



## President's Report: Peconic Bay Zonta Year Summary June 2017 – May 2018

### Service

Our club gave several scholarships to local students this year. We continued our service project of offering a \$300 scholarship to a female student who has completed an English as a Second Language (ESL) course at Suffolk County Community College. The intent of the scholarship is to further the applicant's education.

This past year we gave out two ESL scholarships. Ana Aucapina Tigre, a recipient who came to the U.S. nine years ago, works as a line cook at a local restaurant. She hopes to advance in her career, perhaps some day be a sous chef or executive chef. Recipient Maria Guadron was a nurse in her native country, El Salvador, and she hopes to continue her studies in order to be able to resume her nursing career in the U.S.

This year, we also funded a student taking violin lessons at East End Arts in Riverhead. According to her teacher, Margarita Basurto is making excellent progress in her lessons. Peconic Bay Zonta continued to support her lessons through the spring, fall and summer semesters.

Our club was thrilled that Isabella Sorgi, a senior at Mercy High School in Riverhead, won the District 3 Public Affairs Award. Our club members met this accomplished young woman at a dinner sponsored at the home of one of our members. Our club gave her a \$300 scholarship for her outstanding academic performance and volunteer work.

A dual citizen of Finland and the U.S., Isabella last summer obtained two internships in Finland. In one, she worked for a social services organization helping Somali refugee women and their children who were granted asylum in Finland. In her second internship, Isabella worked with a Finnish political party and came to better understand the complexity of immigration policy. She plans to enroll in New York University's Stern School of Business in the fall.

Our members prepared a Thanksgiving meal for approximately 30 homeless adults on eastern Long Island. In cooperation with Maureen's Haven, club members made a turkey dinner with all the trimmings and delivered it to the Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church in Cutchogue to be served to those in need by volunteers.

Shortly before Christmas, club members bought and wrapped 50 journals and pens to donate to girls in the Butterfly Effect Project in Riverhead. The nonprofit community group works to empower young girls by giving them tools to help them achieve academic success and an emotionally stable and self-confident future.

One of our members, Liala Strotman, accompanied part-time by several other club members, worked two-day shifts shortly before Christmas selling crafts made by Guatemalan women. Sponsored by a fair trade organization called Mayan Hands, the women artisans continue the ancient tradition of weaving on a backstrap loom. The funds they earn are used to support the women's families, educate their daughters and purchase school supplies.

### Membership/Mentoring

We added two new members to our club this year, Christine Killorin and Diane Loffredo. Christine has a background in accounting and helped to streamline and organize the club's financial records. Unfortunately, she left the club after a year's membership.

### Advocacy

Our club's webmaster, Mona Rowe, wrote a four-part series for our website for Women's History Month. To view her posts, go to: [peconicbayzonta.blogspot.com](http://peconicbayzonta.blogspot.com). Check out her posts between Feb. 28 – April 11, 2018.

### Fundraising

We had two major fundraising events this year. In November 2017, club member Annika Shapiro had a soup-tasting fundraiser in her home. Sixteen women observed Annika put finishing touches on her soups as she gave soup-cooking tips. She then handed out recipes for five homemade soups, which everyone tasted along with homemade bread. All participants were also given a beautiful ceramic bowl made at Greenport Pottery and donated by Diane Giardi of East End Arts as part of hunger-fighting program called "Empty Bowls." We raised \$1,070 at the very successful event, and we gave \$500 of the proceeds to Island Harvest, a food bank on Long Island.

We also held a yard sale hosted by Mary Ann Miller, club treasurer. The members found hidden treasures in their basements and closets that they donated to the sale, and asked friends for donations. We made a profit of \$835 selling many diverse items, including a Nordic track and hand-made jewelry. Friends of Zonta baked breads for the sale and helped to distribute leftover goods to local charities. The proceeds helped to fund ESL scholarships.