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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Soroptimist Celebrates Triangle Women of Distinction.**

**Soroptimist International of Raleigh, NC hosted its Annual Triangle Women of Distinction Awards Celebration on April 14, 2010.** This year marked the twenty-first year for Soroptimist celebrating the contribution local women make serving our community.

**Raleigh, NC, April 14, 2010** The Soroptimist's Annual Triangle Women of Distinction Awards Celebration honored Triangle women living their dreams. Dr. Maureen Hartford, Meredith College President, was the keynote speaker and Sonya Williams, Tarheel Talk Hostess and Producer, served as mistress of ceremonies.

More than 90 people attended the event, which included a silent auction fund-raiser. Approximately \$6,670 was raised through a raffle and generous silent auction donations. Among the sponsors were Bailey's Fine Jewelry and Merrill Lynch, Cary NC. The funds raise will be used to support the service projects of Soroptimist International of Raleigh, NC.

Soroptimist honored Dr. Lisa Tolnitch as this year's recipient of the Soroptimist Ruby Award: For Women Helping Women. Dr. Tolnitch has focused exclusively on the treatment of breast disease since 1991. Her vision of bringing the most effective and least invasive treatments of breast cancer to the Triangle has helped thousands of women throughout North Carolina. As an organization dedicated to improving the lives of women and girls, Soroptimist was proud to present this prestigious award to Dr. Tolnitch. A \$500 donation was made to the Pretty In Pink Foundation, founded by Dr. Tolnitch to ensure that quality, life saving medical treatment, regardless of the ability to pay, is available to breast cancer patients who need it most.

Recognition was also given to the recipients of two additional awards, the Soroptimist Women's Opportunity Award and the Soroptimist Violet Richardson Award. The Soroptimist Women's Opportunity Award, which provides financial aid to a female head-of-household seeking to improve her life through education, was awarded to Kerry Ford and Laura Parker Romero. Ms. Ford, as first place recipient, received a cash award of \$1500 and a \$500 educational assistance grant. Ms. Romero, as runner up, received a \$500 cash award. Both recipients are studying to become nurses.

The Soroptimist Violet Richardson Award, which recognizes a teen for her volunteer efforts, was given to Catherina Gomes. Ms. Gomes, a senior at Cardinal Gibbons High School, is involved with numerous organizations as a volunteer. She received a \$500 cash award and a \$250 donation was made to her charity of choice, the Shepherd's Table Soup Kitchen.

Soroptimist International of Raleigh, NC would like to recognize Capstrat for sponsoring the Soroptimist Ruby Award and the National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO) Greater Raleigh for providing the Soroptimist Women's Opportunity Award educational assistance grant.

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**Soroptimist International of Raleigh, NC**

Founded in 1921, Soroptimist is an international volunteer organization of business and professional women. The name, Soroptimist, means "Best for Women." The mission of Soroptimist is to improve the lives of women and girls in local communities and throughout the world. Soroptimist International of Raleigh, NC, chartered in 1987, is a 501(c)(3) organization solely run and

operated by volunteers. Locally, Soroptimist is focused on helping women achieve economic independence, ending domestic violence against women and their Triangle Women of Distinction Awards. For more information on ways to help, how to donate or how to become a volunteer, and/or become a member, visit [www.soroptimistraleigh.org](http://www.soroptimistraleigh.org).