



Hello, my name is Sophie-Chanel Bourré, and it is an honor to be the Junior Optimist International President for the 2020-2021 year. I am from Ottawa, Ontario, in Canada and a member of the Samuel-Genest High School Optimist Club in the Eastern Ontario District, where I have held the position of President for the past four years. I am also proud to begin my eighth year as a Junior Optimist International member. This organization encourages youth to give back to their community and makes me feel that I am part of a big worldwide Optimist family. I have met so many wonderful people throughout my optimist journey that have the same vision that I do, as well as a place for me to give back to my community, no matter where I am in the world for years to come!

I am excited to announce this year's JOI theme: Shooting for the stars of Optimism. This theme is very dear to my heart. In my day to day life, I have always been encouraged to reach for the stars in other galaxies. I was told that by reaching that far, if I missed, I would still land among the stars! This year, by working with my extremely talented Board of Directors, I plan to help JOI members, our stars of Optimism shine bright as they continue the great work that is accomplished by our organization and by encouraging new members to shoot for the stars of Optimism with them.

I have often heard Optimist members say that they did not really know what Junior Optimist Clubs do or that they did not have one in their community. Together with you, Optimist members, let us join forces to help improve participation, growth, inclusion and to continue in the promotion of both our organizations globally. Let's work together to help reach as many youth in our communities as possible and to encourage them to join a Junior Optimist Club. If you do not have a JOI Club in your area, consider creating and sponsoring one through your Optimist Club! There are many advantages to sponsoring a new JOI Club. This will not only promote community service among the youth in your community as well as help them become youth leaders, but will also ensure the future of Optimist International, as most of our JOI members wish to continue on their optimistic journey by becoming OI members once they are adults. With your help, our youth organization can thrive even more, by continuing to create new international clubs, improve our visibility worldwide via different social media communication platforms and find and share new innovative ways to help our communities and youth in need through JOI.

Being an organization that helps youth, I send you all this challenge: How many youth in your community can you recruit this year to help us expand our Junior Optimist International family?

This year will be a very different kind of year. But I firmly believe that as optimists we will be able to find new ways to continue helping our communities in need, both virtually and by finding and sharing fun and original ways to give back. Together, while adapting to these changes in our daily lives, let us make this year an unforgettable one for both our organizations and youth in need worldwide, by choosing optimism.

As written in our optimist creed: *Look at the sunny side of everything and make your optimism come true*, and do not forget to smile because life is beautiful!

I hope to see you all either virtually or in person at the 2020-2021 International Convention in Atlanta, Georgia.
Yours in Optimism,

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chanel".

Sophie-Chanel Bourré
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