted steps. As sisters, we bonded walking together, celebrating healthy living while strengthening our connections. We're proud to partner with John Muir, Elizabeth House, and the Alameda County Registrar of Voters. Special thanks to NTS/Legislative Chair Theresa Cox for leading voter registration through "Link Up the Vote."

The celebration concluded with food and fellowship at Portals, a joyful reminder of how the Oakland Bay Area members continue to uplift our community through friendship and service.



## AUSTIN (TX) CHAPTER

The Austin (TX) and Town Lake Chapters proudly participated in the 30th Anniversary of the Walk for Healthy Living, a national initiative promoting wellness across communities. As part of the Central Texas Cluster's "Lace Up & Let's Move" event, members, families, and friends joined together in a walk covering distances from 1.5 to 4 miles.

Photos of the Austin (TX) Chapter and the Town Lake Chapter of The Links captured the energy and commitment of participants as they embraced healthy living in action. The Health & Human Services Facet provided snacks and spirited encouragement, while a member led group warm-ups.

This day reflected more than physical activity; it was a powerful expression of being fit for service. By prioritizing personal health, members were able to strengthen their capacity to serve, lead, and uplift the communities they support.



# Walk For Healthy Living Annual Walk-A-Thon



## PHOENIX (AZ) CHAPTER

On September 27, 2025, the Phoenix Chapter hosted the 30th Annual Walk for Healthy Living across three locations, broadening our reach and impact. A total of 56 community members registered, with 37 walkers joining together to promote health, wellness, and intergenerational connection.

The scavenger hunt was a highlight, blending fun with education. Participants shared health facts, learned strategies for preventing chronic diseases, and engaged youth in meaningful conversations about healthy living. This activity created an energetic atmosphere that paired physical activity with important knowledge about prevention and wellness.

The walk not only fostered community bonding but also served as the launchpad for our year-round wellness initiatives under our Phoenix Chapter Bridges to Health and Wellness through STEM umbrella program. We are Health Equity Ambassador's (H.E.A.L.) and this was just the beginning to our 2025-26 Program. Together, we continue advancing health equity in visible, impactful, and sustainable ways.



## MONTEREY BAY (CA) CHAPTER



In celebration of the 30th Anniversary of our “Walk for Healthy Living,” members of the Monterey Bay (CA) Chapter came together to log meaningful steps while fostering camaraderie and engaging in conversations about healthy habits. We shared walking routes, hydration tips and other wellness resources – all with the goal of making health a daily priority.

The event amplified the powerful message that small consistent movement leads to lasting benefits. But we didn't stop there. As we walked, we also distributed voting information and emphasized the importance of civic engagement – reminding everyone that our voices matter and truly make a difference.

Our efforts were proudly supported by one of our local mayors, his wife along with other community members who joined us in this joyful, motivating morning. It was a celebration of legacy, a commitment to ongoing health and vitality, and a powerful reminder of the strength that comes from community and connection.

# Walk For Healthy Living Annual Walk-A-Thon



## CLAREMONT AREA (CA) CHAPTER SAN BERNARDINO VALLEY (CA) CHAPTER



The Claremont Area (CA) Chapter and San Bernardino Valley (CA) Chapter coordinated their walk at Almeria Park in Fontana CA. This day brought together members, families, and community partners in a spirit of wellness, unity, and purpose. Participants joined in promoting healthier lifestyles by walking side by side, encouraging one another, and raising awareness about the importance of daily physical activity. Beyond the steps taken, the day fostered fellowship and inspired participants to commit to ongoing habits that support mind, body, and spirit. This impactful event served not only as a call to healthier living but also as a celebration of collective action toward a stronger, more vibrant community. As we walked, we introduced ourselves to other people in the community walking and gave them a QR Code to check on their voter registration. #LINKSONTHEMOVE #LINKUPTHEVOTE

## SPOKANE (WA) CHAPTER

The Spokane (WA) Chapter of The Links, Incorporated proudly participated in the 30th Annual Walk for Healthy Living, embracing the beauty of the Spokane River and the power of community. As sisters strolled along the scenic Centennial Trail, the walk became more than just a walk—it was “us” time; we honored wellness, sisterhood, and purpose. Reconnecting with nature offered a moment of reflection and renewal, while sharing space with one another deepened the bonds of friendship that fuel our collective impact.

This milestone walk underscored our commitment to healthy living and holistic well-being, values that are central to our mission. With each step, we honored the legacy of service and advocacy that defines The Links, Incorporated. Whether engaging in laughter, stories, or quiet moments of gratitude, the walk reminded us that health is not just physical—it’s emotional, spiritual, and communal. Here’s to 30 years of walking with intention, and many more to come.



# Walk For Healthy Living Annual Walk-A-Thon



## EDEN ROSE (CA) CHAPTER

The Eden Rose (CA) Chapter of The Links, Incorporated proudly celebrated the 30th Anniversary Walk for Healthy Living this weekend at Chabot Regional Park in San Leandro! Hosted by our Health & Human Services Committee, the day began with a fun warm-up led by Link Robin Dozier that set the tone for fellowship, fitness and fun.



Under the bright sunshine and fresh crisp air, we walked with purpose—our “exercise prescription” of friendship, service, and wellness. Highlights included a heart transplant recipient who inspired us all, our oldest walker at 90 years young showing that vitality knows no age, and Olympian Edith McGuire Duvall, 1964 Tokyo gold medalist, bringing her legacy of excellence to the trail. Even our “Heir to Paws” mascot added extra joy along the trail.



We also took time to Spread the Vote for California’s crucial upcoming election—because civic engagement is wellness, too. After the walk, we shared an early supper and fellowship, closing the day with laughter, unity, and purpose

## PENINSULA BAY (CA) CHAPTER & SAN JOSE (CA) CHAPTER

On September 27, the Peninsula Bay (CA) and San Jose (CA) Chapters of The Links, Incorporated joined forces for a day of service, wellness, and sisterhood, co-hosting the 30th Annual Walk for Healthy Living at Baylands Park in Sunnyvale.



The Health and Human Services Facets, with support from the Peninsula Bay National Trends and Services Facet, hosted a voter education table offering registration forms and resources for Santa Clara and San Mateo counties. The voter information flyer designed by Peninsula Bay was shared with Bay Area chapters to promote civic engagement.



More than 20 Link Sisters and guests participated in the one-mile walk, followed by a cool-down, chapter photo, and celebratory medals and goody bags. The event beautifully reflected our commitment to health, sisterhood, and civic engagement—embodying the spirit of

# Walk For Healthy Living Annual Walk-A-Thon



## EL PASO (TX) CHAPTER

On September 27, 2025, the El Paso (TX) Chapter of The Links, Incorporated celebrated the 30th anniversary of Walk for Healthy Living at Chuck Heinrich Park. Friends, families, and community members gathered for a morning of fitness and fellowship, promoting wellness and preventive health.

Participants walked the scenic trail, engaged in warm-ups, and celebrated three decades of encouraging active lifestyles. Chapter leaders emphasized the event's impact, sharing how the walk continues to strengthen community health and unity. The El Paso (TX) Chapter of The Links, Incorporated thanks all who supported this milestone and looks forward to continuing its mission of empowering healthier lives across the community.



## STOCKTON (CA) CHAPTER

The Stockton (CA) Chapter hosted the annual walkathon on September 27, 2025, with our Sacramento (CA) and Solano (CA) chapters along with community members from San Joaquin and Stanislaus Counties. The morning started with mediation, messages regarding the importance of healthy living and the importance of supporting our sisters and our community.



# Walk For Healthy Living Annual Walk-A-Thon



## GREATER DENTON COUNTY (TX) CHAPTER PLANO NORTH METROPLEX (TX) CHAPTER

Starting with empowering stretching exercises and a warm welcome, our chapters embarked on a healthy walk on the picturesque pathway through the Nature Preserve. The 51 registrants walked an estimated 189,806 steps. Focusing on building healthy bodies through exercise and healthy eating, is a critical part of protecting our community from the leading causes of mortality and morbidity in African Americans: heart disease, diabetes, strokes, and kidney disease. We fueled participants with water, fruit and healthy snacks, then armed them with enduring education on life's simple 8 ways to live a healthier life including controlling blood pressure; blood glucose; cholesterol; body weight; healthy eating; exercise; good sleep habits; and quitting tobacco. Our talk support the LINKS commitment to friendship and service to the community.



## GREATER SEATTLE (CA) CHAPTER

Thirteen (13) people representing the Greater Seattle (WA) Chapter of the Links, Incorporated participated in the 30th Annual Walk for Healthy Living. Our walk took place on Saturday September 27th at 10am at Volunteer Park in Seattle, WA. Participants ranged in age from 2.5 years and up, including 3 teenage DOLs, and even a furry friend of the chapter joined in the fun.



# Walk For Healthy Living Annual Walk-A-Thon



## TUCSON (AZ) CHAPTER

The Tucson (AZ) Chapter had an exciting time on Sept. 27th, walking with family and friends at the University of Arizona's indoor walking track. We all know this time of year in "Hot" Tucson is challenging, so we enjoyed the coolness of an indoor environment.

Over 25 participants joined us, each walking 5 to 15 laps. Every participant received an entry ticket into a drawing to win great prizes, including UA water bottles, stadium seats, small appliances, and more.

Additionally, we championed voter registration by setting up a registration table at the entrance of the walking track. To nourish our participants' health, we provided a diverse selection of healthy snacks, including fresh fruit, granola bars, sports drinks, nuts, and yogurt, as well as a drink station with Gatorade, Apple Juice, and plenty of water along the track.

Together, we celebrated health, family, and community, along with engagement, fun, and laughter!



## TRINITY (TX) CHAPTER



The 30th Annual Walk for Healthy Living was a meaningful event that brought together the Trinity (TX) Chapter, with some members walking individually and others linking up with fellow members, to promote both wellness and community. Walking is one of the simplest yet most effective forms of exercise, helping to decrease comorbidities such as heart disease, diabetes, and high blood pressure, while also reducing stress and improving mental clarity. Together, the Trinity (TX) Chapter completed an impressive 42.27 miles, leaving everyone energized and motivated to carry that healthy momentum throughout the day. This walk served as a reminder of the power of movement, fellowship, and commitment to living

# Walk For Healthy Living Annual Walk-A-Thon



## ORANGE COUNTY (CA) CHAPTER

The Orange County (CA) Links Chapter Health and Human Services Facet kicked off their return from summer break with a fun-filled Walk that began at 9:00 am. 12 Active Members, 1 Alumna Member, and 1 Guest sauntered over 93,000 Golden strides alongside the beautiful Lake at Yorba Regional Park in Anaheim.

In step with the newly adopted 2025-26 Program Year HHS Facet Theme: “Living a Golden Healthy Life,” walkers strolled & power-stepped as some listened to gospel music, joyfully conversed, and moved in sync—mind, body, and spirit.

Walk for Healthy Living Specialty Bags, Bottles, and Towel Holders served to inspire, quench thirst, and adorn the day’s attire. The walk began with healthy grab & go snacks to boost energy and concluded with nutritious salads to replenish vivacity. It was an event that reminded members that we best serve our community when we strengthen our chain of friendship and enhance our individual health—together—as Link Sisters!



## SACRAMENTO, STOCKTON AND SOLANO COUNTY (CA) CHAPTERS

The Sacramento (CA) Chapter was delighted to join the Stockton and Solano County Chapters for the 30th Walk for Healthy Living at Atherton Park in Stockton. The morning began with light warm-up exercises and meditation, setting a joyful tone for the day. Participants enjoyed fellowship and fresh air, while capturing memorable group photos. We also celebrated our Link Sisters who supported the event from afar, sharing photos of their walks in their own neighborhoods or while traveling. Special thanks to the Stockton Chapter for leading this inspiring and uplifting event.



# Walk For Healthy Living Annual Walk-A-Thon



## PASADENA-ALTADENA (CA) CHAPTER

Rain or Shine, nothing could stop us! The sky was cloudy with slight drizzling rain creating a chilly environment as Link Sisters laced up their shoes, ready to get moving! The Pasadena-Altadena (CA) Chapter had an awesome time at the chapter's "30 th Annual Walk for Healthy Living Walk-A-Thon" at Victory Park in Pasadena, California.

This initiative blended health with civic engagement, encouraging participants to "Link Up the Vote," promoting both physical well-being and community empowerment.

The event began with a warm-up, led by Link Leslie Richard-Craven, Chair of the Health and Human Services Facet. Participants then choose between several walking paths—ranging from half mile to two miles—catering to different fitness preferences.

Following the walk, Link Sisters, family and friends enjoyed a social gathering filled with snacks, laughter, and camaraderie, strengthening community bonds. The day was marked by enthusiasm, education, and community spirit, underscoring the Pasadena-Altadena Chapter's dedication to fostering a healthier, more informed community.



## WACO CENTRAL TEXAS (TX) CHAPTER



Waco Central Texas (TX) Chapter members enjoyed participating in the "Walking for a Healthy Living" event on Sept. 27 at Cameron Park in Waco. They joined the Central Texas Cluster and other chapters of The Links, Incorporated, nationwide. This year, the event celebrates its 30th anniversary.

# Walk For Healthy Living Annual Walk-A-Thon



## PORTLAND (OR) CHAPTER

On September 27, 2025, the Portland (OR) Chapter of The Links, Incorporated, celebrated a momentous occasion: the 30th Annual Walk for Healthy Living! In a vibrant display of community spirit, our members, friends, and families gathered at Peninsula Park in North Portland to walk towards a healthier future.

This year's event also highlighted our "Link Up the Vote" initiative, where we shared crucial information about the importance of off-cycle elections. It was a festive and impactful day, demonstrating our holistic commitment to health and civic engagement. We are so proud to partner with our community to decrease comorbidities, reduce stress, improve mental health, and empower our neighbors to be the change they wish to see.

## PALOS VERDES (CA) CHAPTER

The overcast weather didn't dampen the enthusiasm of the Palos Verdes Links, friends and family members who walked in Redondo Beach, Calif. in support of the 30th Anniversary Walk for A Healthy Living program. Held September 27th, we joined other participating chapters and community members in this national event to raise awareness about the benefits of walking.

## HAWAII (HI) CHAPTER DR. ME!



The Hawai'i Chapter of the Links, Incorporated is running the second iteration of Dr. Me! We collected over 65 applications and were featured on KHON2 news. Participants, parents, Kaiser Permanente partners, and the larger community are thrilled about this program!



## PALOS VERDES (CA) CHAPTER DR. ME! KICKOFF AT CRYSTAL STAIRS

The Palos Verdes (CA) Chapter of The Links, Incorporated kicked off the Dr. ME! Program at Crystal Stairs/Headstart preschool in Watts.

Using a fun and interactive approach, these young scholars learned about the human body, lungs and heart. Held September 30th, this hands-on learning event concluded with a white coat ceremony and celebration! The Links were encouraged by the positive comments from the students who wanted to become doctors to keep their white coats. Developed by the Western Area STY and STEM leadership, Dr. ME! is aligned with the Biden-Harris STEMM initiative.

A special thank you to HHS Co-Chairs Karol Bowens Thompson, M.D. and Fasha Liley, M.D. for leading this successful event.



## PASADENA-ALTADENA (CA) CHAPTER COOKING UP CARE FOR UNION STATION FAMILIES

Pasadena-Altadena (CA) Chapter President Cheryl Myers established a Community Service Committee to broaden and deepen our outreach in the greater Pasadena-Altadena area, in keeping with our National Mission –“*Friends Transforming Communities Through Service*”– and answering the charge from International President Ethel Isaacs Williams (who reminds us: “As Links, we must raise our service to a more impactful level so that we can have a powerful effect on the communities we serve!”).

The committee has developed a calendar of community service opportunities, giving members more ways to serve directly in the community. Our first community service activity was at Union Station Homeless Services (Family) in Pasadena, CA, which houses families on an interim basis. We prepared and served a healthy, well-balanced meal. During the dinner, we talked about and invited the families to our annual Walk for Healthy Living and were delighted to have both active and alumni members join us in serving. The meal was prepared in the on-site kitchen, allowing residents to enjoy familiar home-cooked food aromas. All the families appreciated our service, but we found joy in being of service. Alongside our girl empowerment program, Links Up for Success: She Leads in STEAM, our community service calendar aims to expand our chapter’s outreach and respond to the evolving needs of our community.

As the saying reminds us: “Service is the rent we pay for being. It is the very purpose of life, and not something you do in your spare time.” This was a powerful beginning for our new committee as we remain Linked in Friendship, Connected in Service.



## PASADENA-ALTADENA (CA) CHAPTER

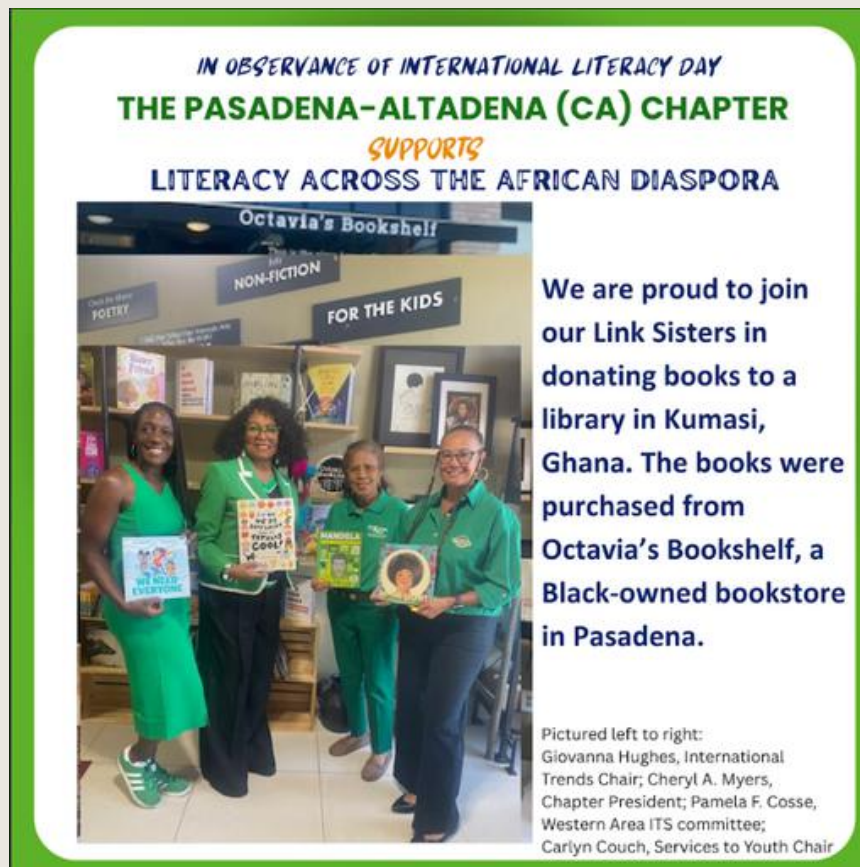
### SUPPORTING LITERACY ACROSS THE AFRICAN DIASPORA

The Pasadena-Altadena (CA) Chapter’s International Trends and Services (ITS) and Services to Youth (STY) Facets proudly participated in the Western Area’s Books and Literacy Enhancement Initiative: Literacy Across the African Diaspora.

We began by recognizing International Literacy Day on September 8, purchasing books to help stock a student library for Bridge to Africa Connection in Kumasi, Ghana. To demonstrate our commitment, the chapter shared a photo on social media featuring Chapter President Cheryl A. Myers, ITS Chair Giovanna Hughes, STY Chair Carlyn Couch, and WA ITS Committee Member Pamela Cossé purchasing K–12 level books at the Black-owned bookstore Octavia’s Bookshelf.

In addition, the chapter hosted a book drive and exceeded our goal by collecting a total of 43 books from members. Each book was personalized with a handwritten note of encouragement for a child.

The Pasadena-Altadena Links are proud to join the Western Area in advancing global literacy, empowerment, and educational equity through this initiative. We are excited to see the ripple effect of these contributions—books that will enrich young minds and provide a gateway to knowledge, hope, and opportunity.



## PALOS VERDES (CA) CHAPTER

### PROVIDING RESOURCES FOR WAMPA HOPE INITIATIVE IN UGANDA



When our new International Trends and Services Facet Chair Valerie Robinson took on her new role, she introduced our Chapter to the Wampa Hope Initiative (also referred to as Wampa Hope) in Uganda. Based on her presentation, Chapter members knew we could make a positive difference in the lives of the students that attend the Wampa Hope school.

In the months that followed, Chapter members supplemented the ITS budget with donations to purchase laptops with computer accessories, printer and internet service for a year. This equipment and internet service gives them access to a network of world-class educational resources for the teachers and students. It also provides a framework for an interactive and engaging educational experience.

Plans are underway to use the internet to connect the Wampa Hope students to their counterparts at Catch High School in Los Angeles, one of our local community partners. Steps are also being taken to involve Wampa students in a robotics event organized by STEM NOLA, a national leader in the design and delivery of STEM-based activities and programs in early December 2025.



## LAS VEGAS (NV) CHAPTER DOCUMENTARY HIGHLIGHTS HISTORY OF AFRICAN AMERICANS IN LAS VEGAS



The Las Vegas (NV) Chapter proudly attended the premiere of the documentary UNSUNG, directed by Zachary Fried. This powerful film highlights the history of African Americans and their significant contributions to the cultural and social fabric of Las Vegas.

The Arts Facet supported the documentary, recognizing its importance in preserving and sharing the stories of resilience, creativity, and impact within the African American community.

During the premiere, Legendary Las Vegas (NV) Chapter members and Alumna were honored and acknowledged for their invaluable contributions to the making of this documentary. Their dedication and involvement helped ensure that these vital stories were brought to light and celebrated.

The event served as both a celebration of history and a reminder of the ongoing importance of documenting and uplifting the voices that have shaped the legacy of Las Vegas.



## BEVERLY HILLS WEST (CA) CHAPTER IGNITING DR. ME! JOURNEY WITH STEMM

**By Roberta Butler  
Dr. Me! Chair**

The Beverly Hills West (CA) Chapter of The Links, Incorporated launched our Dr. Me! Umbrella Program led by Chair Roberta Butler and Co-Chair Tina Choyce for the Services to Youth Facet at Frank D. Parent School in Inglewood, gathering nearly 75 students in the Future Doctors Program in addition to parents, educators, school board members, and members from our chapters and others from around the city. We opened with a dynamic STEMM introduction by Antoinette Massey from the Western Area STEM Initiative, followed by our Health & Human Services Facet leading a hands-on Circulatory System workshop and CPR demonstration. The White Coat ceremony was a meaningful moment, celebrating the journey ahead to learn about themselves and opportunities in STEMM. We are inspiring the next generation to imagine, innovate, and lead!



## TURNING THE PAGE ON INTERNATIONAL LITERACY DAY

**By Tamala Choma, ITS Chair**

The Beverly Hills West (CA) Chapter proudly joined the Western Area in celebrating International Literacy Day through the Literacy Across the African Diaspora Initiative. Now in its third year, this effort unites chapters to advance global literacy, empowerment, and educational equity. Throughout the month, led by Chair Tamala Choma and Co-Chair Cheryl Bowman-Scott we collected more than 25 children's books to donate to local programs that inspire a love of reading. Alongside our sister chapters, we embraced the opportunity to turn the page toward brighter possibilities for all children.



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# THE ANXIOUS GENERATION:

## A CALL TO ACTION FOR WESTERN AREA LINK CHAPTERS

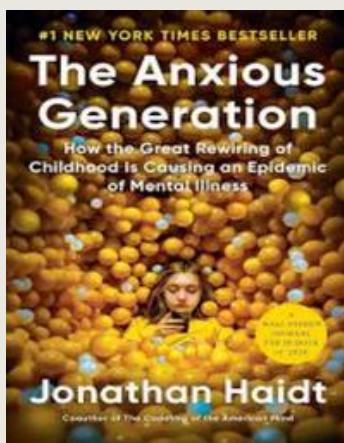
The Western Area Mental Health Committee is excited to share, Dr. Jonathan Haidt’s groundbreaking book, *The Anxious Generation* (2024), which shines a powerful light on the youth mental health crisis that has accelerated over the past decade. Drawing on data from psychology, sociology, and public health, Haidt argues that the rise in anxiety, depression, and loneliness among adolescents—particularly girls—has been fueled by the dramatic shift from a **play-based childhood** to a **phone-based childhood**.

- Smartphone and social media use skyrocketed after 2010, coinciding with dramatic increases in teen reports of sadness, self-harm, and suicide attempts.
- Adolescents today spend an average of 8–9 hours a day on screens, replacing face-to-face interaction, physical activity, and deep sleep.
- The decline in unsupervised, real-world play and social connection has reduced resilience and coping skills.
- Girls in particular have been harmed by social comparison, online bullying, and the pressures of “performative” social media use.

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BY JENNIFER R. KELLEY  
WA Mental Health Chair  
San Antonio (TX) Chapter

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While Haidt paints a sobering picture, he also offers **hopeful, practical solutions**.

Families, schools, and communities can help reverse this trend by:

- Delaying smartphone use until at least high school.
- Limiting social media access and encouraging healthier digital habits.
- Restoring play and in-person social interaction as essential to childhood development.
- Partnering across generations to rebuild supportive environments where young people can thrive.

### Why This Matters for Western Area Link Chapters

As women committed to service and transformational programming, Western Area Links are

uniquely positioned to respond to this urgent call. Incorporating Haidt’s insights into chapter programming will allow us to:

- Host Chapter and Community book clubs, workshops, and webinars to spark dialogue with teens, parents, and community partners.
- Develop digital detox challenges and resilience-building activities during Mental Health Awareness Month and beyond.
- Collaborate with schools, faith communities, and HBCUs to model healthier tech practices and expand mental health education.

By engaging *The Anxious Generation* as a resource, Western Area Links can empower our youth to reclaim balance, build resilience, and face the future with confidence. Together, we can help combat the teen mental health crisis—one program, one conversation, and one chapter at a time.

#### Summary



#### Mental Health America



#### Screening The Coddling Movie



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## GREATER DENTON COUNTY (TX) CHAPTER

# HBCU PRIDE



Greater Denton County (TX) Chapter of Links Incorporated HBCU Alumni representing with pride!  
#GDCCLinks, #WALinks, #LinksInc. @WA Links @Western Area of The Links, Incorporated

# BREAST CANCER AWARENESS



In honor of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Greater Denton County (TX) Chapter of Links, Incorporated wore pink to our October chapter meeting.



## **LET'S KEEP ELEVATING AND INVESTING IN OUR HBCUS!**

### **WESTERN AREA HBCU ENDOWMENT CAMPAIGN**

**In the month of October, we dedicated our efforts to spotlighting our Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)—now it's time to shift our focus toward raising funds for their endowments!**

#### **The Ask:**

- **Large Chapters:** minimum donation of \$1,000
- **Small Chapters:** minimum donation of \$500
- **Feel free to give more!!!**

Make your chapter check payable to:

The Links, Incorporated Foundation; Memo Line: WA HBCU

Mail to:

Western Area Financial Secretary

Link Marcia Darden

PO Box 5408

Chatsworth, CA 91313

### **DONATE NOW – MAKE A DIFFERENCE**



*Linked in Friendship, Connected in Service  
Western Area*



**Deadline for giving: December 15. 2025 GOAL: 100% CHAPTER PARTICIPATION!!!**

# WESTERN AREA SCHOOLS



# MEMBERSHIP



- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>LaMonica Lewis</b><br/><i>Austin (TX) Chapter</i></p> <p><b>Madeline Thoman</b><br/><i>Dallas (TX) Chapter</i></p> <p><b>Juna Jones Moore</b><br/><i>Plano North Metroplex (TX) Chapter</i></p> <p><b>Geraldine Boyles</b><br/><i>San Fernando Valley (CA) Chapter</i></p> <p><b>Kizzie LeJay</b><br/><i>Town Lake (TX) Chapter</i></p> | <p><b>Christy Calvin</b><br/><i>Los Angeles (CA) Chapter</i></p> <p><b>Debra Mars</b><br/><i>Angel City (CA) Chapter</i></p> <p><b>Lesli White</b><br/><i>Pasadena-Altadena (CA) Chapter</i></p> <p><b>Tristan Topps</b><br/><i>Phoenix (AZ) Chapter</i></p> <p><b>Dawana Taylor</b><br/><i>Fort Bend County (TX) Chapter</i></p> |
|---|---|

The “So Glad She’s My Sister” recognition is now a Cluster participation and collaboration award for those cluster members who effectively organize, participate, engage, and collaborate within their cluster as is encouraged and demonstrated by the Western Area Cluster Friendship and Core Value collaborations and friendship activities. Each Cluster selected the following members of their cluster to be recognized.

*‘So Glad  
She’s My  
Sister’*

- CENTRAL TEXAS CLUSTER**
- Debra Evans**  
*Waco (TX) Chapter*
  - Michelle Hayes**  
*San Antonio (TX) Chapter*
- NORTHERN CALIFORNIA CLUSTER**
- Rhonda Andrews**  
*Eden Rose (CA) Chapter*
  - Rozenia Cummings**  
*Alameda Contra Costa (CA) Chapter*
  - Jakaria Stewart**  
*Peninsula Bay (CA) Chapter*
  - Carolyn Veal-Hunter**  
*Sacramento (CA) Chapter*

## BEVERLY HILLS WEST (CA) CHAPTER

## A RUBY RED AFFAIR

CELEBRATING 40 YEARS: HONORING OUR HISTORY, ADVANCING OUR FUTURE

By Jasmine C. Houston  
Press Secretary

On Saturday, May 31, 2025, the Beverly Hills West (CA) Chapter of The Links, Incorporated celebrated four decades of service, friendship, and sisterhood at the Cameo Beverly Hills Hotel. “A Ruby Red Affair,” our 40th Anniversary celebration, honored a legacy rooted in strength, passion, and purpose — symbolized by the ruby itself. Guided by the visionary leadership of Chapter President Zna Portlock Houston, and chaired by Jeanine Black (daughter of chapter organizer Joyce T. Black) and Linda Valdry (daughter of the second president, Doris Valdry), the evening embraced the theme “Honoring Our History and Advancing Our Future.” The celebration glowed with elegance as members arrived in radiant ruby and guests in timeless black tie. From the sparkling reception to the final note of entertainment, each moment reflected our past and inspired the path ahead.

The program featured heartfelt tributes, music, and memories that uplifted our collective spirit. A moving highlight was the acknowledgment of past leadership, and members whose commitment built the foundation we continue to strengthen today, and remarks from all of the past presidents in attendance, chartering member and past president La-Doris McClaney, and Western Area Director and past president Karen Cole. While the evening dazzled with glamour, its impact reached beyond the ballroom. Proceeds from “A Ruby Red Affair” will support scholarships and community programming, ensuring our legacy of service continues to empower future generations. More than an event, this was a declaration of purpose and unity. The Beverly Hills West (CA) Chapter etched its legacy in ruby red brilliance and ignited the flame for the next 40 years. Truly, an unforgettable night of history, hope, and sisterhood.



Legend Past Presidents: Adell Walker, La-Doris McClaney, Ruth Creary, WAD Karen Cole, President Zna Portlock Houston, Monet Daniels, Sherril Rieux, Natasha Joplin Lightfoote



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## AUSTIN (TX) CHAPTER DISTINGUISHED LEADERS



The Austin Chapter of The Links, Incorporated proudly celebrated the accomplishments of four of its members who were honored for their leadership and service during the 47th Western Area Conference of The Links, Incorporated.

**Brenda Kennedy** was elected Western Area Vice Director, one of the highest leadership roles within the organization. As Vice Director, she will serve on the Western Area Executive Team and preside over all business sessions during the Area Conference. Her election reflects a long-standing commitment to excellence, service, and the mission of friendship that defines The Links. Adding to the chapter's presence at the conference, **Angela Henderson** was selected to co-chair the White Rose Banquet, a signature event established by 7th National President Julian Pernell. The all-white affair is a beloved tradition that honors sisterhood and marks the induction of newly elected officers.

The chapter also celebrated **Cheryl Graham**, who was awarded the inaugural Emerald Platinum/Alumna Liaison Award for her dedicated service to the chapter's Adorable Alumni and Precious Platinum members. Through her bi-monthly newsletters, birthday celebrations, and the "Pal" connection program, Cheryl has deepened intergenerational bonds within the chapter. Her efforts during Links Friendship Month, which included personalized gifts and special recognition for Platinum/Alumna members, were especially impactful. Contributing to the chapter's visibility and engagement at the area level, Alumna **Yvonne Van Dyke** served on the Western Area Conference Committee, playing a key role in planning a dynamic workshop tailored specifically for Platinum and Alumna members.

These recognitions underscore the Austin Chapter's ongoing legacy of leadership, service, and sisterhood within the Western Area and beyond. Together, these remarkable women exemplify the values and vision that have guided The Links, Incorporated for nearly eight decades.

# Linkspirations



The Sisterhood of the West : Where the Sun Comes to its Spectacular Rest

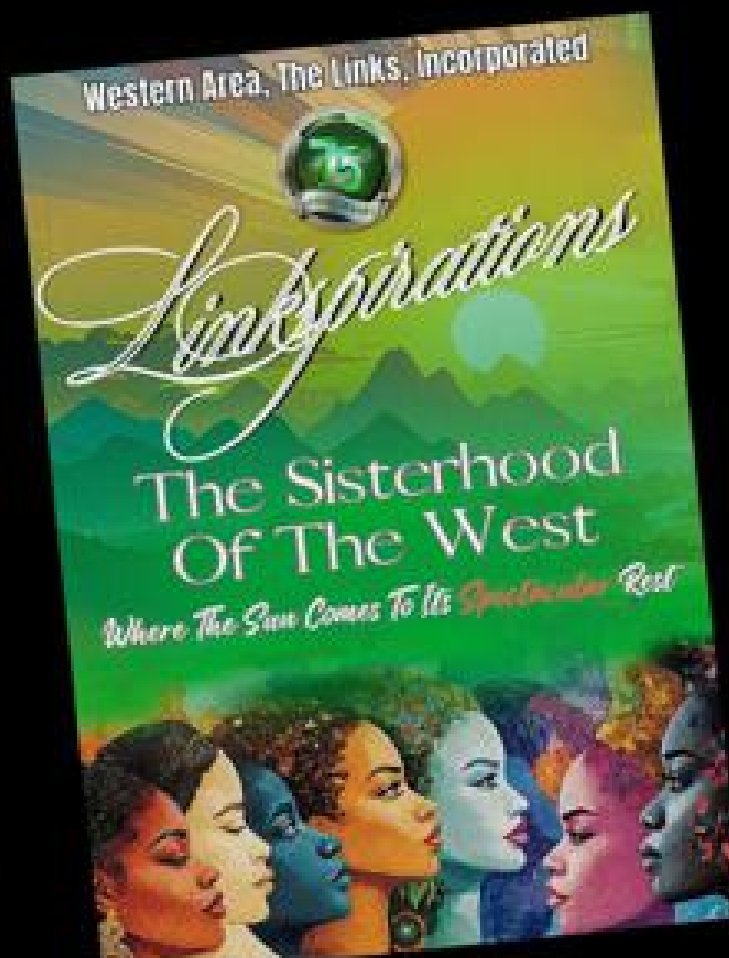
## A Beautiful Sisterhood Month Gift

WALINKS.ORG

ONLY 37  
COPIES LEFT!

\$40

WESTERN AREA  
BOUTIQUE



Get your copy: [WALinks.org](http://WALinks.org)

### Description

The term, Linkspiration and its definition, is the brainchild of our 13th National President, Link Gladys Gary Vaughn. Link Gladys changed the word, "inspiration" to "Linkspiration", and described the concept as a brief inspirational message - oral or written-particular to The Links, Incorporated, and used when and where an invocation or similar time of reflection is warranted.

We have 37 books in stock. They are \$40 each. We also encourage members to browse some of the other items available in the Western Area store.

Order your copy now at the WA Links Boutique.  
[Walinks.org](http://Walinks.org). Log into the Members only section.

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# Links In The News

*Lisa Brown Ross*

## STEWARDED A LEGACY:

### LISA BROWN ROSS TO LEAD THE AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSEUM, DALLAS



The Mid-Cities (TX) Chapter of The Links, Incorporated proudly congratulates member Lisa Brown Ross on her appointment as President & CEO of the African American Museum, Dallas. She officially assumed the role on July 21, 2025, succeeding the museum’s visionary founder, Dr. Harry Robinson, Jr., who now serves as president & CEO emeritus after more than five decades of leadership.

“I am grateful for the honor to serve as the next president and CEO of the African American Museum, Dallas – an institution that has long stood as a beacon of culture, education, and history in our city and beyond,” said Ross. “Dr. Robinson built something extraordinary, and I am committed to building upon that legacy by expanding access, deepening community engagement, and spotlighting the richness of the African American experience through art, storytelling, and scholarship. This is more than a professional calling – it’s a personal mission.”

Founded in 1974, the museum is the only institution of its kind in the Southwestern United States and houses one of the nation’s most extensive collections of African American art, artifacts, and archives.

Ross brings a record of purpose-driven impact to this role, including securing \$15 million in federal funding as director of marketing and development at Anthem Strong Families, and leading communications on education initiatives at USAID that expanded learning opportunities for more than 15 million children.

Her leadership reflects the mission of advancing equity, education, and cultural preservation.

*Lenise N. Yarber*

### LENISE YARBER, VICE PRESIDENT OF NATIONAL DENTAL ASSOCIATION

We are proud to announce that Lenise N. Yarber, DDS, FACD, FICD, a dedicated member of the Inglewood Pacific (CA) Chapter will be installed as Vice President of the National Dental Association (NDA) on November 8, 2025 in Sacramento California. For over a century, the NDA has served as a vital platform for minority dentists, championing their advancement in the dental profession, military, government, and private sector. The organization is committed to improving oral health care in underserved communities and expanding educational opportunities for minorities underrepresented in the dental field. Dr. Yarber’s commitment to community and oral health will serve the organization well during her 2026 term. Currently, she serves as Inglewood Pacific (CA) Chapter's Health and Human Services (HHS) Facet Co-Chair.



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# Links In The News

*Ret. Judge Vanessa Gilmore*

## REFLECTIONS ON THE CONSTITUTION AND NEW CHAPTER IN SERVICE

On September 17, Constitution Day, retired federal judge and Missouri City (TX) of the Links, Incorporated Chapter member, Vanessa Gilmore, joined fellow jurists in Savannah, Georgia, to witness a rare 1787 draft of the U.S. Constitution. The document, featuring handwritten notes by signer Abraham Baldwin, is displayed publicly only once every three years.



Judge Gilmore described the experience as both moving and affirming. “I think that it is an opportunity for civic engagement that might make people leave here and go and seek to have a greater understanding of the role of the Constitution in our lives and the fact that it is a living document that still informs the rule of law today,” she shared.

Reflecting on her own career, she added, “It makes me proud of the work that I did as a federal judge, and it makes me proud of the work that my colleagues who still are on the federal bench do every day to support the rule of law through the Constitution and other laws of the United States.” In addition to her continued civic engagement, on several non profit boards, she recently joined Roberts Markland, LLP as counsel, a leading Houston law firm recognized for legal excellence and community service. Her expertise and dedication to justice will continue to shape both her profession and her community.

Judge Gilmore remains a shining example of leadership, service, and the enduring power of the Constitution in our daily lives.

*Briana Johnson*



Briana Johnson has been honored with the Urban Chamber of Commerce 2025 Women in Politics Award. This recognition highlights her leadership, dedication, and impact in shaping our community.

# Links In The News

Teal Holden

## TEAL HOLDEN APPOINTED TO XAVIER UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Fort Bend County (TX) Chapter of The Links, Incorporated, proudly celebrates member Teal Holden on her recent appointment to the Xavier University of Louisiana Board of Trustees.

Holden's service to her beloved alma mater runs deep. She previously served with distinction as the Houston Alumni Chapter President and now holds dual leadership roles as National Alumni Board President and Trustee. Her appointment is a remarkable honor that reflects her enduring commitment to education, leadership, and the Xavier community.

Within the chapter, Holden currently serves on the Budget and Finance Committee and as Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee, where her vision and expertise continue to strengthen our chapter's impact in Fort Bend County and the Western Area.

Her appointment also aligns directly with The Links, Incorporated's HBCU initiative – "Links Love HBCUs" – which underscores our national commitment to supporting and uplifting Historically Black Colleges and Universities. By serving Xavier University at the highest levels, Holden is advancing this mission while demonstrating the power of purposeful service and leadership.

We are deeply proud of Teal Holden's accomplishments and know her contributions to Xavier University will continue to inspire generations of leaders. We congratulate her on this milestone appointment and look forward to her continued legacy of service with purpose, passion, and pride.



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# Links In The News

## Krishna A. Walker

Krishna A. Walker of the Portland (OR) Chapter is a proud graduate of the One Million Black Women: Black in Business program, having been one of the 300 people selected from thousands of applicants for Cohort 7. Black in Business is an education program sponsored by Goldman Sachs and the NYU Stern School of Business for business owners to learn skills and build relationships that will propel their businesses to the next level. Krishna, who has owned her corporate law firm since 2016 and has intentionally limited her practice to a select number of new clients each year, graduated in June.



## Lakecia N. Gunter

The Portland (OR) Chapter of The Links, Incorporated proudly celebrates our esteemed member, Lakecia N. Gunter, for her recent recognitions that exemplify her leadership, impact, and commitment to uplifting others. Lakecia was named to the Board Prospects 100 Black Board Members Making a Difference, recognizing her influence in the boardroom and her advocacy for inclusive governance. She was also honored by Technologists of Color as a Woman Making History in Tech during Women's History Month, highlighting her contributions to AI, innovation, and mentorship. In addition, HR.com recognized Lakecia as

one of the Top 11 Trailblazing Women Tech Executives to Follow in 2025, spotlighting her forward-thinking leadership in the tech industry. One of her most inspiring moments this year was representing Black Women on Boards at the New York Stock Exchange, advocating for equity and representation at the highest levels of corporate leadership. These accolades are a testament to Lakecia's unwavering dedication to opening doors, creating opportunities, and lifting as she climbs. We are proud to celebrate her continued legacy of excellence and service.



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# Literary Links

## Shaun Hall

Shaun Hall, known by her pen name L’Ve Hall (pronounced L-V), is an award-winning author from the Las Vegas (NV) Chapter who specializes in Urban Fiction Romance novels.

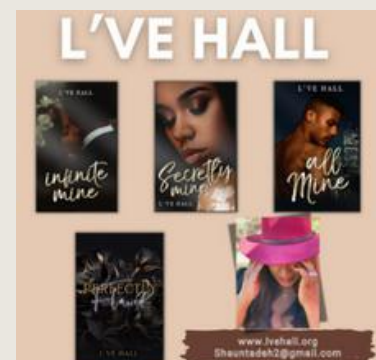
Her debut novel, *Infinite Mine*, marked the beginning of her literary journey and quickly surpassed her expectations, receiving an outpouring of positive feedback from readers. This response solidified her passion for storytelling and encouraged her to continue writing. Since then, she has released several acclaimed works, including *Secretly Mine*, *All Mine*, and *Perfectly Flawed*.

When she is not crafting heartfelt romance stories, L’Ve Hall enjoys spending quality time with her loved ones and exploring diverse works of literature from authors around the world.

Currently residing in Henderson, Nevada with her husband, she has expanded her creative pursuits by co-founding Ink Love, a hybrid publishing company.

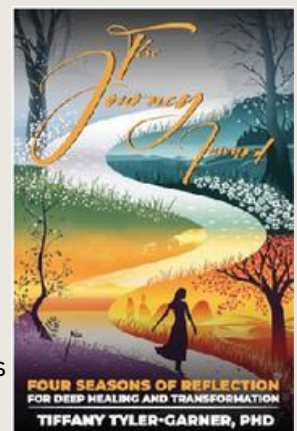
Ink Love is dedicated to promoting, producing, and distributing impactful literature while fostering a strong community of literacy advocates in Las Vegas and beyond.

Through her writing and publishing endeavors, L’Ve Hall continues to inspire readers and contribute to the growth of literary culture.



## Tiffany Tyler-Garner

Dr. Tiffany Tyler-Garner is an educational psychologist, published researcher, and servant leader dedicating her life to transformative engagement, community empowerment and the eradication of poverty. Recognized as “Humanitarian of the Year,” “Alumna of the Year,” and a “Workforce Development Champion” during her professional journey, she is routinely sought as a thought leader, change agent, and innovator. In her book, **“The Journey Forward: Four Seasons of Reflection for Deep Healing and Transformation,”** she is empowering individuals to be the change needed in their lives so they may become the change needed in their communities.



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# Parliamentary Pointers

## IMPORTANT AMENDMENT DEADLINES

### NATIONAL

**12/15/2025**

For proposed amendments to the National Constitution

**02/08/2026**

For proposed amendments to the National Bylaws

**03/15/2026**

For proposed amendments to the bylaws of The Links Foundation, Incorporated

Submit your proposed amendments to the national governing documents to our National Parliamentarian, Link Tyna D. Davis, PRP, at [epp1aea@aol.com](mailto:epp1aea@aol.com).

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BY PATRICIA J. TITUS, RP

WA Parliamentarian  
Harbor Area (CA) Chapter

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### WESTERN AREA

**02/01/2026**

For proposed amendments to Western Area Chapter bylaws

Members of the Western Area Bylaws Committee have been charged with the responsibility of conducting an in-depth general review of the Western Area chapter bylaws. The assigned committee member will review your existing chapter bylaws on file with the Western Area and provide a report to the chapter parliamentarian by November 30, 2025, unless you notify them that your chapter bylaws are pending amendment. If your chapter bylaws are pending amendment, you must complete your amendment process and submit the new set of bylaws to your assigned committee member by February 1, 2026. Please review your chapter bylaw amendment process and time yourselves so that you comply with the requirements of your bylaws and meet our stated deadline. If you have any questions regarding the in-depth general review of your chapter bylaws, please do not hesitate to contact me at [linkpattitus@gmail.com](mailto:linkpattitus@gmail.com).



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# Talking Points

## NAVIGATING AI IN CHAPTER MESSAGING

As artificial intelligence (AI) tools become more accessible, many chapters are exploring their use to streamline communications, enhance engagement, and keep consistent messaging across platforms. While AI offers exciting possibilities, it is important to approach its use thoughtfully and ethically. Here are some key tips and concerns to consider when integrating AI into chapter communications:

### Tips for Using AI Effectively

**Use AI to Draft, Not to Publish:** AI tools like ChatGPT or Grammarly can help generate drafts for social media posts, newsletters, or website updates. However, always review and edit content before publishing to ensure accuracy, tone, and alignment with chapter values.

**Maintain Human Oversight:** AI can help with grammar, formatting, and even idea generation, but final decisions should be made by a person. This ensures cultural sensitivity, relevance, and appropriateness.

**Leverage AI for Routine Tasks:** Automate repetitive tasks like scheduling posts, summarizing meeting notes, or generating event reminders. This frees up time for more strategic communication efforts.

**Train Your Team:** Provide basic training on AI tools to ensure consistent use and understanding. Encourage responsible experimentation while setting clear boundaries.

**Use AI to Enhance Accessibility:** Tools like speech-to-text, translation services, and alt-text generators can make chapter content more inclusive and accessible to diverse audiences. **Concerns to Keep in Mind** Bias and Representation: AI tools may reflect biases present in their training data. Be cautious when using AI-generated images or text that represent people, cultures, or sensitive topics.

**Privacy and Data Security:** Avoid inputting confidential or personal information into AI platforms. Always check the privacy policies of the tools you use.

**Authenticity:** Over-reliance on AI can lead to generic or impersonal messaging. Ensure your chapter's unique voice and mission remain front and center.

**Copyright and Plagiarism:** AI-generated content may inadvertently replicate copyrighted material. Always verify originality and cite sources when appropriate.

**Misinformation:** AI tools can sometimes produce inaccurate or misleading information. Fact-check all content before sharing it publicly.

### Final Thought

AI is a helpful tool—but not a replacement for thoughtful, human-centered communication. Use it to support your work, not to replace your voice.

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BY MIA MOODY-RAMIREZ  
WA Social Media Chair  
Waco Central Texas (TX) Chapter

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### RECOMMENDED AI TOOLS FOR CHAPTER COMMUNICATIONS

**ChatGPT:** Drafting posts, brainstorming ideas; great for initial drafts; always edit

**Grammarly:** Grammar and tone checking; helps maintain professionalism

**Canva Magic Write:** Creating captions and visual content; combines AI writing with design tools

**Otter.ai:** Transcribing meetings and interviews Useful for creating summaries

**Hootsuite:** Scheduling and managing social media; includes AI-powered suggestions

**Lumen5:** Turning blog posts into videos; good for multimedia storytelling

**Microsoft Designer:** AI-assisted graphic design; easy-to-use templates for chapter branding

**Google Translate:** Translating content for multilingual audiences; use with caution; verify translations

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# Western Area, The Links, Incorporated

## FRIENDSHIP MONTH WORD SEARCH

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Join us in completing this word search that celebrates friendship! Dive into this engaging puzzle designed to foster connection and bring laughter among friends.

**Words to Find:**

FRIEND  
LOYAL  
TRUST  
SUPPORT  
LAUGHTER  
KINDNESS  
SHARE  
MEMORIES  
CARE  
HONEST  
TOGETHER  
JOY

N L O Y A L V S M Z G S O Y E  
O X Y M R U B E U C H R A V R  
G P L R B N M I E P A L L Y A  
A K G D E O S Q J J P W D Q H  
Y P P O R T Z U E B M O O H S  
T G V I M D H O G E S J R T P  
K S E B M R N G H K A H T T Q  
P S U E F E H E U R X L B T J  
J A R R G H O M I A K C O O O  
F Z V Y T T N Z N R L U A F Y  
R Q V W N E E B U I F D A R Q  
B V S K P G S W G W J N T G E  
I Y H C T O T J P G W P R D N  
A R S Y S T C P A N K Y U F Q  
Q K I N D N E S S Q O O Q H H

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HAPPY FRIENDSHIP MONTH!

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VISIT OUR WEBSITE: [WALINKS.ORG](http://WALINKS.ORG)

**Western Area, The Links, Incorporated**



# Links Boutique

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**NATURADE**<sup>®</sup>  
EST. 1926

Kareem Cook (Husband of Rahel Cook, Beverly Hills West (CA) Chapter) and Claude Tellis are the owners of Naturade, a nutritional supplements company focused on nutritional shakes, Weight loss shakes and gut health products. Magic Johnson and Grant Hill are investors in Naturade. Naturade's mission is to bring high quality nutrition to underserved communities. Naturade was a sponsor of The Links' Western Area Conference in Las Vegas this past summer and the Black K.A.R.E. (Kidney Awareness Resources and Education) event in Los Angeles earlier this year. If you attended either event, you were treated to delicious nutritional weight loss shakes being served every day. Cook has mentioned that he has been incredibly grateful to Western Area Director Dr. Karen Cole for welcoming their partnership.

Naturade is one of only two black-owned companies in Costco and as black owned businesses are losing distribution at an alarming rate today, they need our support to continue doing in business in Costco.

Prior to owning Naturade, Cook and Tellis co-founded Healthy Body Products (HBP), a healthy beverage and snack distribution company based in LA. HBP was the first company to place vending machines exclusively serving healthy snacks and beverages in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). HBP was instrumental in the banning of junk food in LAUSD and later in banning the sale of junk food in the state of California. Within two years of the company's founding, HBP was awarded the exclusive contract to supply all LA public schools, totaling over 130 schools.

Go to [Costco.com](https://www.costco.com) to purchase a bag of Naturade Weight Loss Shake.

Here is the link to the product in Costco, which was also featured at the Western Area Conference. <https://www.costco.com/naturade-plant-based-weight-loss-high-protein-shake%2C-vanilla-creme%2C-2.5-lbs.product.100676614.html>





**LINKED TO**  
*Connect, Create, Collaborate*

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## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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