



A global volunteer organization that provides women and girls with access to the education and training they need to achieve economic empowerment.

SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL OF ORTIGAS AND ENVIRONS

Soroptimist International of Ortigas & Environs (Club # 170215) was chartered on 10 October 2001 at the Edsa Shangri La Hotel, Mandaluyong City and was sponsored by Soroptimist International of Makati. SIPR Gov. Teresita B. Choa officiated the chartering of Soroptimist International of Ortigas & Environs, installed its first set of officers and directors with Enriqueta "Baby" V. Doble as Charter President and inducted 19 Charter Members.

The chartering of Soroptimist ORTIGAS started as a dare among 6 friends: Norma Co, Baby Doble, Grace Fernandez, Malou Fernandez, Baby Lirio and Olive Ramos. Missing the projects they do, Norma broached the idea of chartering a new club to Baby. Aware of the difficulties in sustaining a club, she challenged her to scout for the required 15 members. For Norma, it was a breeze having recruited her closest of kin. For months, the group met and discussed plans. There were times when the conditions did not seem perfect but there was a common thread that connects them, their desire to serve the marginalized women of our society. They were united to take on the challenge to make a difference in the lives of women and girls. For Baby Doble, there was no turning back. She became the Charter President of Soroptimist Ortigas.

Barely 2 months old, Soroptimist Ortigas conducted their first project- a bloodletting activity on December 19, 2001 with the help of Star Security & Investigation Agency and the Magdapio Security Agency, owned by two of their charter members. Soroptimist Ortigas donated more than 5000 cc of blood to the Red Cross, Quezon City Chapter. Shortly after in January 6, 2002, Soroptimist Ortigas undertook its first big 3 pronged project, the Botolan Zambales Mission. It was a Medical and Dental Mission, a Gift Giving for 500 indigenous families (Aetas) & a Share A Toy Program for the children. For four years, Soroptimist Ortigas run the Zambales Mission. This started their partnership with the doctors of East Avenue Medical Center (EAMC). Who would think that this initial partnership will blossom to a bigger project? In July 2002, Dr. Florentino Doble (Founder of the Philippine Foundation for Breast Care) offered Soroptimist Ortigas a project on breast cancer. This prompted them to make a study of diseases plaguing Filipinas. Alarmed by the rapid increase of breast cancer cases in the country, they started their impact project called Soroptimist Ortigas Breast Friends. The signing of a Memorandum of Agreement capped their partnership to be a support group of the East Avenue Medical Center- Breast Care Center and the Philippine Foundation for Breast Care. In 2004, Soroptimist Ortigas created a screening committee and took medical advisers that helped process applications for free chemotherapy. The committee decides whether an applicant is eligible for the program or not.

Early on, Soroptimist Ortigas suffered a lot of birth pains. They lost charter members who are young professionals building a career and starting a family. But, their desire to serve and to accomplish bigger and better projects that help women and girls sustained them. They realized early on that although they are young and few in number, things are possible if they dare to dream and take action. In 2005, they took a process of transformation and reinvention.

Membership recruitment became top priority. Soroptimist Ortigas is one happy family, glued together by the bonds of friendship. They work hard and they find joy in the projects they do. In 2006, president Vee Velasco run a Skills Training Program called Kasanayan ay Kabuhayan, Kaalaman ay Yaman.

The Journey of Hope Project linked them with the Women's Crisis Center, Laura Vicuna Foundation and the Third World Movement Against Exploitation of Women. The same year, they signed a MOA with the Pasig City General Hospital to help them in their chemo project. They also partnered with oncologist, Dr. Diana Cua, the club's Soroptimist Making a Difference for Women Awardee, who lends assistance to their free breast cancer chemotherapy program.

In 2007, they partnered with Sr. Eden Orlino, SPC, the club's Making A Difference for Women Awardee and the Diocese of Bayombong in Nueva Vizcaya. They run a very successful mission in Sitio Macdu, Kayapa, Nueva Vizcaya.

They served around 500 families and touched the lives of five types of indigenous peoples.

Soroptimist Ortigas is aware of the most common problems of teenagers. To address these issues, they partnered with DAWV (Developmental Advocacy of Women Volunteerism) and initiated the / Keep Love Real Seminars. One seminar was held in Pampanga sponsored by SIPR PG Letty Yap & the other was in the Tuloy Center of Don Bosco sponsored by Soroptimist Alabang. They also partnered with the Visayan Forum Foundation Inc. for their projects against modern slavery and human trafficking. The club awarded VFFI's Founder, Ms. Cecille Oebanda, as the club's Making a Difference for Women Awardee.

Mariecel Onate was Soroptimist Ortigas' 4th president. During her term, Dr. Cristina Santos (their club nominee) won as SIPR's Unsung Woman Hero. This led to their partnering with GiftLife, Inc. and the Rizal Provincial Government. They held free clinical breast examination, risk factor assessment, one-on-one consultation & breast biopsy for the resident: of Angono and Morong, Rizal. This year together with GiftLife, Inc., Soroptimist Ortigas started on-site breast cancer screening during TAKBO! Breast Friends. Most memorable during Pres. Mariecel's term was when their nominee for Women's Opportunity Awards won as SIA finalist winning a \$3,000.00 prize. Also during her term for 2 successive years, TAKBO! Breast Friends had the most number of participants.

In 2010, PP Vee Velasco became the club's 5th president. At their adopted community (Brgy. 841, Pandacan), st revived the club's Kasanayan ay Kabuhayan Project by conducting seminars on Fish, Vegetable & Fruit Processing. This year, Soroptimist Ortigas strongly joined the fight to end modern slavery & human trafficking. They adopted Visay Forum's Center of Hope in Antipolo (a half-way house for victims of human trafficking). They donated a whole line kitchen utensils, beddings and five Hewlett Packard computers to the center for their computer literacy program. They believe that the computer courses attended by trafficking survivors will give them many options to get better jobs.

Soroptimist Ortigas was one of 200 stakeholders who voiced out a unified commitment to end modern slavery & human trafficking in the Philippines. It was a week-long celebration. Most memorable was their get-together with over 100 trafficking survivors at Museo Pambata. How nice to hear the laughter of the girls, singing and thrilled as singer Christian Bautista serenaded them. The day ended with US Amb. Harry Thomas leading the girls as they wrote their dreams in colorful balloons later released to fly in the sky. As the balloons flew, we prayed that in time all their wishes and dreams will come true.

In 2011, Soroptimist Ortigas adopted Brgy Lambakin; Marilao, Bulacan. Here they conducted their first Breastfeeding Seminar with 50 women in attendance. This is in line with their impact project called Soroptimist Ortigas Breast Friends and in support of the government's Milk Code Law.

Pat Gualberto was the club's 6th president. Barely 2 months in office & in partnership with GiftLife, Inc., they brought their Breast Clinic to Los Banos, Laguna. Over 150 women attended the lecture and about a hundred underwent the screening. During her term, Pres. Pat had a serious medical condition. In spite of her physical absence, 2 skills training programs were conducted at the Fr. Louis Chauvet Found. School: Nail Care Training & Bar Tendering & Waitering.

In July 2014, Mary Gaw So became the club's 7th president. During her term, the club started 2 new projects: the SIA's Program called Dream It, Be It (DIBI) Seminar. It was first conducted at Don Bosco Makati. DIBI is a career support seminar for girls. The other new project is the tree planting activity of the club at Ipo Dam. Also conducted was a breast cancer awareness lecture & screening held at the ReHub Bldg. and 2 successful TAKBO! Breast Friends Run.

In July 2016, Ann Christine Palisoc started her term as the club's 8th president. She continued the 2 new projects of the club: a 2nd tree planting activity at Ipo Dam (a partnership with Manila Water & Wacoal) and the 2nd Dream It, Be It Seminar (a career support for girls) in Don Bosco Makati. Because Pres. Ann's goal is to have many more women screened for breast cancer, she brought GiftLife, Inc. to Brgy. Kapitoly and to Cervantes, Ilocos Sur where over 200 women were screened and 97% are high risk. To date over 300 patients have been screened. Recently, 28 women graduated from their Cosmetology Course at the Fr. Louis Chauvet Found. School (a network with Ang Hortaleza Foundation). Not to forget the successful TAKBO! Breast Friends 2016. More projects are up her sleeves as she ends her term in June 2018.

Today, Soroptimist International of Ortigas & Environs is sailing on new adventures. Their members are fired with enthusiasm and hope. They have stretched out their hands to serve others. Although they are still small in number, they have started to think big because they want miraculous results. They trust that the Lord is moving them to create and to do something good to advance the status of women and girls.