



Assistance League of Tucson

*In 1959 22 women had a vision.
In 2011 400 members are carrying on their dream.*

1959 - Community women received the first information on National Assistance League during the prior year. In February, a tea was held with 22 women deciding to organize, and in May, the first annual meeting was held at Tucson Country Club. The name Service League of Tucson, Inc. was chosen. The philanthropic project, "Homemaker Service" was then selected.

1960 -Receiving good support from newspapers, community agencies and patrons, the first Homemaker Service office opened July 5. It was located in one room at 240 N. Court for \$18.00 including janitor service and utilities. Staff: one homemaker and a part time supervisor. The first public fundraising began, raising \$5,000.

1963 – Financially solid and with a thriving project, Service League petitioned to become a chapter of National Assistance League.

1964 – Assistance League of Tucson, Inc. is formed and replaces the name Service League of Tucson.

1965 – Assistance League purchases property at 1307 N. Alvernon Way which consisted of a small house and kindergarten building. Craft classes were taught to raise money. Hand-made items and next to-new clothes were sold in special sales.

1968 – In the fall a gift shop featuring new merchandise opened in the little house and a "Better Mousetrap" in the back building.

1969 – By this time Homemaker Service has grown with an average of ten homemakers on staff. It was decided to add Home Nursing Aides in order to fill a growing community need.

1971-72 – Property was purchased directly to the south of the current buildings. The Homemaker Service was moved with the office to the newer building; the older buildings were used for the combined shops.

1973 – Expanding need prompted the joining and addition to the front and back buildings. This gave the combined shops the needed room to bring in greater profit. The first Auxiliary, Shop and Craft, was formed by 12 members.

1976 – Assisteens[®] Auxiliary formed by 13 charter members and certified in the Spring of 1977.

1978 – Philanthropic project, Friendship and Interest Group for Seniors, was added.

1985 – Philanthropic project, Survival Kits, provided basic housekeeping supplies to family in crisis referred by DES Child Protective Services, La Frontera and other agencies. This program is currently **Starting Over Supplies.**

1988 – The Professional Association of Women’s Service Auxilliary (PAWS) began.

1991 – Educational Support Project becomes a new philanthropic project.

1994 – Operation School Bell® is added as a philanthropic project, dressing 335 children from one school.

1995-96 – Homemaker Service is phased out. Addition is completed on existing building for expanded Thriftique, meeting rooms, Operation School Bell, etc.

1997 - Assault Survivor Kits® is added as a philanthropic project.

1999-2000 – Terrific Thursdays began with invitations to business leaders and members of the community. We also qualified for Arizona Tax Credit donations.

2000 – Friendship and Interest Group for Seniors was terminated. More growth was on the horizon. We were working on the purchase and rezoning of two properties north of our main building, where the Philanthropic Programs Building is today. In August, during a burglary, doors were broken, computers and safe stolen. Fortunately, this resulted in a security system being donated and installed. E-mail minutes were instituted, making it much easier to keep all well-informed.

2001 – The Thrift Shop began taking credit cards for purchases. Craft Auxilliary voted to disband and became Craft Associates. The first Ada Edwards Laughlin Award was given in May.

2002 – Capital Campaign began for Philanthropic Programs Building.

2004 – Groundbreaking for PPC Building, March 31. Operation School Bell held the first dressing on October 20 of that year.

2006-07 – Non-member community volunteers provided helping hands in Operation School Bell. Our philanthropic programs and Thrift Shop set new highs.

2007-08 – Educational Support Program was eliminated and some segments of the program were incorporated into Operation School Bell. Signage was installed on the Philanthropic Programs Building.

2008-11 – Member Newsletter was sent by e-mail and Shop Shifts were arranged online. Our website was linked to a donation site, YouTube and Operation School Bell videos. We have a Facebook page. We tried to go “green” and use less paper and succeeded by using 7 cartons of paper less than the previous year. A chapter review by National Assistance League gave us an “exceeding expectations” grade! Operation School Bell has now provided clothing and essential items for more than 40,000 children in the Tucson community.