

Media & Project Contacts

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 10, 2026

Maria Newhouse

Public Image Chair, Rotary Club of Kalamazoo

Email: maria.newhouse@kzoo.edu

Lucinda Stinson

President-Elect, Rotary Club of Kalamazoo

Email: lmstinson@lendinghandsmi.org

Rotary Club of Kalamazoo Elects First African American Female President

KALAMAZOO, Mich.—On Monday, July 6, the Rotary Club of Kalamazoo celebrated one of its most meaningful traditions as outgoing President Dann Sytsma officially passed the gavel to Lucinda M. Stinson during the club's annual Passing of the Gavel ceremony. The ceremony marked a historic milestone for the organization as Stinson became the first African American woman to serve as President of the Rotary Club of Kalamazoo.

Stinson brings more than four decades of leadership experience in healthcare, nonprofit management, education, and community service to the role. A lifelong learner, she holds a Bachelor of Arts from Spring Arbor University and a master's degree in public administration from Western Michigan University, where she also completed all doctoral degree coursework.

Her commitment to service is rooted in a family legacy of community leadership. Stinson's family owned the first African American business in Kalamazoo, an experience that shaped her lifelong belief in investing in people, strengthening neighborhoods, and creating opportunities for others. That foundation has guided a career dedicated to improving the health and well-being of the Kalamazoo community.

Beginning in 1979 as a registered respiratory therapist at Bronson Methodist Hospital, Stinson went on to serve in numerous executive leadership roles, including Deputy Director of the Kalamazoo County Health and Community Services Department; Chief Operations Officer of Family Health Center; Executive Director of the Kalamazoo County Health Plan, which provided health insurance to underserved members of the community; and leadership positions with Borgess Medical Center and the South Michigan Healthcare Coalition. She also served as Interim Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity and has contributed her expertise through board leadership with organizations including Hospice of Southwest Michigan and Housing Resources, Inc.

Today, while "semi-retired," Stinson continues to serve the Kalamazoo community as CEO of Lending Hands of Southwest Michigan, teaches graduate and undergraduate courses in Western Michigan University's College of Health and Human Services, and serves as President of the Kalamazoo Valley Community College Board of Trustees.

As Rotary Club President, Stinson has selected **"We Go Where They Are"** as her theme for the 2026-2027 Rotary year. The theme reflects a commitment to meeting people where they are, building meaningful relationships throughout the community, and making Rotary more accessible to individuals who want to serve.

That vision begins this fall with **Discover Rotary**, a community open house on **Thursday, September 17, from 5:00-7:00 p.m. at Mt. Zion Baptist Church**. The free event invites community members to learn about Rotary, meet local leaders and volunteers, explore service opportunities, and discover how they can make an impact both locally and around the world.

"Rotary has always been about people," Stinson said. "This year we're focused on going where people already are, listening first, building relationships, and inviting more people to join us in serving our community."

The Rotary Club of Kalamazoo welcomes anyone interested in community service, leadership, professional networking, or simply learning more about Rotary to attend Discover Rotary. To learn more about the Rotary Club of Kalamazoo, please visit www.kalamazoorotary.org.

###

About the Rotary Club of Kalamazoo

The Rotary Club of Kalamazoo is one of Southwest Michigan's oldest and largest service organizations, bringing together business, professional, and community leaders who are committed to creating lasting change. As part of Rotary International's global network of more than 1.4 million members, the club supports local service projects, youth leadership programs, scholarships, humanitarian initiatives, and international service efforts while fostering fellowship and civic engagement.

Editor's note: Five images are included for your use.

- *Rotary Club of Kalamazoo's logo*
- *Rotary Club of Kalamazoo outgoing President Dann Sytsma embraces incoming President Lucinda Stinson as Rotarians applaud*
- *A club guest photographs incoming Rotary Club of Kalamazoo President Lucinda Stinson as she shares her vision for the 2026-27 Rotary year*
- *Rotary Club of Kalamazoo President Lucinda Stinson thanks her daughter, standing, and others for their support during her installation*
- *Newly installed Rotary Club of Kalamazoo President Lucinda Stinson shares her vision for the 2026-27 Rotary year*