



Zonta Club of Joliet
Member of Zonta International
Advancing the status of Women Worldwide

For immediate release

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JOLIET ZONTIAN WINS PRESTIGIOUS ATHENA AWARD

Joliet Zontian Lisa Morel Las was awarded the prestigious Athena award by the Joliet Region Chamber of Commerce and Industry at a special luncheon held on Thursday, September 1, 2011. The Joliet Chamber has been bestowing this award, an international recognition of professional excellence, community service, and actively assisting women in the attainment of professional excellence and leadership skills, since 1988.

Of the 24 Joliet Chamber recipients, 12 of them have been members of the Joliet Zonta Club.

Founded in 1982, according to their website www.athenainternational.org, there have been nearly 6,000 leaders in over 500 communities who have been recognized. Awards have been given in the United States, Bermuda, Canada, China, Greece, India, Russia, United Arab Emirates, and United Kingdom.

The award is sculpted individually for each recipient by sculptor Linda Ackley. The bronze figure represents the goddess Athena, equated with the wisdom of women. Each sculpture has a different texture, representing the uniqueness of each recipient. The crystal represents the light each recipient sheds, and the marble base represents solidity.

In addressing the assembled crowd, Las said, "Never in a million years did I think I'd be here. I've been impressed and awed at the women who have won this award before me." Las, the CEO of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Will and Grundy Counties, cited several mentors who have helped shape her career and shape her outlook on life. "I know first-hand the impact an individual can have. Volunteering has made me the person I am. I can help make a difference; I've been able to meet and network with a

wide variety of individuals who help shape their community. My mentors helped me make my life what it is now.”

Las has over 3 decades of experience in public relations, marketing, public affairs and fundraising in social services, government, health care and education. In addition to being a Joliet Zonta Club member, Las is a member of the Joliet Rotary Club, the Holly Club, Will County Take Back the Night, and serves on the Board of Directors for the Will County Child Advocacy Center. She has been involved in many other organizations in the community and is a strong advocate for women and children in need.

As she concluded her speech, Las exhorted the group to “...take a minute and reflect on how you are a mentor. You never know who you may inspire.”

The Zonta Club of Joliet is committed to advancing the status of women locally and globally. To find out about upcoming events and membership opportunities, please visit www.jolietzonta.com and find us on Facebook: Zonta Club of Joliet.

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