



Dream

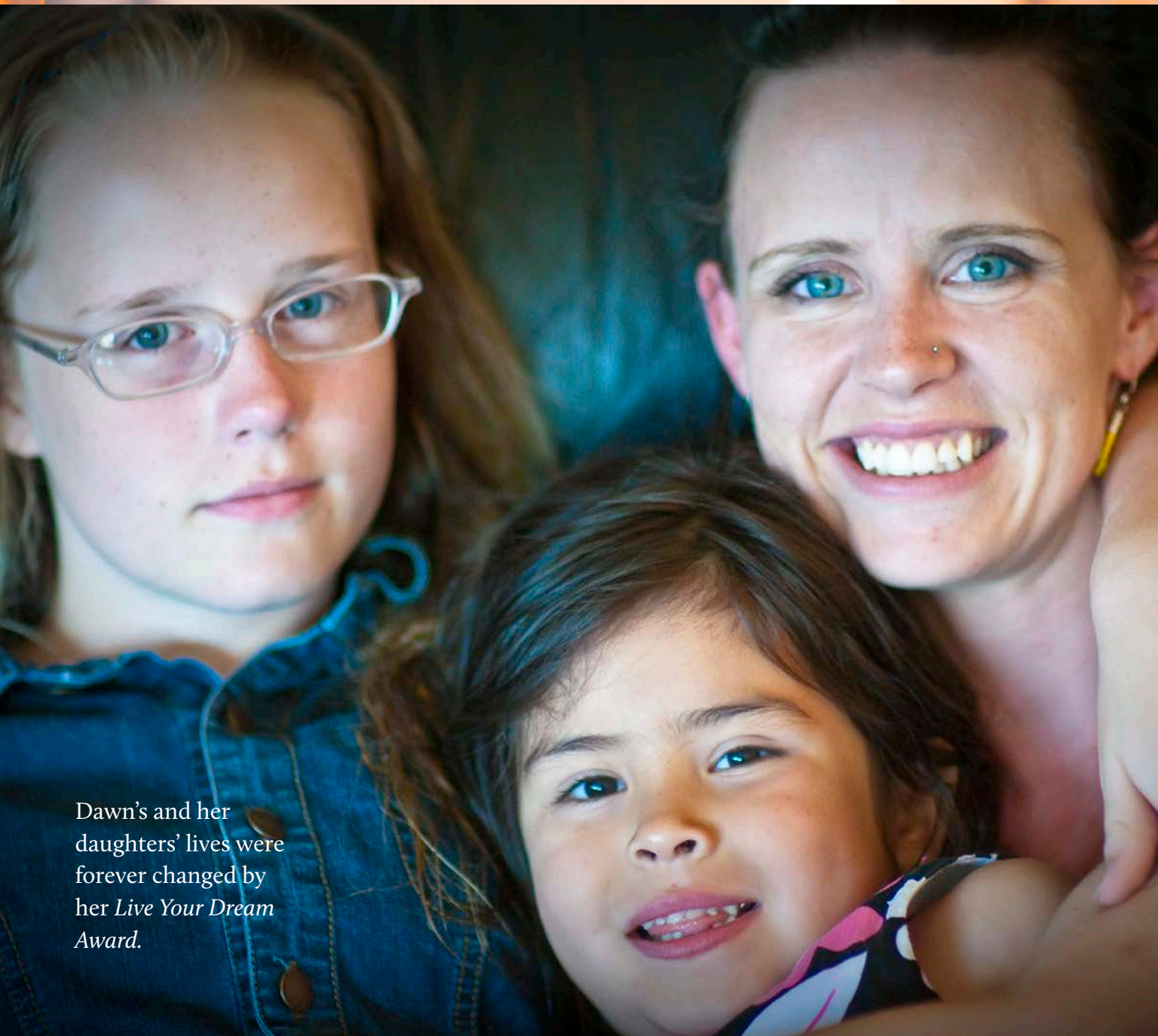
Big

*Campaign for Soroptimist International
of the Americas*

**Our most important
campaign ever ...**

**For half a million women and girls
like Dawn who need your help**

It was finally here... the day
you made Dawn's dream come true.



Dawn's and her
daughters' lives were
forever changed by
her *Live Your Dream*
Award.

“You’ve got this, Dawn. We believe in you!”

Those were the words that floated through Dawn's mind as she woke up that sunny morning in May.

They were the words that had carried her through from the moment she received her first cash grant through our *Live Your Dream Awards: Education and Training Awards for Women*®. And those were the words behind every gift from donors like you.

That cash grant, and the ones that followed, gave Dawn the power to make her own decisions. By empowering her to decide how best to use the money, the *Live Your Dream Awards* and support from Soroptimist® members gave her the confidence to take the next step toward a better future.

Dawn looked out into the audience with tears in her eyes as she walked on stage to receive her law degree from the University of British Columbia. She zeroed in on her two daughters, who smiled back at her with love, pride, and encouragement.

It was a surreal moment for Dawn—one she never would have dreamed of just a few years before.

For Dawn, this was an extraordinary achievement.

LIKE ALL OUR AWARD RECIPIENTS, Dawn had major obstacles to overcome in her journey to become a lawyer.

When she was a little girl, she dreamed of practicing law and changing the world. But in reality she was living a nightmare, and eventually her dreams faded away.

Dawn's parents were just children themselves when she was born. Two teenagers whose lives were defined by poverty and violence, they parented Dawn the way they'd been parented themselves.

Dawn turned to alcohol at the young age of 8 to numb herself from the years of physical and sexual abuse she had endured.

At 11, she was placed into the child welfare system.


By 12, she was living on the streets and addicted to crack cocaine.

At 13, she dropped out of school.

At 15, still a child herself, she was involved in an abusive relationship and became pregnant.

Those obstacles and traumas could easily have defeated anyone ... but not Dawn.

One day she woke up on the kitchen floor, surrounded by her own blood after a particularly violent beating from her then partner.



Evidence shows that a quality education—*more than any other intervention or solution*—holds the greatest potential to transform the lives of women and their children.

She looked into the eyes of her infant daughter and decided then and there to break the cycle of abuse and violence.

During her many weeks of recovery in the hospital, Dawn summoned her inner strength and began planning to take back her life. She knew that education was the path she needed to take. Education would lead to financial independence and to her youthful dreams coming true.



Dawn takes her first steps toward independence.

AFTER DECIDING TO LEAVE her old life behind, Dawn was accepted into the distance education program at the University of Victoria to complete her Bachelor of Arts in child and youth care.

By this time, her family had grown. Dawn had adopted her brother's young daughter, who'd been in the care of child welfare. She was now a single parent working full time to fund her full-time education and accumulating debt. **Dawn was in a state of financial crisis, and her plans were in real danger of being derailed.**

She remembers there would be times without much food. Many nights, she'd make dinner for her girls but not have enough to feed herself.

After Dawn received her first *Live Your Dream Award*, she no longer had to choose between affording groceries and her education. The award meant she could get out of survival mode and make room for education in her life while still caring for her daughters.



Shacambria, USA



Rhea, Philippines



Aziza, USA

Now is your time to lift up the many hundreds of thousands of other women and girls around the world who face obstacles to their education.

When you combine the resilience and determination of a woman with the support of donors like you, that's when we see all those big dreams come true.

Dawn will go on to make an incredible difference in the lives of her daughters, her community and the world. Her legal career will focus on marginalized women facing the same obstacles she faced herself.

Dawn will touch countless women. You can too.

We believe in the power of dreaming big.

THAT'S WHY WE'VE SET A GOAL through our **Dream Big Campaign** of investing in the dreams of half a million women and girls through our Dream Programs.

That's four times the number of women and girls we currently reach. Realizing half a million big dreams will have an incredible impact on women, their families, their communities, and the world.

Many of the women who receive our *Live Your Dream Awards* go into helping professions: becoming nurses, educators, lawyers, and social workers. They're driven to help others who face disadvantages the way they or their children have. This means that the ripple effect of our programs goes far beyond the women and their families.

Entire communities benefit.

Natalia, Mexico/USA



Pachara, Thailand/Japan



Dream It, Be It participants, USA

Our newest program, *Dream It, Be It: Career Support for Girls*[®], has provided more than 50,000 vulnerable girls in secondary school with the support they need to accomplish their career dreams. Support includes mentorship, goal-setting, tools to overcome setbacks, and career planning.

The program is an intervention at a critical time in the girl's life. *Dream It, Be It* was designed to help girls avoid situations like the ones Dawn found herself in. If she'd had that type of support at a young age, Dawn's early life might have gone in a much different direction.

Just imagine what half a million women and girls living on their own terms could do for our world!



Half a million women and girls are waiting for your helping hand so they, too, can live their dreams.

Today, thanks to you, Dawn and her daughters no longer live in poverty, and their future is bright.

It's time to Dream

Big

Dream of a world where all women and girls can pursue their dreams of education and a secure future for their children.

Imagine those dreams becoming reality.

A world where women and girls can freely access the education and training they need to achieve economic empowerment.

A world where they create a wave of change that shapes not just themselves, but also their families and their communities for the better.

Will you help?



Ana Caren, Mexico; Lucia, Canada; Shamayel, Afghanistan/USA

It's a big, audacious goal.

But no more audacious than the courage and resolve of the women and girls our Dream Big campaign will impact.

We need your help to make it happen.

Please give generously, and make dreams come true for women and girls like Dawn. Your gift tells them,

"You've got this. We believe in you!"



SOROPTIMIST®

Investing in Dreams

“We will not achieve the Sustainable Development Goals if there is no accelerated action to empower women economically. We know that women’s participation in all spheres of life, including in the economy, is essential to sustainable and durable peace and to the realization of human rights.”

U.N. SECRETARY-GENERAL ANTÓNIO GUTERRES



SOROPTIMIST[®]

Investing in Dreams

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The women and girls shown are actual recipients or participants of our Soroptimist Dream Programs.

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