

2017 Annual Report

Thank You, Members and Donors

We are grateful to thousands of members and donors who have contributed to making RI's programs possible. Because of you, no one is turned away due to inability to pay; we are there to help those in need, many of whom are on fixed incomes or are not able to work. Additionally, hundreds of churches, synagogues, libraries, community centers, and hospitals across the country donate meeting room space, enabling us to place programs right in the communities we serve.

What's Inside:

From the President's Corner.....	Page 2
Helplessness is not Hopelessness.....	Page 3
Programs.....	Page 4
Recovery Around the World.....	Page 5
Looking Back - 80th Anniversary.....	Page 6
Western Regional Conference.....	Page 8
Vietnam Vet's Story.....	Page 9
In the News.....	Page 10
2017 Financial Year in Review.....	Page 11
From the CEO.....	Page 12

Recovery International Board of Directors

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Rochester, NY

Joan Nobiling, Vice President
Iowa City, IA

Nicole Cilento, 2nd Vice President
Rochester, NY

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Lockport, NY

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Aurora, IL

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Sandra Glenn
Chicago, IL

Brendan Minnock
Dublin, Ireland

Marilyn Schmitt
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Rob Winike
Portland, OR

From the President's Corner

Dear Recovery Friends,

Thank you to all who have contributed in so many ways this year. You will always be Recovery International's special friends.

The year 2017 was positive and eventful, with many changes, such as:

- We successfully balanced our budget for the first time in many years.
- We executed many successful fundraising projects.
- A new Group Leader Guide was published.
- We saw a growth in membership.
- There was an increase in grant funding.
- We developed two new partners for the Veterans' Initiative.

The above represents just a few of the accomplishments during last year.

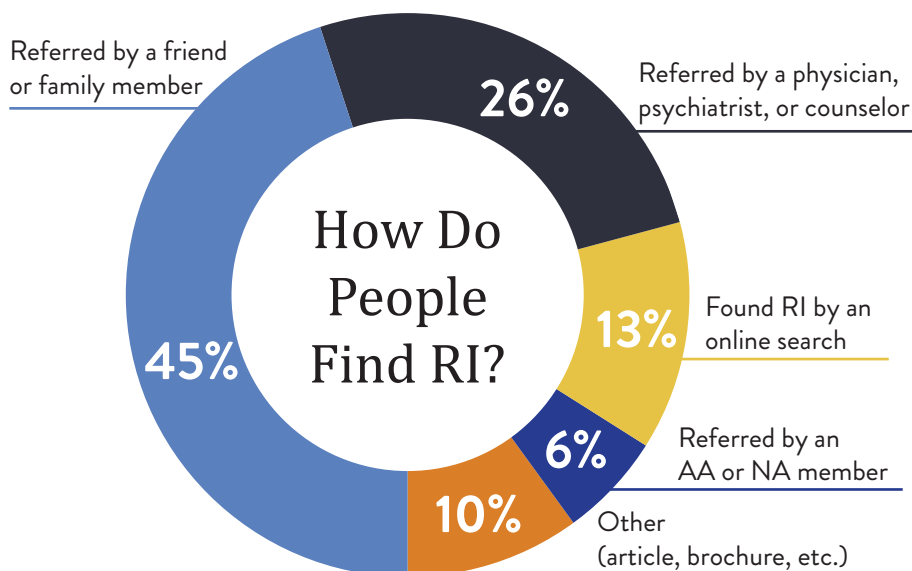
The coming attractions for 2018 include:

- The National Conference in October will be the first in many years. It will be wonderful to unite again with all our Recovery friends and associates.
- We will focus this year on growth of community meetings, telephone meetings, and online meetings. This will involve all of our good people – everyone who loves Recovery – to help with this effort. We will be in touch about this soon!

In fellowship,



Joanne Lampey
Board President



The mission of Recovery International is to help people achieve better mental health. This is accomplished through practice of the peer-led, cognitive-behavioral, self-help method developed by neuropsychiatrist Dr. Abraham Low.

Helplessness is not Hopelessness

This picture of my family was taken in 2010, three years before losing my handsome and sweet brother, Matthew (on the left), to suicide. He was gentle, rational, funny, strong, and patient. He was one of my soul mates on earth. His sudden death was a shock to my system; the worst pain I've ever felt. A few short years later, my dear and funny dad passed away suddenly from a heart attack. I was close to my dad and miss our talks. I miss hugging my tall and warm-hearted brother.

Anxiety, depression, panic attacks, and obsessive thinking of what I could have done to "save" my brother and dad slowly began to wreak havoc on my nervous system, my digestive system, my self-esteem, and my energy. My whole body suffered as my mental health suffered.

Since training in the Recovery International method, I've regained authority over my mental health and peace of mind and body. I've begun to put thoughts and feelings in the right place and have been able to function and I am now proud of the state of mind I live in. Progress not perfection! I'm no longer a victim of the grief or pain I endured. I am learning to be self-led, not symptom-led. I know that to know is not to know about why people die suddenly or tragically. I can trust my basic functions and live a beautiful life while still feeling symptoms. I am an RI apprentice, using any courage I can muster to grow. RI has given me hope, true hope.



I am beyond thankful for the strength I have found in Dr. Low's wisdom and will forever be committed to retraining my defeatist brain to rattle if it must, but function. This is the gift my brother and dad would want me to have: beautiful inner peace, with their presence a constant reminder to stay strong and trust the higher good by moving my muscles! We may feel helpless at times, but there are no hopeless cases. Let us love and be gentle with ourselves and each other. Love is everywhere.

Danielle



Recovery Helps People:

Increase energy & productivity

Feel less helpless

Develop a stronger sense of peace

Improve attitude at work & home

Restore mental balance

Attain confidence

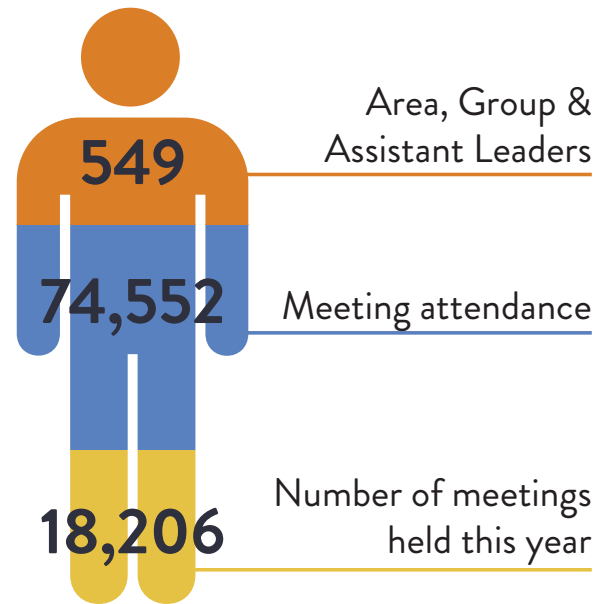
Gain self-acceptance

Programs

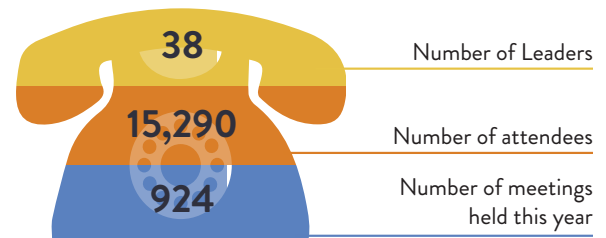
“ I was 26 years old and a young engineer with the Army Corps of Engineers when I first joined Recovery, after being hospitalized because of nerves. I attended Recovery meetings in Chicago for many years, dealing with my temper toward a division chief who was lacking in inter-personal skills. Eventually, I moved to New Jersey, where I have lived since. I attended leader training meetings in New York City before opening a group in Morriston and then serving as assistant leader in Orange. There, I met my wife, and we have had a good life together. RI enabled us to cope with her schizoaffective disorder and with my ADHD. While RI does not diagnose, it does help. Recovery is the reason I have lived a good life. ”

Lester

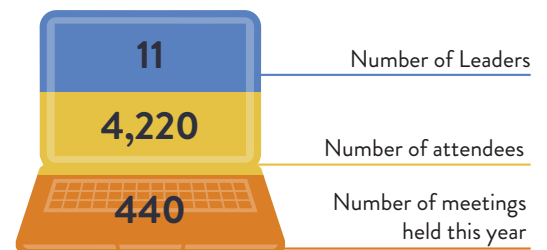
Community Meetings



Phone Meetings

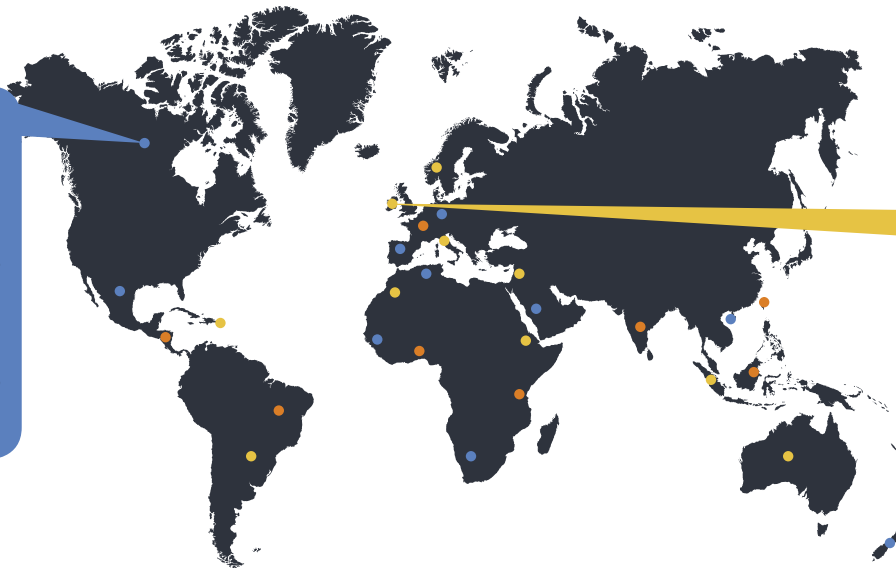


Web & Chat Meetings



Thank You, Leaders and Volunteers!

More than 622 trained peer leaders help people through RI's programs. We couldn't do it without you! Whether it is leading a meeting, opening a chat room, serving refreshments at a gathering, or prepping materials for an information booth, your services and commitment are invaluable. Your group-mindedness is a model for others to follow, and your ability to mentor new leaders will serve the next generation.



Recovery Canada

1,100 Meetings held in 2017
6,070 Meeting attendees

Recovery Ireland

1,000 Meetings held in 2017
13,600 Meeting attendees

Recovery Around the World

In addition to Canada and Ireland, we know there are meetings using the Recovery Method held in Spain, Israel, and India. If you hear of other meetings, please let us know! Our books have been shipped to more than 44 countries and our phone, web, and Facebook meetings are regularly attended by people from Hong Kong, Italy, New Zealand, Costa Rica, India, Morocco, Australia, Algeria, Japan, and Indonesia.

Ireland Highlights

Recovery came to Ireland in 1971. There are now 22 meetings in Ireland with about 300 people attending each week, but a much larger community who dip in and out. The recently appointed executive committee hosted a conference in Dublin in October with 40 attendees.

Brendan Minnock served many years as the Group Leader for Killester and as the Area Leader for Ireland. As Brendan says, “there is a time to say, ‘your turn now.’” Charles Kelly has taken on the role of Group Leader already, and will become the Area Leader for all of Ireland in September. He was elected by the membership in May and is working with Brendan and Dermot to learn the ropes. He has been a member of Recovery since 2010 and brings fresh ideas and energy to the position.

Special recognition was given at the conference to May McCallig as she retired as a leader with Recovery. May worked in Chicago as a nurse and attended her first Recovery meeting there more than 30 years ago. On her return to Ireland she attended the Recovery meeting in Rathgar, Dublin. She led that meeting for the last 15 years. May’s dedication and belief in the Recovery Method has set a stellar example to encourage all to do better.



This year has been busy as Group Leaders have engaged with leadership to help expand, engage, and energize Recovery in Ireland. The combined contributions of leaders and members will make a difference. The goal is to make the conference an annual event, as it is a wonderful networking and communication day.

Canada Highlights

Recovery Canada held a Leader’s Training Conference in London, Ontario, in the fall attended by Recovery International Board President Joanne Lampey.

Participants were excited about the RI Discovery workshop, and the new Canadian Information Brochure. A workshop on publicity elicited many ideas from attendees. The website adds to Recovery’s visibility, with 23 meetings across Canada listed. The World Cafe workshop, presented by social worker and now board member Ruth, gave everyone food for thought as she posed questions and insights about Recovery experiences.

After serving diligently and effectively for 10 years, Joyce Oliver retired as President of Recovery Canada. Incoming President Doug Gilbert brings solid experience to the role including 28 years as a Recovery member, 25 years as an assistant leader, and 30 years in accounting and business.

Looking Back

On November 7, 1937, thirty patients of Dr. Abraham Low met with him to discuss forming a group to help as they transitioned from the hospital to life in the community. This new organization was originally called "The Association of Former Mental Patients and their Relatives." One of their goals was to eliminate stigma, which they faced early on when one of their members was expelled from his rooming house after receiving a letter with the organization's return address. That is when they changed the name to Recovery.

Through weekly meetings, social events, and lectures, Dr. Low evolved his theories and practices and published many papers and books to help people lead more peaceful lives by using tools for coping with everyday trivialities. Meetings soon expanded to Iowa, Michigan, and Indiana.

By 1952, the four-step example and self-help panel was implemented as the primary way for practicing the method. After Dr. Low's death in 1954, his widow, Mae Willett Low, along with former patients, ensured that his work lived on.

By 1970, meetings stretched further to Canada, Ireland, Israel, and Puerto Rico. Ann Landers promoted Recovery in her columns, and attendance grew to 1,000 weekly group meetings held in 55 areas throughout the world.

Over the years, numerous studies were published citing Recovery and other self-help groups as adjuncts to psychiatric treatments. In the year 2000 Recovery, Inc. received the Arnold L. Van Amerigen Award in Psychiatric Rehabilitation from the American Psychiatric Association in recognition of its contributions to the field.

In subsequent years, the first telephone meetings were introduced, The Power to Change program was developed and tested in the Chicago Public Schools and the Los Angeles Twin Towers Correctional Facility, and Spanish-speaking programs were introduced in partnership with UCLA and the Latino Access Program.

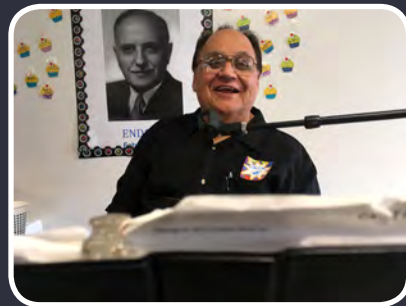
Changing the organization's name to Recovery International (RI) better reflected the reach of programs. Today, tens of thousands of people each year continue to find peace of mind through community, phone, and web meetings.

As we celebrate its 80th Anniversary, RI is more relevant and necessary than ever. We are poised to expand programs through outreach and promotion, and to let the general public know we are here to help.



1937 **RI**

- TRY, FAIL, TRY, FAIL,
- PEACE, ORDER AND
- BE GROUP-MINDED
- EXCUSE, DON'T ACCU
- DECIDE, PLAN AND A



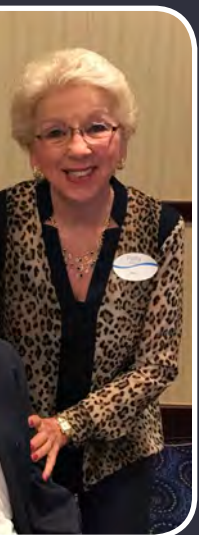
RECOVERY INTERNATIONAL 2017

- TRY, SUCCEED • FEELINGS ARE NOT FACTS
- BALANCE • ANY DECISION WILL STEADY YOU
- USE • CALM BEGETS CALM
- ACT • DO THINGS IN PART ACTS
- HUMOR IS OUR BEST FRIEND



80th Anniversary Celebrations

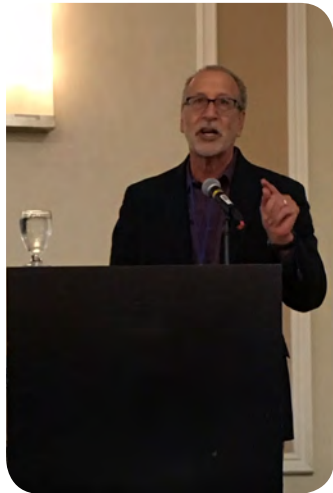
Recovery International celebrated its 80th Anniversary with commemorative membership cards, recognition pins, and cakes at leader gatherings throughout the country. In February, Dr. Low's two daughters, Marilyn Schmitt and Phyllis Berning, were joined by Treasure Ann Sachnoff in a delightful conference call program to reminisce about the early days of Recovery as they were growing up. In May, we celebrated with a brunch in Chicago in conjunction with the Annual Meeting, with guests joining us from Wisconsin and Michigan.



Western Regional Conference

In November, San Diego's Area 25 team pulled out all the stops to present a fun-filled and jam-packed conference to celebrate Recovery's 80th Anniversary. More than 110 people attended from 15 states to hear presentations on topics such as "Bridging the Relationship with Mental Health Professionals," "Recovery for Military Members and their Families," and "Technology Tools Advancing the Vision."

Festivities and learning sessions included a welcome address by Alfredo Aguirre, Director of Mental Health Services for the County of San Diego, a resource fair with information exchange among 25 mental health organizations, original songs, special "spot" jewelry, raffle prizes, and time for talking and fellowship.





Vietnam Vet's Story:

“ I served in the US Army from May 1968 to May 1971. When I was discharged, I was suffering from major depression. I had to be hospitalized several times for crisis management and was under psychiatric treatment for years. After being admitted again to the mental hospital due to a suicide attempt in 2005, I was referred to Recovery International.

I started to practice the method almost immediately and have stayed away from hospitals since. I have attended RI meetings for many years now and feel that I am in control of my temper, and therefore, all the symptoms that result from it. My life has completely changed and people around me notice that I have become another person who reflects and transmits an inner peace that enables me to help my fellow patients and friends. My family is thankful because our quality of life has improved greatly. Recovery, thanks from the bottom of my heart! ”

Rick

After a year of planning, Recovery International's **Veterans' Initiative** has launched in Chicago and San Diego. Evaluations and feedback from these sessions will facilitate the expansion of this program in the future. For more information, or to explore opening a Veteran's meeting in your area, contact info@recoveryinternational.org.

In the News

We often joke that Recovery is one of the “best-kept secrets” in the mental health field. In the 1960’s and 1970’s, a brief mention of RI in Ann Landers’ column set the phones to ringing. In order to serve the next generation, we must continue to reach out, tell our stories, and promote our meetings and programs. Several articles in traditional newspapers, as well as via the Huffington Post, garnered attention during the 80th Anniversary Year.

Chicago Tribune



Ann Landers

Help for anxiety sufferers

Dear Ann Landers: I have some information for the millions of Americans who suffer from panic attacks. Symptoms may differ greatly. Some people have difficulty breathing and fear they may choke to death. Others have palpitations so strong that they are sure they are having a heart attack. Nervous symptoms may include dizziness, sweating, depression, fatigue, headaches, numbness, tremors and difficulty sleeping. Often there is a fear of being alone or going out in crowds. Some people are agoraphobic, afraid to leave the house. Your readers should have a complete physical above descriptions to rule out health problems. The doctor finds nothing wrong, chances are, the problem is caused by severe anxiety. This is where Recovery Inc. comes in. The temporary method is a system for controlling temperamental behavior and changing attitudes.

The San Diego Union-Tribune



MAKING A DIFFERENCE AFTER TAMING HER ANXIETY, SHE HELPS OTHERS HELP THEMSELVES

Karla Peterson

The first time Karla Peterson was in a Recovery International meeting, she was in a panic. She was so nervous she couldn't breathe. But after attending several meetings, she found a community that helped her manage her anxiety. Now she helps others do the same.



Karla Peterson is a 28-year volunteer with Recovery International in San Diego, which meets at the Rancho San Diego Library.

From Hopelessness... to Hope and Healing

11th Annual Forum for Healthy Minds
Saturday, October 14, 2017 • 8:00 AM - 3:30 PM • Free Event
at California State University, San Marcos
333 South Twin Oaks Valley Road, San Marcos, CA 92066
SKILLS • RESOURCES • SUPPORT
Keynote Speaker: Mark S. Konrad, MD

Chicagoand Guide to Charitable Giving

Seven Keys to a Better Life
By Susan K. Williams
Charitable giving is a great way to support causes you care about. Here are seven keys to making the most of your donations.

4 - Oswego County's Health Matters

Local group helps those struggling with mental illness

By TIM LYMAN
FULTON — A local group in Fulton is making sure those with mental health problems don't have to fight those symptoms alone. Recovery International (RI), an Illinois-based volunteer-driven peer-to-peer support group focusing on mental illnesses such as depression, anxiety, schizophrenia and agoraphobia. The group acts as a support from peers.

She struggled with her panic attacks for 20 years before she found out about the program, but techniques to help her cope. She said she is “blessed to be well now.”

Chicagoand Guide to Charitable Giving

Recovery International Celebrates 80th Year
Recovery International (RI) is celebrating its 80th anniversary. The organization has provided support and resources for millions of people with mental health issues.

“She just has a heart of gold,” said Michelton. “I can never repay what she's done for me.” The group in Fulton meets at the First United Church of Fulton, 33 S. Third St., Sundays at 2:30 p.m. For more information, contact Barry at 315-598-6658 or go to recoveryinternational.org.

Recovery International



Joell Bakke began attending Recovery International meetings in 1994, and now she is a group session leader.

Recovery International's peer group sessions are held weekly. Joell Bakke, a group session leader, shares her experience with the program. She says that attending meetings helped her manage her anxiety and find a supportive community.

RI RECOVERY INTERNATIONAL
BETTER.MENTAL.HEALTH.™
www.recoveryinternational.org
local meetings • phone meetings • web meetings
3 Weekly meetings in Chicago
Hillside, Palatine, Crystal Lake, Huntley and
also in Oak Park, Hillside, Hammond, Indiana

Dianne's Story

“I had severe panic attacks that kept me housebound for about 20 years. I couldn't even go shopping by myself—I didn't know what to do with the feelings I was having. Then I heard about Recovery, and learned techniques to help me cope. I am blessed to be well now. I want anybody else who suffers like I've suffered to know there's help out there. It's comforting to know you're not alone.”

Dianne

Balance Sheet as of December 31, 2017

Current Assets \$751,529
Fixed Assets \$7,064
Other (Area Accounts) \$138,003
Total Assets \$896,596

Current Liabilities \$35,199
Equity \$861,399
Total Liabilities & Equity \$896,598

2017 Financial Activity

Revenues
Meetings & Area Revenues \$198,809
Grants & Donations \$400,505
Membership & Sales \$98,493
Volunteer Time \$1,211,181
Total \$1,908,988

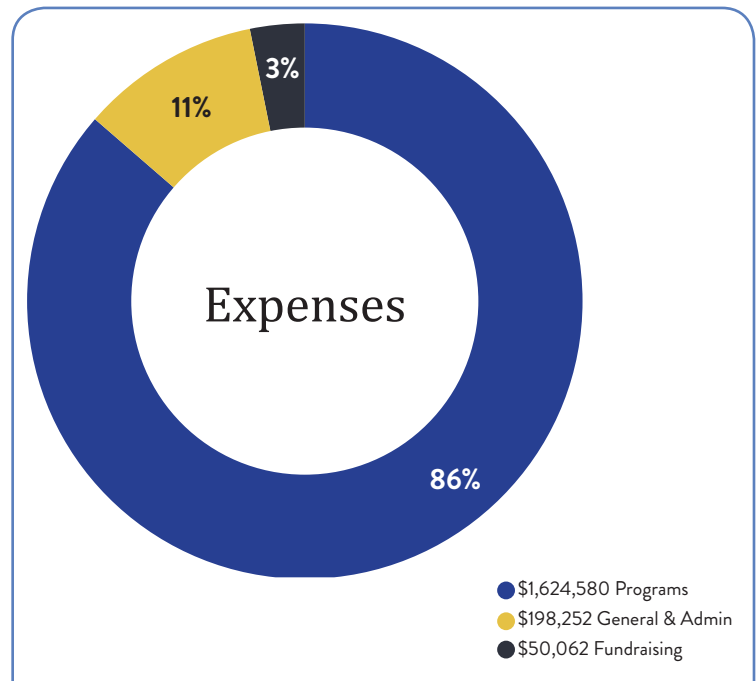
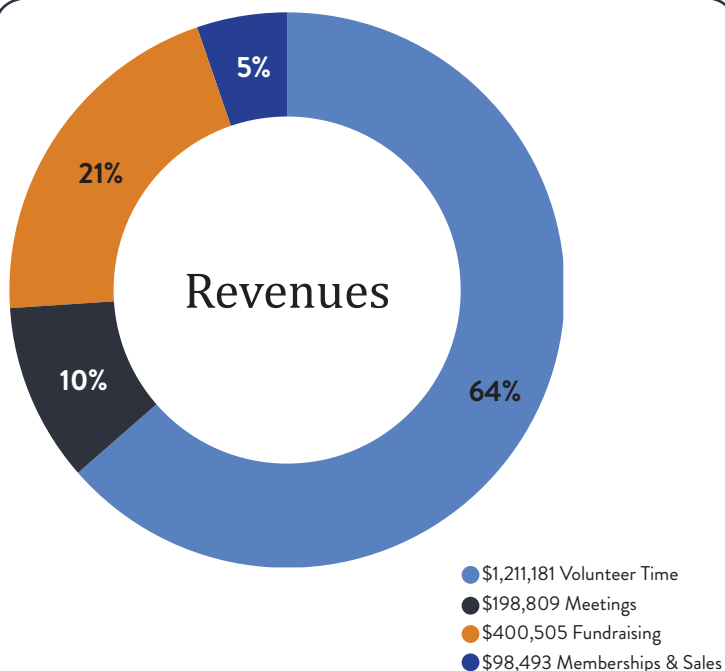
Expenses
Programs \$1,624,580
General & Admin \$198,252
Fundraising \$59,062
Total \$1,881,894
Net \$27,094

2017 Financial Year in Review

From the Treasurer...

“ Under new leadership, and due to increased donor support, financial stability has returned to the organization. Recovery International operated on a balanced budget after four years of losses. Thanks to grateful participants who bequeathed estate gifts during 2017, we ended the year with an overall positive net income which will help us re-build cash reserves. This is an important milestone for RI, since positive financial performance is often a key criterion to securing grant funding for programs and special initiatives. We have planned for a balanced budget in 2018 and the foundation laid here will lead to even greater results, new programs and outreach, and enable us to help others far into the future. ”

Hal Casey, Treasurer





Dear Friends,

My first full year at Recovery International has been, appropriately, one of discovery. Learning about the history of RI and working behind-the-scenes on many great projects has been very rewarding. The board has strived diligently to stabilize RI’s operations and finances. Our dedicated staff and volunteers created the “My Dear Ones” program in February, organized the Western Conference, developed the strategies for the Veterans’ Initiative, and updated the Group Leader Guide.

During the past year I have had the opportunity to meet with groups and leaders in Chicago, Phoenix, and San Diego, and to travel to Wisconsin and Ohio. I was able to visit our affiliates in Ireland. I have spoken with leaders in Puerto Rico who are still struggling to rebuild, many months after the hurricanes hit.

But most importantly (and most helpful to my work) has been meeting and talking with so many people who practice the RI method and who help demonstrate it to others. Your generosity of spirit and group-mindedness inspires all of us. You are my mentors as we bring RI’s methods and tools to people who need them in order to lead more peaceful lives. I look forward to the coming year in your service.

Endorse,

Sandra K. Wilcoxon
Chief Executive Officer



Staff

- Sandra Wilcoxon, CEO
- Everlean Pelt, Office Administrator
- Lisa Garcia, Project Manager, San Diego
- Camille Rizzo, Telephone Groups Manager
- Gilda Marconi, Telephone Groups Assistant
- Steven Ferradino, LPC, Online Meetings Manager

Professional Services
Chicago Transom Partners, Accounting, IT & HR

