

WELCOME

By providing hope and positive vision, Optimist bring out the best in youth, our communities and ourselves.

2022



Optimist
INTERNATIONAL

WELCOME

to Optimist International



Iwelcome you to Optimist International, the greatest service organization in the world. We believe we have something to offer that no other service organization has - OPTIMISM!

In 2018, Oscar Winner Filmmaker Guillermo Del Toro stated in Times magazine, *“Optimism Is radical. It is the hard choice, the brave choice, and it is most needed now. In the face of despair - Optimism is our Instinct to inhale while suffocating. Our need to declare what needs to be in the face of what is.”*

I look back to a team of people from 1919 who had a vision – they not only wanted to be optimistic in their view of the world and how they accomplished things – they wanted to name themselves after that very word. Thousands of members have made that brave choice to choose Optimism as a Way of life, to be involved in our communities by providing hope, happiness, positive vision, and Optimism.

We thank You for your commitment to Being an Optimist!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patsy Garner'.

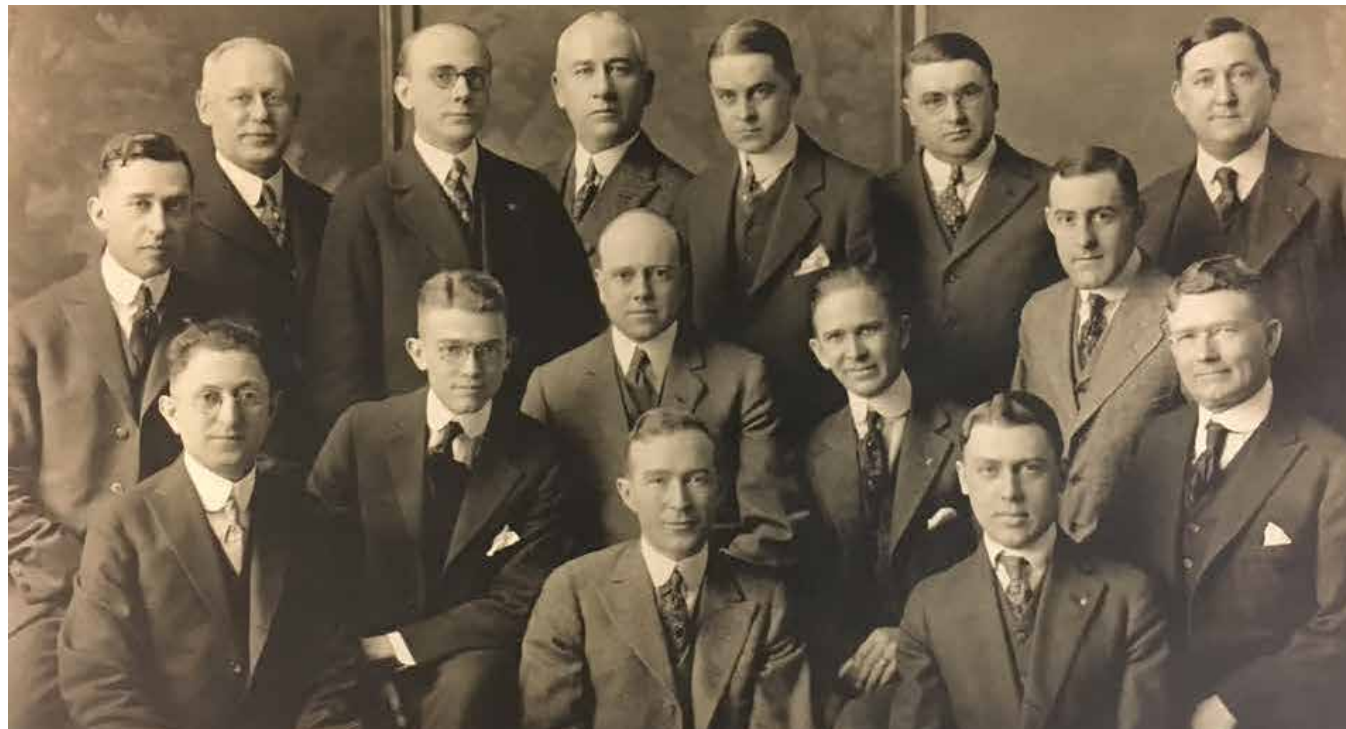
Patsy Garner
International President 2021-22

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OUR HISTORY



The original members of the 1916 Optimist Club of Indianapolis, Indiana

The Optimist International Organization was founded at a convention in Louisville, Kentucky, in 1919, uniting various local and regional clubs, the first of which was founded in Buffalo, New York in 1911. At the convention, the first official charter of the international organization was awarded to the club in Downtown Indianapolis, Indiana which was founded in 1916.

The turn of the century was a turning point in the organization's storied history. Following the International Convention in Reno, Nevada, the inaugural Optimist International Junior Bowling Championships (OIJBC) took place there. Junior bowlers battled for the right to be called "Optimist Champion."

In July 2001, Optimists found themselves seated in the White House, pledging to support U.S. President George W. Bush's goal to mentor one million children. Optimist International President

Bob Garner called the meeting "yet another sterling example of 'Optimists Bringing Out the Best in Kids.'"

Also in 2001, Optimist International introduced the Childhood Cancer Campaign to provide awareness and support of children battling cancer and the challenges their families face. In 2004, the organization made a \$1 million commitment to Johns Hopkins to underwrite a research focus.

In 2005, the Optimist Junior Golf Program expanded to include the Optimist International Tournament of Champions for top-performing junior golfers ages 14 to 18. On October 1, 2006, the first female international president in Optimist history, Ronnie Dunn, took office for the standard one-year term. In October 2007, Theo Golding of Jamaica became the first international president from outside of Canada or the United States.



Ronnie Dunn, the first female president elected to a major international service organization. (2006-2007)



Theo Golding, first international president from outside of US and Canada. (2007-2008)

There are currently about 65,000 individual members who belong to more than 2,900 autonomous Clubs. Optimists conduct 65,000 service projects each year, serving six million young people. Optimists also spend \$78 million on their communities annually.

Optimist Clubs are dedicated to "Bringing Out the Best in Kids" and do their part through community service projects.

Since each Club is autonomous and run by members in their community, Optimists have the unique flexibility to serve the youth of their area in any way they see fit. Optimist Clubs see a need in their community and react to it.

Optimists strive to live up to their name and maintain an upbeat attitude, which they try to pass along to the children they serve. The words of The Optimist Creed are well known to Optimist volunteers and beyond. The creed gives volunteers a focus for personal improvement as they work to better the world around them.



The Optimist Creed

Promise Yourself ...

To be so strong that nothing can disturb your peace of mind.

To talk health, happiness and prosperity to every person you meet.

To make all your friends feel that there is something in them.

To look at the sunny side of everything and make your optimism come true.

To think only of the best, to work only for the best, and to expect only the best.

To be just as enthusiastic about the success of others as you are about your own.

To forget the mistakes of the past and press on to the greater achievements of the future.

To wear a cheerful countenance at all times and give every living creature you meet a smile.

To give so much time to the improvement of yourself that you have no time to criticize others.

To be too large for worry, too noble for anger, too strong for fear, and too happy to permit the presence of trouble.



ANNUAL EVENTS

JANUARY

- Vice Presidents and Governors-Elect Conference
- District Trainer Class
- Club Trainer Class

MAY

- Optimists in Action
- Spring Magazine Release



JUNE

- International Convention

SEPTEMBER

- Closing of the Optimist Year

OCTOBER

- Fall Magazine Release
- Optimist New Year

FEBRUARY

- Optimist Day
- Winter Magazine Release
- President's Midyear Planning Conference

JULY

- World Oratorical Contest
- International Golf Championship

MARCH

- Optimist International Board of Director's Meeting

NOVEMBER

- Golf-Tournament of Champions

APRIL

- Essay Contest

AUGUST

- Summer Magazine Release

DECEMBER

- Optimist International Board of Director's Meeting



FOUNDATIONS



**OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL
FOUNDATION**

Optimist International Foundation (OIF) was established in 1971 exclusively for the charitable, literary and educational purposes of Optimist International, a community service-based organization committed to creating a more optimistic future for young people through innovative programs. OIF works with Optimist Clubs located in over 2,100 communities in the United States and the Caribbean.

The Foundation has grown steadily since 1971 and is recognized as a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

The Foundation's Board of Directors grants funds to Optimist International each year for the development and improvement of International programs. Programs funded by the Foundation serve 1.5 million children annually. Optimist International Foundation depends on the support from Optimist Clubs and individual Members, the general public, businesses and corporations.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.oifoundation.org/>



**Canadian Children's
Optimist Foundation**

Founded in March 1988, the Canadian Children's Optimist Foundation is a Canadian charity recognized by the Canada Revenue Agency. Formerly known as the Optimist International Foundation of Canada, it only serves the interests of Canadian Optimist members.

All monies raised will remain in Canada and are distributed for purposes of funding, including OI Scholarships, Youth Club (JOI), OI Programs and Activities and the Optimist training offered to volunteers.

For more information, please visit: <http://ccof-foec.org/>

PROGRAMS



Childhood Health and Wellness

In response to requests from Optimist Clubs and recognizing the broad range of childhood health-related issues, Optimist International and our Foundations are excited to announce the Childhood Health & Wellness Program.

The Childhood Health & Wellness Program will build on the highly successful Childhood Cancer Campaign to expand our impact. Clubs and Districts will now have the opportunity to initiate projects and services to improve the quality of life for children in their communities across a broader spectrum of needs. For more information, please visit: <https://www.optimist.org/member/health-and-wellness.cfm>

A Kaleidoscope of the Performing Arts

The term “performing arts” refers to forms of art in which artists use their voices, bodies, or inanimate objects to convey artistic expression. The performing arts include a range of disciplines which are performed in front of a live audience. Performing arts may include dance, music, opera, theater and musical theater, magic, illusion, mime, spoken word, puppetry, and even circus arts. Talent showcases highlighting these performing arts are not only fun, but innovative, giving young people the opportunity to express themselves using their own unique talents. Many shows and showcases are held every year because they are enjoyable, involve the community, and give young people a chance to show off their special skills. Showcases are particularly inviting because these events give young people of all ages a chance to participate, either on stage or behind the scenes. For more information, please visit: https://www.optimist.org/documents/iImagine_Kaleidoscope_of_Performing_Arts.pdf



Optimist Photography Contest

iImagine Highlighting “The Optimist Creed.” Photographers for the contest should be students at any age up through high school and prior to postsecondary education. Students are asked to submit photos that illustrate/exemplify one of the ten verses/lines of “The Optimist Creed”. This contest’s purpose is to expose young people to “The Optimist Creed” and our philosophy of Optimism and to

assist them with developing an interest in the area of photography. For more information, please visit: https://www.optimist.org/documents/Optimist_Photography_Contest.pdf



Optimist Visual Arts Competition

This exciting new program is designed to encourage and celebrate youth visual art skills in two categories – painting and drawing. Scholarships will be awarded for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place at the OI level for each category. The Optimist Visual Arts Competition – Paintings and Drawings gives the youth we serve another outlet for their creativity! For more information, please visit: https://www.optimist.org/documents/Optimist_Visual_Arts_Competition.pdf

Kids Speak Out

The ‘Kids Speak Out’ program is broadening its scope to engage children in our primary/preparatory and elementary schools to compete with their fellow students and importantly with children of other schools across the Zones and District. This Club and District option will be for students up to and including age 11, effective for the 2019-20 year. The desired outcome of this competition is to give the competitors the opportunity to compete at different levels: school, club, zone ... thereby gaining experience and confidence in preparation for the Oratorical Contest at the higher level. For more information, please visit: https://www.optimist.org/documents/Kids_Speak_Out_001.pdf



Optimists Spark Fun in the Park

This Optimist International event will be staged at the club level annually where clubs can choose any date to host their event. This fun and exciting new event has been coined to target JOI and College Club members, working with adult Optimist club members. The event will further facilities camaraderie between JOI, College Club members, adult Optimist members, and the community at large, while providing an avenue for meaningful interaction and care for children with differing abilities by our Optimist members at all levels. This is undoubtedly the core function of an event of this stature and, in essence, it is a fun way of sharing our philosophy of Optimism to a wider cross section of the children we serve globally. For more information, please visit: https://www.optimist.org/documents/Optimists_Spark_Fun_in_the_Park.pdf



Optimist International Oratorical Contest

The Optimist Oratorical Contest gives youngsters the chance to speak to the world. More than \$150,000 in college scholarships funded by the Optimist International Foundations is awarded annually from this program. First conducted in 1928, this is the second most popular Optimist International Program. Nearly 2,000 clubs participate in this program each year. The winners at the Club level receive medallions and Zone winners receive a plaque. Districts have the opportunity to provide a first place scholarship of \$2,500, a second place scholarship of \$1,500, and a third place scholarship of \$1,000. For more information, please visit:

<https://www.optimist.org/member/scholarships4.cfm>

OTHER PROGRAMS

Optimist International offers many programs for Clubs to participate in. If you would like a full list of the programs, please visit: <https://www.optimist.org/member/activities1.cfm>

OPTIMIST JUNIOR GOLF



One of the largest and most prestigious junior golf events in the world. A unique opportunity for junior golfers from around the globe. Each year junior golfers, ages 10-18, participate in Optimist sponsored events. With more than 50 qualifying tournaments, Optimists reach out into their own communities to involve children in the game of golf. The best of these golfers, along with international golfers from around the globe, advance to the Optimist International Junior Golf Championship, which is held at Trump National Doral in Miami, Florida.

Junior golfers and their family enjoy golf, parent-child tournament, off-course activities, meals and housing all on one property. Nationally ranked by Junior Golf Scoreboard, Golfweek, Global Junior Golf Rankings, and World Amateur Golf and included in the AJGA Performance Based Entry Process. The Optimist Championship attracts over 30 College coaches each year.



Optimist Junior Golf offers five (5) \$1,000.00 Scholarship Opportunities for boys and girls ages 16-18 each year through the Hugh Cranford All-Scholastic Team. Golfers must apply and complete essay by April 1. Junior golfers selected to the team will receive an automatic exemption into the championship, complimentary registration which includes tournament entry, hotel accommodations and meals plus \$1,000.00 scholarship.

In the fall, the Optimist Tournament of Champions is an invitational and known for its strength of field and highly ranked as well.



TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE OPTIMIST JUNIOR GOLF PROGRAM, PLEASE VISIT:
<https://www.optimist.org/golf/golfmenu.cfm>



LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The Leadership Development area incorporates many things that provide benefits to our Members. Webinars are offered on topics that are relevant to both personal development and Club Management. Members are invited to participate during the live session or the recording can be reviewed at the Members convenience.

The Professional Development Program provides opportunities for Members to build skills that will help build their resume and make them more competitive in their respective career fields. There is information for Members about leadership from determining what type of leader they might be to how to have those “crucial” but necessary conversations. For Members who choose to serve in various leadership positions within the organization, there are training sessions for the office that they choose to hold as well as the opportunities to serve in positions that they would have never dreamed of.

The Learning Management System is the newest addition to the Leadership Development area. The opportunities that come with this addition are so numerous, we feel it gets its own section!

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The PDP program is meant to provide members a way to develop professionally. Members will have the opportunity to build skills that will help them professionally and enhance their Club, District and Optimist International. Our organization wants to bring in younger professionals. The PDP is a tool to help them do that. As a Optimist Member, you will be able to take part in our Professional Development Program, also referred to as PDP.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE PDP YOU CAN VISIT:

<https://www.optimist.org/member/professional-development-program.cfm>



INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

Join us annually to participate in the informational, exciting and networking opportunities at the 4-day annual international convention tailored for adult and junior optimists:

- Interactive training and workshop sessions provide personal and leadership development.
- The Community Improvement Expo provides an opportunity for philanthropic companies and individuals to gain exposure to the 60,000 plus members of the organization.
- Networking provides opportunities for members to collaborate with like-minded people on developing best practices on how to improve the community in which you live.
- Being held in a different city every year provides mystery and excitement of getting to know all about someplace new.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION, YOU CAN VISIT:
www.optimist.org/convention**

LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

In 2020, Optimist International launched our incredible Learning Management System. Our goal for implementing this new system is to expand our focus of bringing out the best in kids to include easily accessible learning & development. We wanted to empower our members with the tools and knowledge they need in order to meet their goals in their Clubs, Districts, and personal lives. The new LMS provides an engaging and learning-rich environment that can be accessed anytime and anywhere through the Internet. It's easy-to-use and is customized to meet each of our members' learning & development needs. We are working hard to convert most of our existing instructor-led courses into online courses so our members will spend less time away from their families and jobs! All of our training and reference materials will be stored in a centralized area so we can ensure you have the most up-to-date information at all times.

By becoming an Optimist Member, you have free access to this wonderful system. [CLICK HERE](#) for instructions on how to register for your own account.

For any questions, please email lms@optimist.org or call 314-881-1309.





JUNIOR OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL

Junior Optimist International Clubs date back to the 1920s, and following growth across local communities, the international organization was established in 1988. We currently have over 500 JOI Clubs with over 15,000 members. It is the umbrella organization which links the local Junior Optimist International Clubs and Members to others throughout the world. Much like Optimist International, Junior Optimist is governed by an International Board of Directors, as well as District Officers. From the Club level on up, Members have the opportunity to develop leadership and teambuilding skills all while helping communities. Each year there is an International Convention, which gives Members the opportunity to share in the decision-making

Junior Optimist International Benefits the Community.

process of the organization, meet young people with similar interests and goals, grow from training seminars.....and have fun!

Students who are involved in Junior Optimist Clubs learn about and practice good citizenship, teamwork, communication and money management. There are opportunities for personal growth and leadership positions at Club, District, and International levels. Junior Optimist Clubs create

an increased number of young volunteers within the community. They can provide an interesting forum in which to address youth related issues, and it serves as an excellent training ground for future community leaders.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE JUNIOR OPTIMIST PLEASE VISIT:

<https://www.optimist.org/joi/>

OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE

[optimist.org](https://www.optimist.org)

CONNECT ONLINE

Optimist International is active on several social media channels to provide Members with the latest content and news about our organization. Whether you're looking for information or inspiration, following us can help connect you to Optimist International and Optimists around the world.

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA FOR THE LATEST NEWS AND EVENTS!



Visit our CLUB DIRECTORY, to find out what Clubs are doing in your area. Click on the state that you are in and you will find a list of Clubs in the cities around you.

You can click on the Club you would like to get more information on, and if you would like to connect with them contact membership@optimist.org.



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