



Contact:
Harriet Chapman
Junior League of Akron
Phone: 330-836-4905

The Junior League of Akron Announces *Kids in the Kitchen* Event on Sunday, April 25

Free Event for Families at the Shaw JCC will Educate Children on the Importance of Eating Well and Staying Healthy

Akron, OH, March 24, 2010 – The Junior League of Akron invites families to attend a free *Kids in the Kitchen* event on Sunday, April 25, from 1-3 p.m. at the Shaw JCC, 750 White Pond Dr., Akron, OH 44320. The Family Fitness Picnic themed event will educate children ages 5-10 and their families on the importance of choosing healthy foods and being active. Children will have the opportunity to prepare their own healthy snacks and participate in a variety of fitness challenges. The first 75 children in attendance will receive a gift bag with healthy eating tips, recipes and prizes!

In partnership with the staff of the Shaw JCC, the provisional class of the Junior League of Akron will assist children as they visit food and fitness stations with activities that will educate about the food pyramid and the importance of physical activity. “The Shaw JCC helps enable families to be ‘fit for life,’ and this *Kids in the Kitchen* Family Fitness Picnic is a great opportunity for children to have fun learning healthy eating and exercise habits that can serve them for a lifetime,” said Stephanie (Davis) Dieringer, Director of Health and Wellness at the Shaw JCC.

There is no cost for this event, but space is limited, so please reserve your spot today! **Guests are asked to RSVP with a name, number attending and phone number by April 16, 2010 to kitkakron@yahoo.com or 330-836-4905. Please plan on arriving at the event between 1 and 1:30 p.m. to allow enough time for children to make their way to all of the food and fitness stations.** Children outside the 5- to 10-year age range are welcome to attend, but programs have been designed with this specific age group in mind.

“With our *Kids in the Kitchen* initiative, the Junior League of Akron seeks to empower Akron’s youth to make simple but enjoyable choices that can help reduce the likelihood of obesity and the health challenges associated with it,” said Harriet Chapman, President of the Junior League of Akron.

Kids in the Kitchen, launched in 2006 by Junior Leagues in over 200 communities in four countries, is a program designed to help address the urgent health issues associated with childhood obesity and poor nutrition. Junior Leagues are committed to improving the health of today’s youth in response to the alarming statistic that nearly one-third of children and adolescents in the United States are overweight or at risk of becoming overweight.¹ Even more alarming is that childhood obesity has been shown to be the leading cause of pediatric hypertension, is associated with Type II diabetes, increases the risk of coronary heart disease, increases stress on the weight-bearing joints, lowers self-esteem and affects relationships with peers.²

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, Ga.

² American Obesity Association, Washington, DC.

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Children and families can learn more about living a healthy lifestyle and the *Kids in the Kitchen* initiative at www.kidsinthekitchen.org. As children are more likely to eat foods that they helped prepare, the Junior Leagues offer an online recipe collection featuring kid-friendly, nutritious recipes from celebrities, chefs and athletes. The website also features downloadable nutrition and exercise tips, quizzes to test kids on their nutritional knowledge and the USDA's MyPyramid Blast-Off game, an entertaining way for kids to learn guidelines for daily food consumption and physical activity, tailored to their nutrition and fitness needs.

ABOUT THE JUNIOR LEAGUE OF AKRON

The Junior League of Akron empowers women for positive change in the community. It is an organization of women committed to promoting volunteerism, developing the potential of women and improving communities through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. Its purpose is exclusively educational and charitable. The Junior League of Akron: identifies community needs and appropriate responses; raises funds and develops programs to meet those needs; and recruits women committed to volunteerism and building a better community. For more information, visit the website, www.juniorleagueakron.org.

ABOUT THE ASSOCIATION OF JUNIOR LEAGUES INTERNATIONAL

Founded in 1901 by New Yorker Mary Harriman, the Junior Leagues are organizations of women committed to volunteerism, developing the potential of women and improving communities through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. The Association of Junior Leagues International is made up of 293 Junior Leagues in the United States, Canada, Mexico and the United Kingdom. Together, they are one of the largest international volunteer organizations for women interested in making a positive impact in their communities. For more information, visit the website, www.ajli.org.

ABOUT THE SHAW JCC

The Shaw JCC of Akron creates community based on Jewish values by providing quality programs and services in a safe and secure environment for people of all ages. The Shaw JCC is open to all members of our community without regard to race, gender, religious preference, marital or economic status. For more information, visit the website, www.shawjcc.org.

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