



# The Torch

Fall 2011



Dear Optimist,

It is a great pleasure for me, as your 2011-2012 JOOI International President, to welcome you to our new Optimist year. As our new year begins, I want to take a few minutes to thank you for your commitment to our magnificent organization. It is a real honor for me to have the chance to lead more than 15,500 passionate young Members like you. But this year is not only about me, it is all about you, my fellow JOOI Members. I can assure you that you have made the right decisions in electing the 2011-2012 JOOI International Board of Directors. All of them are amazing, experienced people and I am confident about the future of our organization under their guidance.

As JOOI Members, I can tell you that we are different from all the other organizations. We are passionate about what we do and we should be very proud of this. Have you attended a JOOI International Convention? If so, you can probably still feel the energy of so many passionate young Members sharing a wonderful experience. I think our passion makes us different and everyone should be aware of this aspect of our organization. We are not only kids helping kids;

we are passionate kids helping kids. And this is the reason why this year will be about SHARING OUR PASSION! We can do so much if we unite our strength. We just need to show everyone how fantastic and enriching it is to be part of our organization.

This year, apart from being a wonderful year full of rewarding experiences, will also be a year of innovations, a year of ambition. Everything is achievable if we all stand together and work for it. Keeping this in mind, I would love to share my goals for the year. My main goal is about the JOOI International Convention. This year, I am confident that we will be able to have 300 delegates in attendance. All we need is to spread the word! Conventions are always so memorable! We have the chance to meet new people from Caribbean, United States and Canada who like you, are passionate JOOI Members. Attendees will also have the chance to have a leadership experience and attend a multitude of interesting workshops. Don't worry; we also have fun parts - such as a dance, talent show, three theme days and so much more for this year's Convention.

My second goal is about communication. This year's Board of Directors will work really hard to make sure everyone is aware of Optimist news. Don't forget to send us information and pictures of the great projects you are running. We will be just as proud as you to show everyone the good work being done by JOOI Members.

Finally, think about our JOOI programs and awards. They make JOOI unique, so please participate in them. If you need further information, just go to [www.jooi.org](http://www.jooi.org) and you will find everything you need.

Don't hesitate to contact me during the year if you have any questions. I can't wait to meet all of you at the 2012 International Convention. I wish you the best for this upcoming year.

Yours in Optimism,

*Marie-Claude Bourgeois*

Marie-Claude Bourgeois

JOOI President



# The Ultimate JOOI Experience

2012 Convention  
Milwaukee, WI • July 9-11



## Save the date!

The 2012 JOOI Convention is July 9-11 in beautiful Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Join us as we assemble to create the highlight of the JOOI year! Outstanding workshops, leadership opportunities, a worthwhile service project, loads of fun, and great new friends from all over the continent.

**Registration is only \$199 for those who register by May 1, 2012! Also, for every three JOOI Members from one Club that register for the JOOI Convention, the fourth registration is free!**

If you haven't been to an International JOOI Convention yet, you don't know what you're missing!



# JOOI Members Breathe Life into Baltimore Classrooms

During the 2011 JOOI convention in Baltimore, Maryland, over 100 JOOI Members and their Advisors took part in a service project to benefit the Living Classrooms Foundation.

Living Classrooms is a Baltimore-Washington based non-profit educational organization. Their mission is to strengthen communities and inspire young people to achieve their potential through hands-on education and job training, using urban, natural, and maritime resources as "living classrooms."

The service project took place at the Living Classroom's onsite campus located in downtown Baltimore. JOOI Members worked hard through the summer heat to apply fresh paint to classrooms. Even though they were tired by the time they finished, JOOI Members were all smiles as they looked upon the impact made by their hard work. This year's service project left Members with a sense of excitement and motivation to continue to carry out JOOI's mission in their own communities.





**Marie-Claude Bourgeois**

President  
1914 de la Gaillarde  
Jonquière, QC G7S 5V9  
Canada  
marieclaude.bourgeois  
@optimistmail.org



**Kayleigh White**

Immediate Past  
President  
364 Avon Way  
Kettering, OH 45429  
kayleigh.white  
@optimistmail.org



**A.J. Cifuentes**

Director  
1905 9th St., Apt #3  
Monroe, WI 53566  
aj.cifuentes@  
optimistmail.org



**Marissa Forzisi**

Director  
561 Bent Trail Dr.  
Chula Vista, CA 91914  
marissa.forzisi@  
optimistmail.org



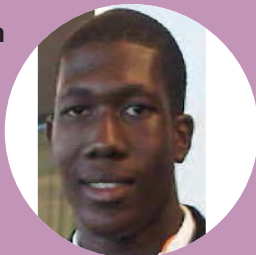
**Mary Morall**

Director  
3281 Sunset Valley Ct.  
Longwood, FL 32779  
mary.morall@  
optimistmail.org



**Cordane Richardson**

Director  
South Hill  
Anguilla, BWI AI 2640  
cordane.richardson@  
optimistmail.org



**Ruby Blair JOOI Member of the Year Award**

Ruby Blair was a huge supporter of JOOI and helped make the organization what it is today. In her honor, JOOI presents a Ruby Blair Award to one JOOI Member each year, and the 2010-2011 recipient was Emily Kluck of the Octagon Club of Century high school in Rochester, Minnesota. Emily is a 2011 graduate with



Emily receives her plaque from Lyle Felsch, Octagon Club Liaison of the Optimist Club of Rochester.

an Honors Diploma and Distinction in Science. She enjoyed playing an active role in her Club, served as President during her junior and senior years and was twice chosen as the Member of the Year. One of her favorite volunteer activities was raising funds to make tie-blankets and baking cookies for the residents of Ronald McDonald House. She plans to continue her volunteer and service work and looks forward to staying connected with Optimist International in the future.

**Member of Excellence**



Shantayaé is looking forward to a bright future.

Shantayaé Kadeen Grant, 19 years old, has been accepted to the University of the West Indies, Mona Campus to pursue a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Media and Communications. She was a dedicated Member of the Octagon Club of Alpha Academy in the Caribbean

District and served as President and Lieutenant Governor during her last year. Her involvement with JOOI has given her the opportunity to spend time with the less fortunate and to raise funds to improve their lives. She has worked hard to embrace the tenet of the Optimist Creed that encourages one 'to talk health, happiness and prosperity to every person you meet.' During her free time, she enjoys keeping her mind sharp through abstract thinking and reading. Shantayaé believes that with continued determination and hard work, she can achieve the goal of one day owning her own publishing company.

# Soup's on!

Souper Bowl of Caring – a youth-led service movement tied to the big game each winter – is just around the corner. Dates for conducting the project are January 15 through February 5, 2012.

In the weeks leading up to the Super Bowl, youth groups all over collect money or canned goods that will then be passed along to a local not-for-profit of the group's choosing.

Your JOOI Club can start by registering at [www.souperbowl.org](http://www.souperbowl.org). When you register, you will receive a free resource kit. Next, decide which local group will benefit. Then, it's time to promote, promote, promote! The collection drive will last up to several weeks, then your Club will donate 100 percent of the collection to the not-for-profit just in time for game day.

Report back to [www.souperbowl.org](http://www.souperbowl.org) so JOOI can track how many JOOI Clubs are participating!

## A hint about registering

When your Club registers at [www.souperbowl.org](http://www.souperbowl.org), make sure the word "JOOI" is in your Club name somewhere so that Souper Bowl of Caring is aware that your Club is a JOOI Club. This will make it easier for JOOI to find out what a difference JOOI Clubs make!



## Advisor goes above and beyond

JOOI Clubs wouldn't be possible without their advisors, so it is only fitting that JOOI recognizes one exceptional advisor each year. This past year's Advisor of Excellence is Avon D. Carty. When Avon's home Club of Anguilla took on the challenge of building Junior Optimist Octagon Clubs, she frequently chaired the JOOI Committee and has always served as an advisor to one or more of the six JOOI Clubs in Anguilla. She has also served as Lieutenant Governor, Governor's Assistant/Governor's Ambassador and Co-Chair of the District's JOOI Committee.

Avon was thrilled to be recognized as the "Advisor of Excellence" at the JOOI Convention in Baltimore and would like to sincerely thank the 2010-2011 JOOI International President Kayleigh White, who nominated her for this award.



Avon serves on the 11-12 International JOOI Clubs Committee.

# Making the **RIGHT MOVES** for the CCC



The Bonita Vista Octagon Club knows that fundraising can be fun, especially if you've got the right moves. After attending an International JOOI convention a few years ago, Club Members were inspired to involve youth from the local community to make a difference in the Optimist International Childhood Cancer Campaign. The Club recently conducted their fourth annual Hip Hop Dance Showcase. Twelve dance groups made up of 300 dancers from local schools and dance studios performed in front of a cheering crowd. Funds were raised through ticket sales and program ads sold to local merchants. This year's event raised \$6,000 to be donated to childhood cancer research. "The Club chose to sponsor this project because it was a perfect combination of inspiring youth in the community, promotion of a safe and fun activity and it displayed to our community the amazing things Octagon can do," Club President, Samhita Ilango said. "We decided to focus on the CCC because not only is cancer sweeping through the nation, but it is sweeping through the youth." Due to the show's growing popularity, adults from the sponsoring Bonita Optimist Club helped provide security backstage and at the many theater doors. Due to capacity crowds responding to Facebook ads, next year's show will be performed for an additional night. The Octagon Club has now donated over \$16,000 to childhood cancer research at Johns Hopkins.



## **NOW PLAYING** THE OPTIMIST TEEN INTERNET SAFETY DVD

The new Teen Internet Safety DVD is for teens by teens. JOOI and Optimist International put their heads together to create a resource relevant to teens everywhere. Topics discussed include posting pictures or damaging information on social networking websites, internet predators, identify theft and cyber-bullying.

The new DVD and a CD of supplementary materials are available by request at [youthclubs@optimist.org](mailto:youthclubs@optimist.org) or by calling 800-500-8130.

# The playtime BOOM

An inexpensive way to work together with your sponsoring adult club – and the entire community – is to organize a KaBOOM! Play Day. This free outdoor event celebrates play. It's a field day, a backyard barbecue and a day of service all rolled into one. The KaBOOM! Play Day is a turn-key event that helps organizations such as JOOI celebrate play with their Members, supporters, donors and Club leaders. This is an awesome opportunity for JOOI Clubs to have an impact in their community and get a lot of publicity for their Club! Visit [www.kaboom.org/playday](http://www.kaboom.org/playday).



it starts with a  
playground.

## Share the JOOI of Reading



February is a few months off still, but don't forget that it is JOOI Reading Month! JOOI Clubs can start planning now to make the most of those 29 short days!

The goal is to get kids in your area reading – for fun!

Get your Club's Members together and brainstorm lists of good books for students of all ages. As the month gets closer, tap into your creative side and make bright posters and banners to promote the event. Get the word out about your JOOI Club and the event at the same time! Figure out how to get the different classes at your school involved in some friendly reading competitions to make the most of it.

If February isn't a good time for your school or your JOOI Club, that's Ok! JOOI recommends February to help get through the winter blahs, but Clubs should promote JOOI Reading Month whenever works best. The most important thing is to get kids excited about opening up a good book (after they finish their homework, of course)!

For information about JOOI Reading Month, go to [www.jooi.org](http://www.jooi.org), look under "JOOI Programs" and select "JOOI of Reading."

## JOOI has messages for you!

Don't forget that your JOOI Club has an e-mail box. Make sure your advisor is checking it. If they're not so technologically savvy, you may want to help them. Just go to [www.optimistmail.org](http://www.optimistmail.org). Your User ID is the word "Club" then your Club's five-digit number followed by .2012 (i.e. ClubA1234.2012). Your password this year is: 100%

Your Club can also turn on the forwarding feature to have messages delivered to another e-mail address all year. After logging in, your advisor can go to "Account Options." They will select "Forwarding" and enter their preferred e-mail address. They should click "Save" and they're done!

Check back often for e-mails from President Marie-Claude, future issues of *The Torch* and other fun notices.

# The Exceptional Advisor: Doing Something Special for OUR KIDS

Optimists serve young people throughout the continent. We create so many exceptional programs to serve the youth in our community. Yet, we have 16,000 of the world's best youth working along side of us, OUR JOOI YOUTH. This year Optimist Clubs are making a concerted effort to support our JOOI students. Here's what you can do:

- Create Special Recognition Programs for your JOOI youth
- Bring JOOI leaders to your Optimist meetings to thank them
- Allow your JOOI leaders to speak to your Optimist Club
- Create outstanding publicity for your JOOI Youth in local newspapers and other media
- Have motivated members speak to your JOOI clubs
- Budget money from your adult club to support your JOOI clubs
- Bring your JOOI youth to Your District Convention
- The ultimate....find a way to bring your JOOI youth to the JOOI convention.

Please give us your ideas to "do something special to support OUR youth. Our young people are special. We hope you'll do something to support them, to honor them, and to nurture them this year. JOOI may be the future of Optimist International.



## Share your ideas with us!

### JOOI International Committee

**Don Brose**, Chair  
248-736-8833  
broseelectric@  
msn.com

**Avon Carty**  
264-235-2866  
avon.carty@  
gmail.com

**Simon Lanthier**  
514-928-7314  
lanthiersimon@  
hotmail.com

**Cherryl Thames**  
248-506-5118  
cherrylthames@  
comcast.net

**JOOI Clubs Director**  
**Amy Keller**  
800-500-8130  
amy.keller@optimist.org

