



Laurel Society Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Laurel Society and why was it established?

The Laurel Society was established in 1994 as a permanent recognition program to honor individuals dedicated to the Soroptimist organization and its mission. Soroptimist had just completed the Five in Five campaign, which exceeded the goal of reaching \$5 million in five years for a reserve fund to secure the long-term financial health of the organization. Many members wished to continue their financial support for Soroptimist after the close of the campaign. The Laurel Society was created to effectively show appreciation to donors for gifts that would ensure continued funding for Soroptimist programs.

The Laurel Society pin was designed to include the laurel leaves from the Soroptimist emblem. The laurel leaves are symbolic of victory and typify friendship and success, much like committed Soroptimist members. Diplomatic terms were chosen to describe the levels of membership because international good will and understanding is the cornerstone of Soroptimist service. Members of the Laurel Society are emissaries of the Soroptimist mission to improve the lives of women and girls. Soroptimists (and friends of Soroptimist) who are committed to the mission, who have extended international friendship, and who have demonstrated success in their personal, career and club endeavor—are ideal candidates for recognition in the Laurel Society.



How does someone become a member of the Laurel Society?

Normally individuals make a personal contribution to Soroptimist to become a member of the Laurel Society. An individual can also be honored with Laurel Society membership by her family, her club or her friends as recognition for exemplary service, leadership recognition and special life events.

What kind of recognition is given for Laurel Society contributions?

All Laurel Society members are acknowledged with a thank-you letter and pin representing their membership level. Recognition is also given at region conferences. Laurel Society members receive exclusive invitations to SIA functions, such as the Laurel Society event at convention. Please note that because of the large number of Laurel Society members, invitations will be extended to members who have contributed an additional \$250 or more to their Laurel Society in the current biennium. The recognition levels are:

<u>Contribution</u>	<u>Membership Status</u>	<u>Designation</u>
\$1000-\$2,499	Attaché	Sapphire
\$2,500-\$4,999	Envoy	Ruby
\$5,000-\$9,999	Diplomat	Diamond
\$10,000-\$24,999	Ambassador	Pearl
\$25,000 or more	Inner Circle	Custom Pin

How Laurel Society contributions used?

Laurel Society contributions are used to fund Soroptimist programs and awards: Women's Opportunity Awards, Soroptimist Club Grants for Women and Girls, Soroptimists STOP Trafficking, Violet Richardson Awards, Ruby Award and the Workplace Campaign to End Domestic Violence.

Can a club become a member of the Laurel Society?

The Laurel Society is a recognition program for individuals. If a club wishes to honor someone with Laurel Society membership, they should complete a Laurel Society contribution form naming the individual and submit the form to headquarters along with their contribution. Clubs are also encouraged to support Soroptimist programs through the Annual Club Campaign and Founders Pennies (*see [Club Giving Options](#)*).

Does the contribution need to be paid all at once?

Each unrestricted gift of \$100 or more from a member—or in honor of a member—to Soroptimist is credited toward membership in the Laurel Society. When total contributions reach the next level in the Laurel Society, headquarters will send the appropriate pin and a letter welcoming the member to the appropriate level of the Laurel Society. Clubs wanting to honor an individual with Laurel Society membership shall remit the name of the member and the full amount.

A Monthly Giving Option is now available for members who want to support Soroptimist programs and work toward membership in the Laurel Society. Monthly giving is easy for the donor, decreases the expenses of fundraising, and puts more money into Soroptimist programs (*see [Monthly Giving Option Information Sheet](#)*). Contributions received through monthly giving are credited to the donor's Laurel Society.

Is it possible to make a donation to another member's Laurel Society?

Yes. Soroptimist often receives donations in honor of a member for exemplary service or in celebration of an anniversary, birthday or in memory of a loved one. The contribution is credited to the member's Laurel Society at the request of the donor. The donor should complete the [Laurel Society contribution form](#) noting the honoree's name and send it to headquarters with her contribution.

Will Soroptimist accept any gifts other than cash for recognition in the Laurel Society?

Soroptimist will gratefully accept gifts of stock and real property toward membership in the Laurel Society. The donor is credited for the cash value of the gift at the appropriate contribution level. Contact Nancy Montvydas, Senior Director of Development, at nancym@soroptimist.org if you wish to give stock or property.

How can a Laurel Society member find out the total contributions credited to her name?

This information can be obtained by sending an e-mail request to siahq@soroptimist.org.