A Brief History of The University League, Inc.

"The first meeting of this small group was held in the spring of 1901 on the lawn of the home of Mrs. William F. Allen, wife of one of the pioneer members of the faculty . . . The formal organization took place May 4, 1901, in the music room of Chadbourne hall. From among the forty women present, committees were promptly formed, one of which was to select a suitable name for the organization. The selection was made, and has remained the same. Teas, receptions, and lawn parties were planned as suitable ways to promote social contacts for faculty as well as women students. . . . Opportunities for helping girl students were found." Capital Times, 1929.

Early University League support included a.) furnishing a rest room in Main hall, b.) organizing an ice carnival, c.) increasing swimming facilities, and d.) furtherance of a "Women's Building" which resulted in building Lathrop Hall. In these early days, The University League founders established what has become our mission: Supporting Scholarships, Service, Education, and Friendship.

Timeline:

**May 4, 1901** The University League was founded

1910 Raised funds for new Women's Building - named Lathrop Hall when opened that year

1916 **Established Loan Fund** for women students - $25 + $50 initially

1925 Received $2000 bequest from estate of charter member, Mrs. William F. Allen, and renamed the loan fund the Mrs. William F. Allen Memorial Loan Fund

1929 Organized Dames Club for wives of graduate students

1930 Responded to the need of more women for financial support during the Depression, by voting to give 2 scholarships to women students in addition to the loans.

**1949** 1st Interest Groups were organized

1950 1st Homecrafters Chair added to League board and it became a **League service project**

1951 **Hospital Services** started with emphasis on the patient library. Magazines and books were donated. Sewing groups made toys and puppets for children.

1952 League became one of the initial sponsors of Madison Friends of International Students (MFIS). Important services were coat loan, furniture loan, welcome picnic, home hospitality and friendship coffees. MFIS Co-chairs served on the League Board for many years.

1955 Rosa P. Fred Scholarship established in her honor.

1959 English classes for foreign wives began through MFIS

1960s Number of Interest Groups expanded responding to member needs and wishes

1962 Junior Division was renamed Newcomers and had a membership of 500

1962 Added Patient Escort and Flower & Mail Delivery to Hospital Services. In the 60s, 90 University League volunteers contributed over 8000 hours per year to the hospital
1970s League logo designed - a circular design with the League name in the outer circle and a 12-pointed star in the inner circle suggesting the Numen Lumen from the UW seal.

1971 **1st University League Scholarship Benefit** held. These have continued annually over the last four decades to provide funds for scholarships.

1973 Honorary Life membership category established for wives and widows of retired faculty. No dues were required.

1974 Newcomers merged with League as a section within University League

1976 Housing Referral Service began for faculty coming to or taking leave from the University. Run by League volunteers, it provided a unique valuable service.

1978 President Angelena Lenehan appointed an *ad hoc* committee to study whether League should apply to be a **tax exempt 501 (c) (3)** organization. The Tax Exemption Committee successfully applied for this status and in **1981**, University League became tax exempt.

1978 **Mrs. William F. Allen Scholarship Fund set up with UW Foundation** with $10,000 from the Loan Fund and $200 from University League. The balance of the Loan Fund was used for loans until the two were combined at the Foundation in 1998.

1980 First Past Presidents Luncheon held - organized by Angelena Lenehan, Mary Sue Hansen, & Margaret Schroeder. Has become an annual event.

1981 University League developed and published a Newcomers' Handbook for incoming faculty and their families. It was revised and reprinted in 1988 and again in 1996.

1985-86 Honorary Life membership category was dissolved due to increasing costs of maintaining these non-dues-paying members. All were encouraged to return to regular League membership.

1986 First Big Ten Faculty Wives Organization meeting was held at University of Michigan. Karen O'Neil, wife of UW System President O'Neil, in response to discussions at the Past Presidents Luncheon, worked with the wife of UMich President to organize this organization and its first meeting.

1992 League's Long Range Planning and Policy Committee proposed opening the membership to any women and men interested in supporting the goals and purposes of the League. The motion to open to all women passed at the Annual Meeting. The motion to open to men was defeated.

1993 on League membership was enhanced with new members from the community that added energy and breadth to the organization

1993 **University League Endowed Scholarship** was set up with $2000 from the Evelyn Steenbock Estate and $3000 from League members. Living members could add to this fund in $1000 increments and set up their own named endowed scholarship when their total gift reached $10,000.

1993-94 University League mission statement developed: *Supporting Scholarships, Service, Education and Friendship*

1994 Newcomers disbanded in response to fewer incoming faculty with spouses who were not also in the work force.

1998 Allen Loan and Scholarship funds combined into one.
2003-04 University League websites developed (http://www.univleague.wisc.edu)

1990s - 2000s Attracting new members and leadership continued to be a goal and a concern as society and the role of volunteer organizations shifted. The League continues to give time and energy to its evolution.

2000s University League opens its membership to men. League continues to attract new members, provide increasing funds for scholarships and grants, support friendships through interest groups, provide education to members and friends through large group meetings, and provide service to the community through its volunteer opportunities.

A Few Facts in 2012-13:

$82,792 2011-12 University League Scholarship and Grant Total for distribution in 2012

22 Number of Endowed and Memorial Scholarships at the beginning of the year

23 Number of Endowed and Memorial Scholarships at the end of the year

2 General Scholarships to UW Madison Colleges and Schools given

3 Number of Grants given

26 Number in University League Interest Groups ranging from Aerobics to Bridge to Foreign Foods to French to Gardening to Hiking & Skiing to Needlework

3 Number of Volunteer Opportunities promoted through University League

4 Number of Large Group League meetings/programs this year

1 Numbers of Stay-at-Home Scholarship Benefits

Summary from your Long Range Planning Chair:

As University League begins its 111th year, we can celebrate a rich history of serving the university, its students, League membership, and the wider community. And as we look to the future, the Board and the Long Range Planning Committee are challenged to think and plan creatively to carry the University League mission forward. Together we will work to develop a path that honors our past while moving towards a positive and viable future for The University League. We seek your help and support.

Compiled by Sally Lorenz, Revised in 2012