

New Frontiers

Polaris in 2018 and Beyond

Polaris





MEDITERRANEE

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and Beyond



LETTER FROM THE CEO

2018: Looking Back, Moving Ahead

For the past two decades, much of the work in the anti-human trafficking field has focused on ensuring people in a position to make change understand that the crime exists at all. Today, thanks to the tireless work of survivors and others, awareness of human trafficking has grown dramatically.

That awareness has in turn led to far more survivors seeking and receiving support - and perpetrators being held accountable. At Polaris, we have seen this firsthand, as signals to the Polaris-operated National Human Trafficking Hotline climb year after year. Clearly, there is much to be proud of. The field has also built a solid network of victim services, trained frontline professionals to know the signs of trafficking, and passed a foundation of strong anti-trafficking laws. But as the number of cases coming into the National Hotline continues to grow, so does our sense that it is time for the field to move towards new ways of fighting trafficking, to explore new frontiers, and to supplement the focus on general awareness and individual case response to strategies that can prevent and disrupt human trafficking at a massive scale.

That shift has materialized in a number of ways, beginning with a strategic plan that clearly maps where we want to go and, in broad strokes, how to get there. The short version of the itinerary is that we begin with data to understand the problem, which provides the basis for strategy, and ultimately, action.

In the meantime, we have a great deal to show for what has been accomplished to date on this journey into new frontiers - a groundbreaking treatise on how private businesses intersect with trafficking and how they can be part of the solution; a first-of-its-kind look at how labor trafficking works in Mexico; systematically dismantling systems that allow for human trafficking at commercial-front brothels; passage of major anti-sex trafficking legislation; and an innovative commitment to ensuring the voices and perspectives of survivors inform all the work of Polaris and the anti-trafficking field as a whole. Hard as it is to believe, these pages comprise just a few highlights of this exciting and jam-packed year. There is so much more - and this is of course, just the beginning.

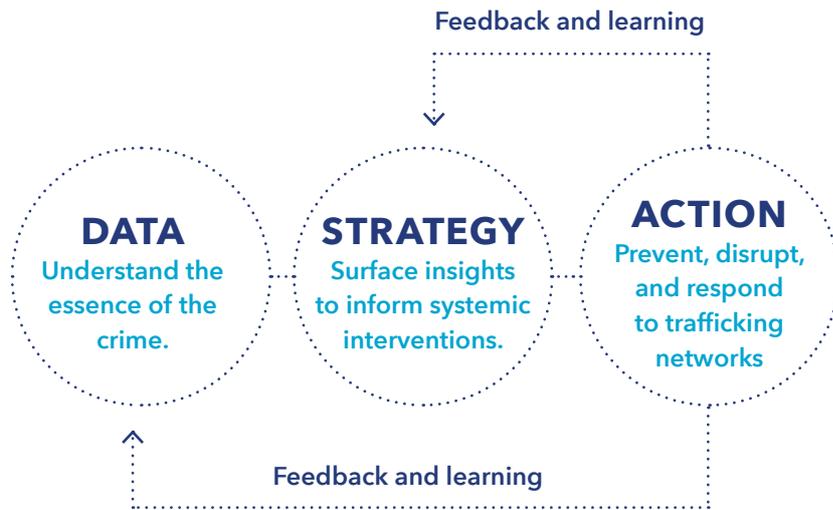
None of it would have been possible without the support of countless individuals, partners, businesses, and philanthropic foundations who have invested in our mission and those we serve. So much more is possible still. We are grateful, humbled, and most of all excited about the New Frontiers ahead.

Thank you for making those possibilities real.

Bradley Myles
CEO, Polaris

Polaris Systemic Change Model

Polaris creates and elevates data-driven strategies and tools that catalyze systemic change within and beyond the anti-trafficking field, with the aim of long-term eradication of human trafficking.



New Frontiers in Public Policy

Sometimes the straightest path to systems change runs through the United States Congress. Straight, of course, does not mean easy. Getting laws passed is a painstaking process that takes time, patience, and a great deal of flexibility. But when it works, the shifts can be seismic.

In the anti-trafficking world, we saw this firsthand with the passage of legislation that will hold online advertising companies accountable when they actively and knowingly facilitate the crime of trafficking. Polaris was proud to play a significant role in advocating for this legislation, the ripple effects of which are still being felt after the bill's passage sent a shockwave throughout the online sex trafficking industry. Labor traffickers are next in line for a wake-up call as the anti-trafficking world turns its attention toward a broken guestworker system that enables exploitation and abuse.

Other highlights and ongoing legislative battles include:

- ◆ The [Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act](#) is a continuation and expansion of a comprehensive federal framework for fighting human trafficking worldwide and in the United States. Polaris and coalition partners have been instrumental in ensuring these programs are properly designed and adequately funded, and in pushing to get this vital legislation over the finish line.
- ◆ Working with Sens. Rob Portman of Ohio and Richard Blumenthal of Connecticut, Polaris supported introduction of the [Responsibility for Unaccompanied Minors Act](#), which clarifies that the U.S. Department of Health and

Human Services is responsible for keeping track and ensuring the safety of children who attempt to immigrate to this country without adult supervision.

- ✦ With support from Polaris, legislation to continue and expand the [SOAR or Stop, Observe, Ask, and Respond program passed the U.S. House of Representatives in February](#). This program equips practitioners, organizations, and communities to identify trafficking victims, offer trauma-informed and culturally appropriate care, and implement proper protocols and procedures for referring victims and survivors to appropriate services.
- ✦ Polaris was instrumental in pushing for the [Empowering Financial Institutions To Fight Human Trafficking Act](#), introduced by Rep. Ann Wagner of Missouri and passed through the U.S. House of Representatives. This legislation protects banks and nonprofits from liability for sharing data that can help financial institutions detect possible signs of human trafficking.

- ✦ Sens. Ron Wyden of Oregon and John Cornyn of Texas worked with Polaris to draft and introduce the [Human Trafficking Survivor Tax Relief Act of 2018](#), which would exempt civil damages, restitution, and other monetary awards given to human trafficking survivors from federal income taxes.
- ✦ The bipartisan [Visa Transparency Anti-Trafficking Act](#), introduced by Sens. Blumenthal and Ted Cruz of Texas, would require information about temporary guest-worker programs be collected and made public so would-be workers, employers, consumers, nonprofits, and others can make the best possible choices about who to go work for in the United States - and potentially which companies, if any, should be held accountable for poor treatment or even trafficking of workers.

Big Legislative Win: Holding Online Sex Traffickers Accountable

The 2018 Stop Enabling Sex Traffickers Act and the Allow States and Victims to Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act (SESTA-FOSTA) creates a new civil right of action for victims as well as state criminal and civil prosecutorial authority against online marketplaces that knowingly participate in sex trafficking. The fight for this law began when families of minors who were sold for sex sued Backpage.com, the site that hosted the ads featuring their children. U.S. Senate investigators found that Backpage.com had worked in collaboration with traffickers, editing their advertisements of young girls so that they would draw less law enforcement scrutiny when posted on the site. The new law also prohibits using the internet with the intent to promote or facilitate the prostitution of another person.

Just a few days before the law was signed, federal law enforcement seized Backpage.com and announced the indictment of Backpage executives. Polaris had worked for over eight years towards that moment. Backpage hosted ads that resulted in 44 percent of all online sex trafficking cases reported to the National Human Trafficking Hotline. The timing of the indictment created the impression that the new law made the charges against Backpage possible where they were not before. In reality, the charges were based on a lengthy investigation into allegations of criminal activity including money laundering and conspiracy to facilitate prostitution.

Nonetheless, the timing of the seizure of Backpage, coupled with the passage of the new law, has dramatically disrupted the online sex trafficking marketplace.

Major Anti-Labor Trafficking Agenda Item: Fix Temporary Work Visas

Temporary work visas are supposed to be a classic win-win - helping employers fill jobs that would otherwise go empty and giving workers from overseas an opportunity to fulfill their dreams and work in the U.S. But the reality is far darker. In 2018, Polaris released a major report detailing how this program has turned into a major revenue source for human traffickers. The study, based on data from the National Human Trafficking Hotline, found 814 individual victims of human trafficking between 2015 and 2017 who were here in the U.S. and working on temporary visas. This figure - nearly half of all the victims of labor trafficking reported to the Hotline during this period whose immigration status was identified - likely represents only a fraction of the number of actual victims. Polaris is fighting to improve the temporary visa program and offer protections against trafficking by requiring data about bad actors to be collected and made public. Other major focuses to reduce trafficking on temporary visas include enforcement of a ban on recruitment fees paid to labor brokers by the workers seeking visas and an end to the practice of tying the visas to a single employer. Tied visas often mean that the moment workers leave an abusive labor situation at the employer that sponsored their visas, they are no longer legally allowed to be in this country. These major reforms to the temporary visa system will help prevent trafficking from occurring and will help reduce the conditions that make workers vulnerable to trafficking in the first place.

Building a Safety Net and Response Across National Borders

Any explorer lighting out for new territory needs a reliable compass. Ours is data, and it pointed us south, to Mexico. The groundbreaking *Typology of Modern Slavery* report found that there are 25 distinct business models of human trafficking in the United States. Further analysis revealed that Mexican citizens comprise the highest percentage of victims and survivors in 15 of these types.

Clearly, if we want to end human trafficking in the United States, we have to work on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border to build partnerships, programs, and political will. In 2018, those efforts began to bear tangible fruit.

Highlights include:

✦ **Mapping the landscape of labor trafficking in Mexico:**

Polaris researchers and partners in Mexico compiled the most comprehensive report to date on the prevalence and patterns of labor trafficking throughout the country and held two high-level presentations with key policymakers in Mexico to put the informa-

tion in context and offer tangible solutions and steps forward.

✦ **Building out the safety net for victims and survivors:**

In 2018, we celebrated the third year of partnership with Consejo Ciudadano, which today operates Mexico's national human trafficking hotline. By the end of 2017, Consejo's referral directory included 650 organizations equipped to provide victim-centered services. Today, Consejo's Línea Nacional Contra la Trata de Personas has been endorsed by the Mexican Government and named by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) as the designated national hotline for

their national awareness campaign throughout Mexico.

✦ **On-the-ground data collection:** Reliable data about labor trafficking - the first step toward a solution - is virtually nonexistent in Mexico, despite a general understanding that exploitation is widespread, especially among farmworkers. To add to the existing knowledge base, and to provide both actionable insights for change and tangible support

for survivors as necessary, Polaris designed a unique text message platform to collect data from agricultural workers vulnerable to labor trafficking. We've collected responses from over 700 farmworkers in Mexico. This ongoing project will paint a clear picture of how and why recruiters and employers prey on specific groups in Mexico, what the work experience is like, and ultimately, how to end the abusive conditions.

Call for help from Mexico leads to freedom in California

Maria's family in Mexico was worried about her. After migrating to the U.S., she called them one night from where she was living in California and told them for the first time that she was being forced into the sex trade against her will. Her brother-in-law in Mexico had recently learned about Mexico's national hotline and contacted the Línea Nacional Contra la Trata operated by Consejo Ciudadano to tell them about what he heard was happening in the United States. Consejo received his permission to connect him with National Human Trafficking Hotline in the United States and transferred the call to Polaris. Once learning of the case from our Mexican counterparts, we worked with the caller to get Maria the information she needed to contact us at a time when she could safely be in touch. Maria then texted the U.S. Hotline, and we coordinated with a network of law enforcement in the area to extract her from danger. She is now safe and getting the help she needs to rebuild her life. Maria probably didn't realize when she made that first phone call to her brother-in-law that she would set in motion a chain reaction of multiple national hotlines teaming up and working across borders to help get her out of the trafficking situation.

"If someone wants to stay here during the day, they close the gates, and if someone jumps the fence, they put you in jail. We do not have freedom."

(agricultural worker, East-Central Mexico)

"They promised everything, but they were cheating. We were sleeping on a bed frame, without a mattress. They told us that we would have drinking water, but we do not have access to it, we have to buy it. They do not pay extra time, they tell us that we did not do any extra time or they say that they do not have them registered."

(agricultural worker, East-Central Mexico)



Optimizing and Modernizing the National Human Trafficking Hotline

As signals to the National Human Trafficking Hotline continue to grow, year over year, Polaris continues to refine the technology, staffing, and systems that make it possible for us to keep up with the ever-expanding need.

In 2018, we took a number of major leaps in that direction, including:

- ✦ Adding an entirely new “chat” function that allows signalers who may not have access to a phone or sufficient access to data to work with a Hotline Advocate on the other end in real time;
- ✦ Expanding access to the BeFree textline from what used to be only a single shift to now be available to receive texts 24-hours-a-day, seven days a week, just like telephone assistance; and

- ✦ Creating new positions dedicated to identifying, mapping, and partnering with an up-to-date list of law enforcement and service providers around the country to ensure that all available referral information is current at all times, and to identify and help fill gaps so that the right kind of help is available to all vulnerable and underserved populations.

2018 is on track to be another record-setting year on the National Human Trafficking Hotline. **In the first six months of 2018 the National Human Trafficking Hotline received:**



Of the cases identified in 2018:



On Ramps, Intersections, and Exit Routes: Leveraging the Power of the Private Sector

In 2017, Polaris broke new ground in the anti-trafficking field with the publication of the [Typology of Modern Slavery](#), which for the first time identified the 25 distinct business models of human trafficking in the United States. In 2018, with the help of survivors, we went deeper, taking a magnifying glass to each of these business models to illuminate how each of these businesses really work, in real time. Specifically, the survivor advisors we engaged with helped guide us through how the business plan of a trafficking enterprise exists within a larger commercial matrix or ecosystem, depending on and intersecting with a range of legitimate industries and systems. What we learned formed the basis of [On Ramps, Intersections, and Exit Routes: A Roadmap for Systems and Industries to Disrupt and Prevent Human Trafficking](#).

Examples are abundant. Traffickers use banks to store their earnings and buses to move their victims around; hotel rooms are integral to the operations of some sex traffickers; social media is a vital recruitment trawling ground for others. It is at these intersections that legitimate businesses and systems can intervene to provide support, prevent recruitment, and hold traffickers accountable.

Governments can do some of this work. Nonprofits and advocates can also help. But neither can do it alone. The private sector, with its ability to move nimbly and its economic leverage, must be part of the solution. Many from the private sector have already joined the fight in recent years - but we need all to engage.

Intersections in action

Delta joined forces with Polaris in 2017 to create and disseminate bespoke trainings equipping 80,000 Delta employees with the tools to identify signs of trafficking and respond effectively and appropriately when they do. Delta also incorporated Polaris into its SkyWish charity program, enabling customers to donate SkyMiles to Polaris to use on the National Human Trafficking Hotline - and Delta made an initial donation of three million miles. From leaving a trafficking situation, to traveling to testify in court, to flying to long-term recovery programs, the miles donated to the Hotline provide life-changing opportunities to survivors who otherwise may have been left without options. Delta's partnership is a prime example of a company using its resources to help break cycles of abuse and ensure survivors have the support they need to access critical services.

BE ALERT FOR HUMAN TRAFFICKING.

THEY HIDE IN PLAIN SIGHT.

SIGNS OF ASKING FOR HELP • AVOIDS EYE CONTACT
HEAVILY GUARDED • PHYSICAL SIGNS OF DISTRESS
HIGH LEVEL OF NERVOUSNESS • SOMETHING IS JUST OFF

Report any signs by contacting law enforcement, texting 233733, or calling the National Human Trafficking Hotline at 1-888-373-7888.

#GET ONBOARD Polaris DELTA



Survivor Empowerment: Real Experts, Real Engagement, Real Change

Stories are powerful. That's a basic truism in nonprofit advocacy. Put a human face, a real experience, behind a set of facts and with it you can get people to care and then to act.

But telling and retelling a story of trauma can itself be a traumatic experience. And best intentions aside, too often survivors of human trafficking are left feeling tokenized or condescended to by the very organizations that claim to respect and value their contributions.

In 2018, Polaris committed to doing better, to pioneering an anti-trafficking model where survivors inform every aspect of the work we do and to recognizing that survivors are so much more than their stories. They are the true experts in the field. Working with survivors is not just the right thing to do, it is also the only way to ensure that our work will be effective and have a lasting impact.

Our internal database of nearly 200 survivor consultants is driving the incubation of this effort. We are currently engaging consultants to review key protocols for the National Hotline to strengthen our messaging and response to meet the needs of survivors the first time, every time. The consultant database was also the primary avenue to recruit survivor survey participants for the [On Ramps, Intersections, and Exit Routes: A Roadmap for Systems and Industries to Disrupt and Prevent Human Trafficking](#) report and subsequent focus group discussions.

The cornerstone of our commitment is the creation and management of an external database of survivor consultants on a national scale who are available to provide guidance to the anti-trafficking field in program design - to filmmakers and other artists looking to tell realistic, non-exploitative stories, and to service providers and law enforcement officials looking to do the best possible job in their work. Our internal database of nearly 200 survivors is driving the effort.

Other commitments and projects in this growing area include:

- ✦ Ensuring survivor review and input on all National Human Trafficking Hotline protocols;
- ✦ Promoting the importance of hiring survivors for expert consultation on all projects to other stakeholders in the anti-trafficking field, public policy, and the arts; and
- ✦ Working with corporations on programs to help them create career opportunities for survivors of human trafficking.
- ✦ Hosting regular interactive forums with survivors to provide information, answer questions, and take suggestions about improving the Hotline;



Pioneering New Approaches To Shuttering Sex Trafficking Venues

The term “brothel” sounds antiquated in this day and age but in fact, the commercial front brothels business is thriving in the United States today. The disconnect is that today’s brothels look nothing like what many in the United States picture from old Western films and the like.

Brothels today are likely to be in strip malls, rather than private establishments; hiding behind other, seemingly legal businesses. The two most common types are illicit massage businesses - commonly known as “massage parlors” - and cantinas - bars and restaurants that may also sell drinks as a cover for selling commercial sex, mostly to a Latino/Hispanic male clientele.

Trafficking is rampant in both of these types of establishments and in 2018, Polaris took major steps toward shutting them down.

Our strategy is to go big on a national scale. The report we published early in the year mapped at least 9,000 illicit massage businesses in the United States. We have also researched and identified cantinas at risk for sex trafficking around the country. Now we are working to change the way law enforcement approaches massage parlor investigations; we’re bringing new allies into the fight against commercial front brothels - including liquor inspection agencies - and we are expanding the social service safety net to ensure that women who are caught in these kinds of trafficking businesses have real options for getting out and staying away from their traffickers.

In 2018, we:

- ✦ Trained over 1,500 law enforcement agents and frontline professionals to better identify trafficking when they encounter it, to conduct more effective trafficking investigations, and to engage with victims in a more trauma-informed and victim-centered manner;
- ✦ Played an advisory, consultative, or support role in shutting down 225 total massage parlors where sex trafficking was likely occurring;
- ✦ Continued building out and mapping a unique safety net that spans and connects over 70 specialized service provider organizations nationwide that are best equipped to provide trauma-informed culturally-competent services to survivor populations who have experienced sex trafficking in illicit massage businesses and cantinas; and
- ✦ Assisted nearly 50 jurisdictions in crafting new business and code regulations that can help shut down cantinas and massage parlors permanently and make the business climate inhospitable to their reopening.

Supporting Other Explorers: Collaboration and Partnerships to Strengthen the Field

No single nonprofit is going to end human trafficking on its own. But working together, around the world, with advocates, survivors, law enforcement, governments and businesses, we can reach that final frontier.

Partnerships therefore are central to the work we do, whether that's finding new and innovative ways to infuse the field with data or helping other nation's set up and run effective, efficient Hotlines.

Creating a worldwide data hub

Polaris partnered with the International Organization (IOM) for Migration to create the [Counter-Trafficking Data Collaborative](#). Together, we launched this first-ever publicly available global data set on human trafficking. The CTDC so far combines data from IOM, Polaris and

Liberty Asia. As the field collects and contributes additional data, we will all have a single, unified hub of information that can be used to disrupt and prevent human trafficking around the world.

Expanding the Hotline safety net

Polaris has joined forces with the Canadian Centre to End Human Trafficking, which was awarded a grant by the Canadian government to set up Canada's first ever national human trafficking hotline. The hands-on partnership includes consultation on building a national response network of service providers, as well as developing policies and protocols. Partners from Canada came to Washington, D.C. for a four-day intensive immersion training - an opportunity to go behind the scenes of the Hotline and experience how the different staff, systems, protocols, and tools work together.

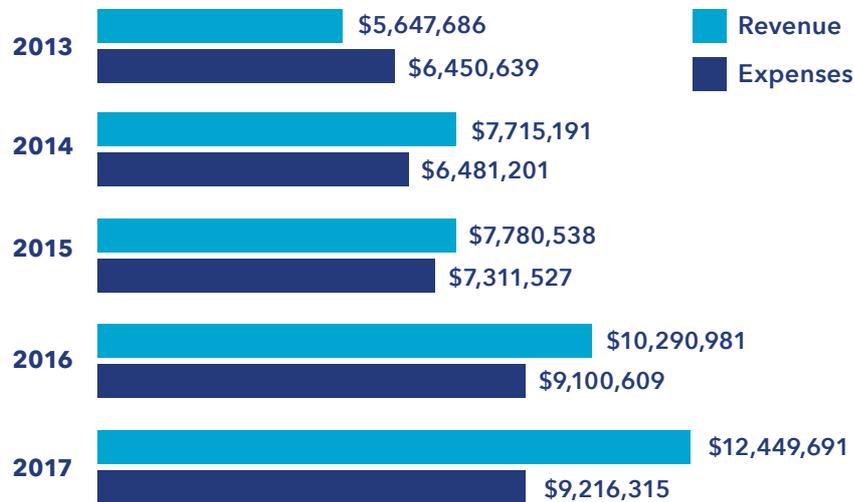
Financial Report

2017 Summary

Fiscal Responsibility

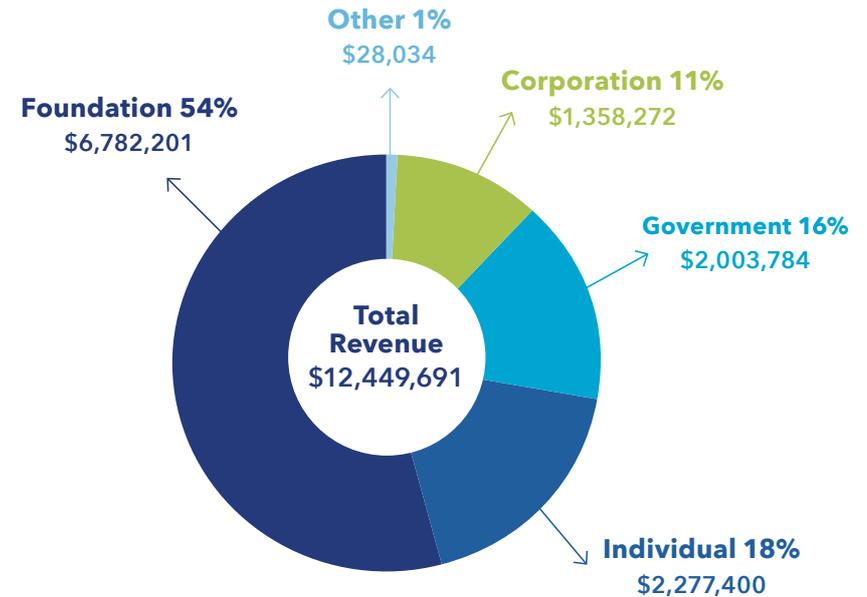
Polaris is a leader in the global fight to eradicate modern slavery and restore freedom to survivors. We are committed to effectively and efficiently utilizing every dollar we raise. In recognition of this fiscal responsibility, Charity Navigator has awarded a 4-star rating to Polaris for eight consecutive years. Only 2% of rated charities have achieved this recognition.

Financial History Since 2013

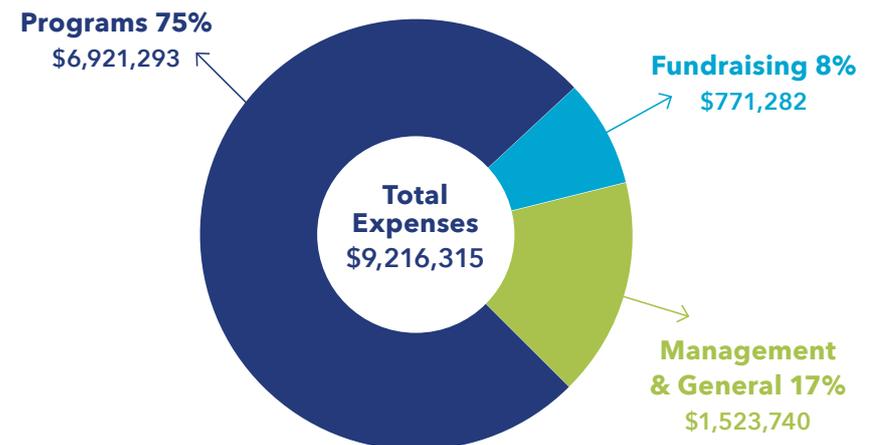


Multi-year grants are recognized in full in the year they are awarded and used to cover current and future year operations.

Breakdown of Funding



Expenses By Functional Class



Board of Directors

Catherine A. McLean
Chairperson

Elizabeth Eun
Treasurer

Joel R. Charny
Secretary

Roy L. Austin, Jr.

Lisa Benenson

Gail MacKinnon

Greg Moore

Steve Rosenthal

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Chief Executive Officer

Nancy McGuire Choi
Chief Operating Officer

Caren Benjamin
Chief Communications Officer

Catherine Chen
Chief Programs Officer

Emily Tracy
Chief Development Officer



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