

Annual 2023 Report: A Year in Review

It is exciting to see the resilience in our organization and the gains we are making as we continue to recover from the pandemic. In-person meetings are resuming, although many have discovered the convenience of Zoom, phone and chat meetings. Meetings held virtually remove geographic boundaries so we can reach people who are isolated by physical location or do not have the ability to attend meetings in-person. To get back to the feeling of community, we began planning conferences again. Being in-person together offers a sense of connection that we can't quite achieve through electronics.

As always, if it weren't for our volunteer leaders, we would have no way to offer RI meetings. You are our bedrock, and we are grateful to you. As our meetings grow, so does our need for qualified leaders in a variety of geographic locations. We have members from Austria, Canada, Croatia, England, Germany, India, Ireland, Israel, Sweden, as well as the United States and Puerto Rico. Over 9,000 peer-led meetings were held last year, serving more than 70,000 participants. In addition to the Spanish-language Zoom meeting, a Spanish-language Newcomers meeting was added, as well as a meeting in Japanese.

To support our leaders, we have a strong, talented staff who help us make a difference. Volunteers and staff together have increased leadership training opportunities so that our groups are consistent and high quality. Expanded educational

opportunities for our members and leaders enhance the development of our practices.

The group-mindedness of our members, through your generous financial and volunteer support of RI, allows us to continue to provide services to those currently unable to contribute, as we work to return to pre-pandemic levels of giving. The kindness and generosity of those who remember RI in their wills and estate plans ensures a legacy of giving and continued service.

As Dr. Low wrote, mental health is our supreme purpose. It is an honor to work together to help people achieve greater peace in their lives. We are grateful to you for your support in serving this higher purpose, as together we strive for Better. Mental. Health.

Warmest wishes,



Celinda Jungheim, President



Karen G. Hall, CEO

Programs, Outreach, and Looking Ahead

Programs and Outreach

Our programs serve the mission of helping people gain skills to lead more peaceful and productive lives using the Method and tools created by Dr. Low. Our 2023 accomplishments include:

- Planned for our first RI conference in San Diego in over 5 years;
- Started development of an RI app;
- Expanded Special Focus Meeting types to Caregivers, another Chronic Physical Conditions, LGBTQ+, College-aged, and Japanese-language;
- Held 180 weekly peer-led meetings serving 70,000+ people;
- Trained 30 new Group Leaders;
- Offered 24 continuing education sessions with 354 participants;
- Held 27 training meetings for Area Leaders and Group Leaders with 485 attendees;
- Presented at one national and 37 regional mental health events reaching more than 34,000 mental health professionals, veterans, first responders, care givers, and others.

Thank you for being part of the RI community! These accomplishments would not be possible without you!

Looking Ahead

We have many goals to reach new people, offer new technologies, and provide you more support and content. In 2024, look for:

- Announcements about the regional RI conference in New York State.
- The 5th edition of *Mental Health Through Will-Training*.
- An audiobook version of *Manage Your Fears Manage Your Anger*.
- An RI app for your mobile device.
- *Better. Mental. Health. for Everyone* translated into Spanish.



2023 Financial Statements*

In 2023, Recovery International benefited from continued expansion of meetings post-pandemic. Online and telephone meetings have allowed us to continue broadening our reach, finding new people who can benefit from the Recovery Method. As community meetings and RI conferences resume, we are hopeful that we will see continued growth.

Hal Casey, Treasurer

Balance Sheet

	2022	2023
Current Assets	\$5,440,564	\$5,229,072
Fixed and Other Assets	\$4,132	\$5,927
Total Assets	\$5,444,696	\$5,234,999
Current Liabilities	\$17,619	\$15,361
Long-term Liabilities	\$1,389,047	\$1,425,908
Equity	\$4,038,030	\$3,793,730
Total Liabilities & Equity	\$5,444,696	\$5,234,999

Financial Activity

Revenues

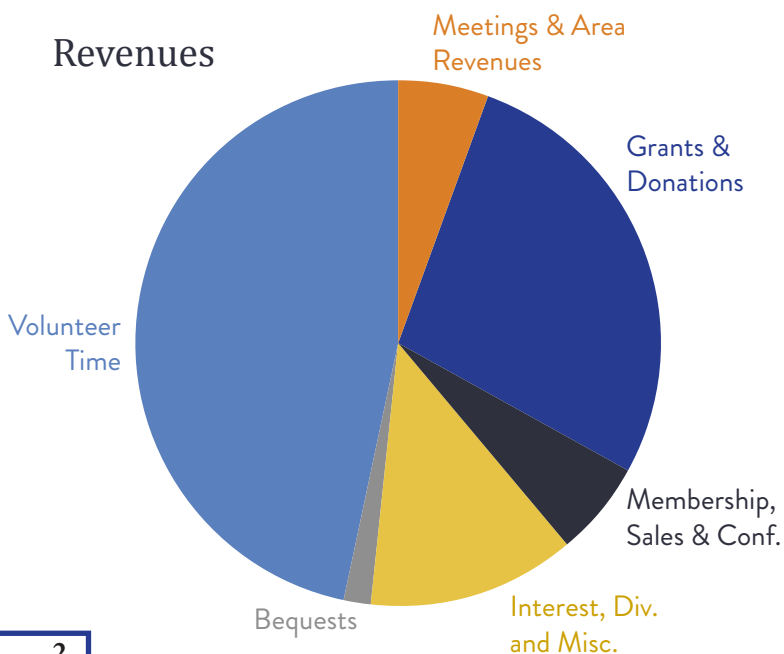
	2022	2023
Meetings & Area Revenues	\$ 71,279	\$ 70,457
Grants & Donations	\$ 397,303	\$ 343,341
Membership, Sales & Conf.	\$ 71,105	\$ 74,135
Interest, Div. and Misc.	\$ 6,112	\$ 158,792
Bequests	\$ 2,283,881	\$ 20,612
Volunteer Time	\$ 533,662	\$ 582,427
Total	\$ 3,363,342	\$ 1,249,764

Expenses

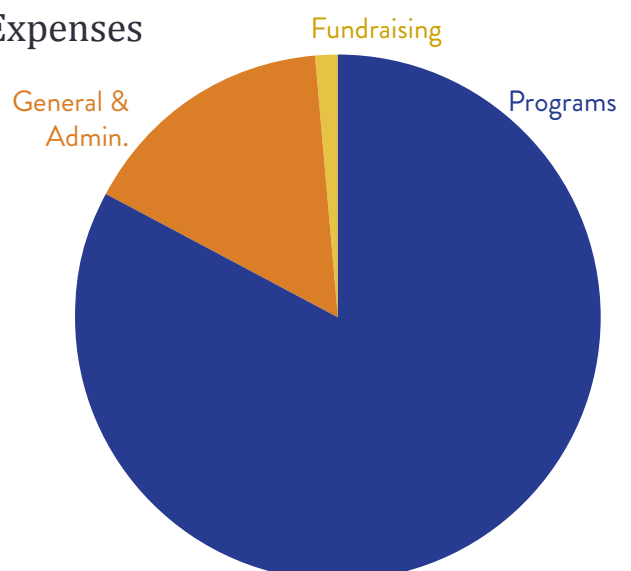
	2022	2023
Programs	\$ 976,182	\$ 1,215,114
General & Admin.	\$ 313,580	\$ 229,200
Fundraising	\$ 82,325	\$ 19,653
Total	\$ 1,372,087	\$ 1,463,967

*Please note that 2023 figures are preliminary and unaudited.

Revenues



Expenses



Judi Bakke: A Journey from Participant to Leadership



Lisa Garcia, Judi Bakke and Jenna Sobelman at the 2024 RI San Diego Conference

Judi Bakke was born in San Diego and raised in a quiet suburban neighborhood. Judi is the second oldest of four children and is still close to all her siblings. As a child, her family moved frequently between the east and west coast. For a shy child, making friends and getting comfortable in new schools was a challenge.

Judi went to college in her hometown of San Diego and graduated with a degree in Economics. After graduation, she went to work for a company that she heard about at the school's Econ Club. Judi was still employed there in her twenties when she found her life being curtailed by anxiety and panic. "I was always a nervous and anxious person growing up and, in my teens, and twenties...I was almost always self-conscious and doubted my abilities, but panic attacks took this anxiety to a new level."

After she started having panic attacks, Judi says that the fear of having another one was very disabling. She could not get on elevators, airplanes, and had to drive herself places so she knew she could leave if her panic level rose. The fear of being trapped was overwhelming.

In a waiting room one day, Judi picked up a pamphlet promoting Recovery International. She started attending in-person community meetings. Judi discovered that the meetings offered her support and the hope that she could recover. During the early months of attending RI meetings Judi credits RI group leader Jan Gale as being extremely instrumental in her continuing to attend meetings.

In the meetings, as people gave examples, Judi thought, "That is how I feel. I did not know other people had these thoughts."

If her leaders had these feelings and they got better, she could too. After attending meetings for a while, Area Leader Jan Elko persuaded Judi to consider taking on RI leadership roles.

Judi started as an assistant leader, made her way to being a group leader and area treasurer. Judi now serves on RI's Board of Directors, is a member of the Board's Finance Committee, chairs the Program Committee, and previously served on the Board's Development Committee. She is also part of the Area Leaders Task Force and helps host RI information tables at local resource fairs. Judi stated that, "I instinctively knew that if I became a leader, it would help my mental health. When you bear discomfort is when you make your greatest gains." Judi also helped organize the RI conferences held in San Diego and was the chair of the planning committee for RI's 2024 conference in San Diego.

Judi would encourage anyone in RI to take leader training, even if they are not ready to become a leader. Judi says, "Start by committing to be a RI assistant group leader because leadership will give you a sense of accomplishment and self-esteem." "Volunteering for RI is a great opportunity to expand – to become friends with new people and learn new things." Judi notes, "Recovery helped me go back to school, get an advanced degree, get married, and stay at a job I love for a long-time...The support and the comradery and the lessening of stigma – these are all a huge part of Recovery." Judi still leads a phone meeting every Saturday morning. Judi says that RI has provided her with support, hope, and lifetime friendships. "Recovery was there for me when I needed it – that's part of why I am so loyal."



Kim Monari, Eric Gonzalez and Judi Bakke at Black Tech STEM Fest 2023

Society of Dear Ones

We are grateful to the people who have already let us know that Recovery International is included in their estate plans. This generosity will keep the work alive to serve generations to come. We express our gratitude to the members of the Society of Dear Ones. If you'd like to consider joining them by including a gift to Recovery in your will or estate plans, contact donate@recoveryinternational.org or call (312) 337-5661 for more information about planned giving. There are several ways that you can plan your gift:

- Bequests - Including Recovery International in your will or estate plans is an easy way to support future programs.
- Life Insurance - You can make Recovery International the beneficiary of a paid-up policy.
- Life Income Trusts - Life Income Trusts provide income during your lifetime with the principal released to RI later.
- Charitable Lead Trust - Trust assets provide income to RI for a specified time period, with principal returning to donor or designee afterward.

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Thank you to our lifetime members for your long-term commitment to Recovery International.

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*Deceased but still with us in spirit.

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