



2018 / 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

Our vision is a world without slavery.



Our mission is to equip a community of people to advocate for the dignity of all people, leading to the protection and **freedom of millions.**

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A LETTER FROM OUR FOUNDER / CEO

In the 2018/19 fiscal year, we saw our greatest impact to date, raising over \$2.4 million during our annual Dresseember campaign. Roughly 8,000 advocates showed up in December 2018 to forgo their typical wardrobe in exchange for a daily dress or tie in an effort to raise funds to bring an end to modern slavery. We are humbled and honored to report that our community has now raised \$7.5 million since our conception in 2013.

Another exciting advancement was the addition of nine new grant partners. Our vision is to blanket the United States with domestic partnerships, recognizing that human trafficking is happening right here in our very neighborhoods. These new partnerships offered our US advocates and supporters a way to make a significant impact both locally and globally. Through the programs Dresseember is funding, we are training law enforcement, providing emergency and transitional housing to survivors, protecting vulnerable populations through outreach and education, providing survivors with legal representation, and more.

In 2018, we launched our first annual 'You Can Do Anything in a Dress' 5K. This walk/run allowed both new and returning advocates the chance to physically take action to raise awareness and funding. Through our first event, we were able to provide \$40,000 in funding to the Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking to offer wraparound services to transition-aged youth who are survivors of trafficking.

In this report, you'll have the opportunity to read more about the impact Dresseember is having through targeted, strategic grants that are actively funding the rescue, protection, and care of individuals around the world.



As you read through the stories of impact and hear from our advocates around the globe, we hope that you are encouraged to see the hope that exists in the midst of the darkness of modern slavery.

Thank you for giving, advocating, and believing in a better world with us.

With gratitude,

Blythe Hill
Founder & CEO

THE PROBLEM



There are over **40 million** people currently enslaved or trafficked¹



1 in 4 of them are children²



People are reported to be trafficked from **127 countries**, affecting every continent and every type of economy³

When we look at the complex, nuanced issue of human trafficking, we see **2 major roadblocks**:

#1

The first roadblock we see is a **lack of comprehensive and collaborative effort** by governmental and non-governmental organizations to fight the issue of trafficking.

We know that rescue cannot exist without trained law enforcement, committed global task forces, and informed leaders. We know that aftercare requires culturally-sensitive trauma therapy as well as education and dignified job opportunities. Prevention must be paired with an understanding of vulnerable populations and awareness of risk factors. **The solution to a problem as expansive as human trafficking can't exist in isolation.**

#2

We view the secondary roadblock as a **lack of mobilization from the general public**. The reality is that many of us feel powerless to create and enact change in our every day lives. When confronted with an issue as heinous as modern slavery, the average citizen does not see how their skills and talents can contribute. We must replace paralyzation with mobilization if we want to see an end to human trafficking in our lifetime.

1. Global Estimates of Modern Slavery
2. The International Labor Organization
3. United National Office on Drugs and Crime

OUR APPROACH



COMMUNITY OF ADVOCATES

Every year, thousands of advocates from around the world take on the creative challenge of wearing a dress or tie everyday during the month of December. The challenge serves as an avenue to create awareness and raise funds. By participating in Dresember, advocates partner in the fight to rescue, protect, and restore the lives of trafficking victims across the world.



“I initially joined Dresember because a coworker told me to. Dresember is more than just a fun month (or two) of wearing dresses. I'm doing my part to make a positive change in the world.”

Pete Y. Kennett Square, PA



“Speaking for life is what Dresember stands for. Dresember gave me the information to fuel a new view on life, a life of true living, of freedom and opportunities.”

Christina L. - Atlanta, GA



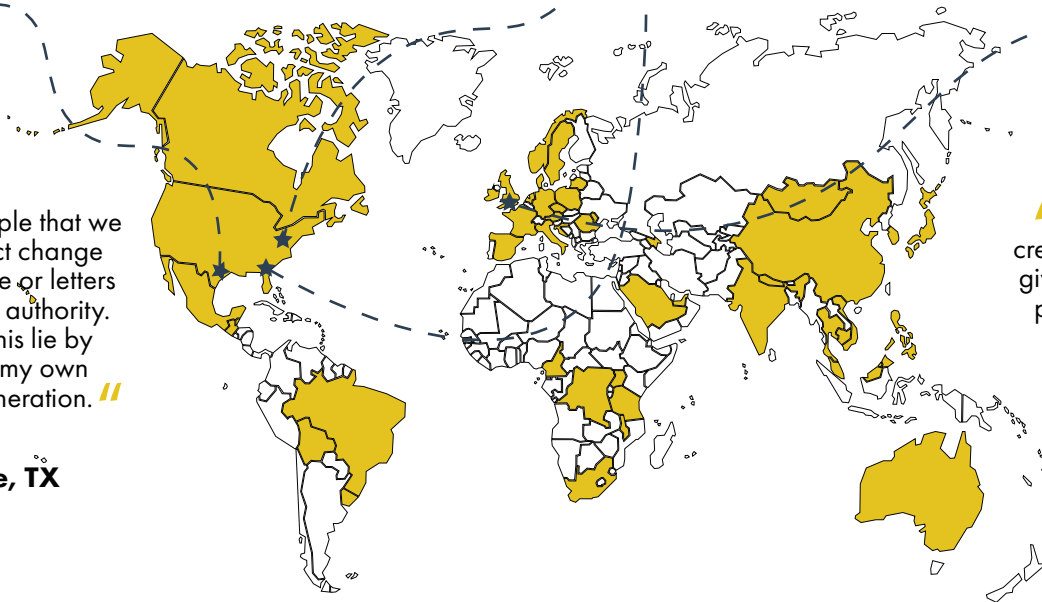
“The world is quick to tell young people that we don't have a voice or cannot enact change because we do not have the degree or letters behind our name to give our voice authority. However, Dresember combats this lie by providing the avenue to fight for my own generation, the most targeted generation.”

MadeleineRuth N. - Temple, TX



“I love how Dresember pushes me to be more creative. Most importantly, it helps real people and gives hope when the world seems like such a dark place these days. We could all use a little more hope, and Dresember makes a difference.”

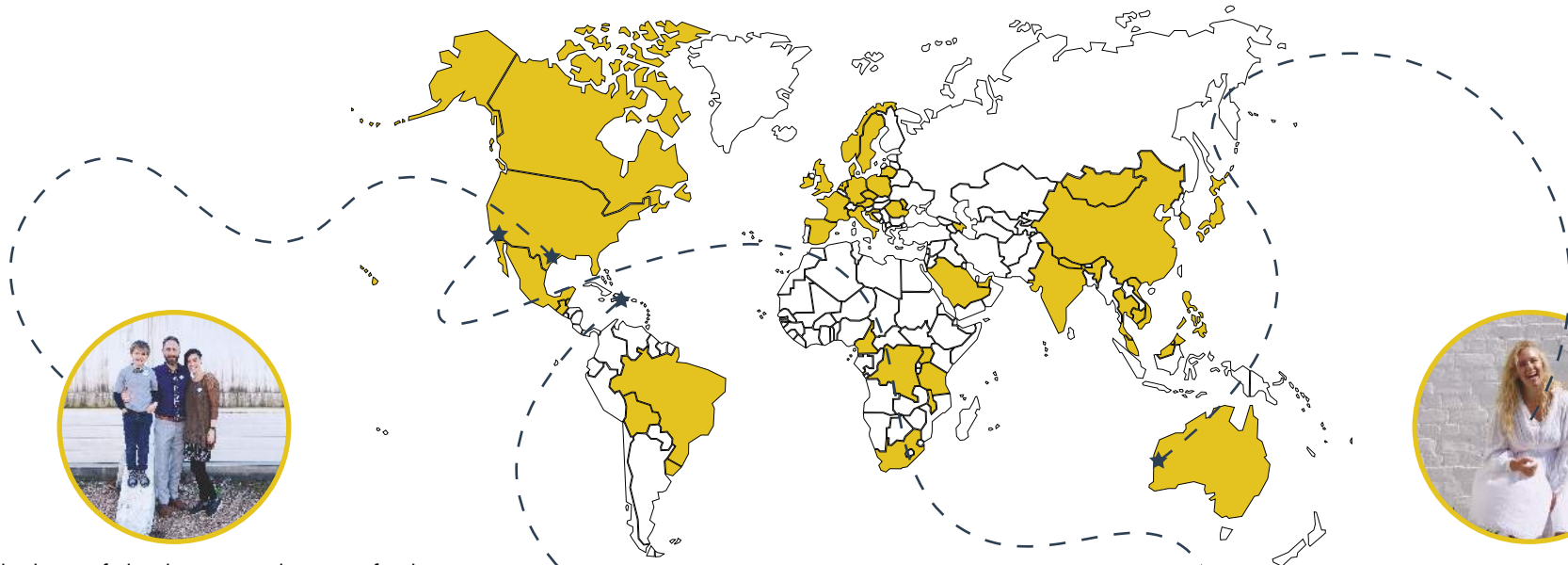
Tamara M. - London, England



8,000 Advocates

6 Continents

\$2.4 Milion raised



“I've watched my wife lead a Dresember team for the last three years. While I've always passionately supported the cause behind the scenes, this last year I just had to join in. It is too important a cause to not add my own voice to the conversation.”

Jason C. - Austin, TX



“I firmly believe that every human being is created with worth and dignity, and it made me so excited to be able to put my money where my mouth is and support a cause that is so important to me at the very core of who I am!”

Emma S. - Perth, Australia



“You have no idea how my heart overflowed with happiness when I found out that people from my country donated money on the Dresember page. The amount doesn't matter; if you lived in the Dominican Republic you would know that it is not normal for people to donate to organizations like this.”

Elizabeth A. - Dominican Republic

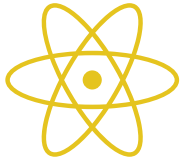


“As a middle school teacher, Dresember was a movement that taught students that they can be a voice for the voiceless and an advocate regardless of their age. Students rallied together to wear ties and dresses to school for the month of December while raising funds.”

Katrina W. - Los Angeles, CA

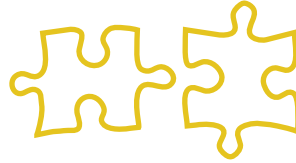
KEY CRITERIA

Our strategy to ensuring the most sustainable impact and maximizing every dollar begins with vetting new and existing grant partners through five key criteria.



INNOVATION

Work that uses creativity to dismantle a shrewd and manipulative industry



COLLABORATION

Partners who understand the complexity of the issue and seek to empower others and work together toward an end to this injustice



SUSTAINABILITY

Work that is structured to last, and has a long lasting impact



CULTURAL SENSITIVITY

Partners who seek to understand and work with locals who understand an area's nuances and culture on a deeper level



MEASURABLE IMPACT

Work that is proven to protect victims, increase convictions of perpetrators, and/or prevent the spread of slavery

OUR STRATEGIC PROJECTS

We partner with domestic and international organizations who are truly moving the needle forward in the fight to end trafficking. This year, we awarded the following grants:

Rescue & Identification:



Impact area: South Asia
Project focus: Projects in South Asia focused on rescuing girls from sex trafficking, restoring broken justice systems, and training police and other NGOs.



Impact area: United States
Project focus: "Spotlight Tool", a sex trafficking investigation tool that helps law enforcement identify child sex trafficking victims who are advertised online.



Impact area: United States
Project focus: Expansion of Inhospitable to Trafficking Training within the hotel industry in communities across the US.



Aftercare:



Impact area: Sofia, Bulgaria
Project focus: New Freedom Center in Bulgaria to accommodate survivors and provide holistic aftercare services including counseling and legal assistance.



Impact area: Southern California, United States
Project focus: Case management and legal services to eliminate employment and self-sufficiency barriers in Southern California.



Impact area: United States
Project focus: US Survivor Care program, providing long-term services, helping children and their families/caregivers understand, respond to, and recover from the impact of their victimization.



Impact area: New York City, New York
Project focus: Job development that helps place survivors in sustainable, life-giving, safe employment through innovative, worker-owned cooperatives in New York City.



Impact area: Los Angeles, CA
Project focus: Expanding case management services to meet the growing demand for frontline services to youth survivors.



Impact area: Milwaukee, Wisconsin
Project focus: Sex trafficking prevention services and advocacy resources for children and youth.



Prevention:



Impact area: Syracuse, New York
Project focus: Victim identification, aftercare, and outreach to at-risk youth in the greater Syracuse area.



Impact areas: Washington & California
Project focus: Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) Awareness and Independent Life Skills training to young people living in group homes and those coming out of foster care.



Impact area: Atlanta, Georgia
Project focus: Youth Services Center that offers program tracks for boys and LGBTQ youth in Atlanta, Georgia.

IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS

Our work restores dignity. The following stories are of real individuals who are experiencing new freedom as a result of funding from Dressember grants. The individuals are represented by pseudonyms to protect their identity.

ALICIA'S RESILIENCE IS HELPING HER DEFY THE ODDS

Alicia is from Mexico and was a victim of both labor and sex trafficking. In her country she was successful. She had a good job and was going to college to obtain her law degree. Then, she fell in "love" and was promised her own business in California. When she arrived in California, she was locked in a room in an isolated area with other women. **She was forced to work at a bar and was beaten frequently by her trafficker when she refused to work.**

She was able to escape after being locked up for days in a garage after refusing to work. She hadn't eaten and had been beaten. A neighbor saw her coming out of the garage and came to her aid. She called the police, and Alicia was taken to the police station where they called our partner CAST. When they met Alicia, she was scared and angry but her strength was evident. She told CAST that her life goal was to master the English language and someday become the Governor of California so she could end human trafficking.

Since being a participant in their program and residing in CAST's shelter, Alicia has completed several vocational programs such as early childhood development, electrician, and most recently janitorial and maintenance. She has continually taken ESL courses, and she is working at a local grocery store. Her long term goal is to join the Navy.

In May, when she graduated with her vocational certificate, she invited CAST's shelter residents to attend. She said she wanted them to see that if she could do it, so could they, and they should never give up on their dreams.





MONA'S BRAVERY IS CRUMBLING TRAFFICKING NETWORKS

In February 2018, anti-trafficking police officers and social workers from Dressember partner, International Justice Mission, rescued Mona* and another teen girl from an apartment in south Kolkata where they were being forced to sell sex to private customers. Mona was forced into the trade by her own mother. From then on, she was also exploited by a private sex trafficking network that was abusing dozens of other school girls in her community. This abuse continued for six months, and although Mona's mother promised this was a temporary arrangement, Mona began to lose hope.

One morning, 16-year-old Mona agreed to skip school again to "work" to support her family. Mona and another 17-year-old girl were waiting at the apartment to be sold for sex. But instead of customers, the girls were met by anti-trafficking police officers and IJM social workers on a mission to rescue them.

The police immediately separated the girls from their abusers and IJM's social workers explained the situation, assuring the girls they were not in trouble. Slowly, Mona began to share her story and conflicted emotions with the IJM staff. She did not want to betray her family because she believed her mother's claim that this was their only way to earn money. At the same time, Mona feared her mother. As Mona became comfortable, she shared detailed information about the network that controlled her. She courageously told the police about other apartments and the names of other minors that were being sold by similar trafficking networks around the city.

Because of Mona's testimony and strong statements against six perpetrators, these networks are beginning to crumble.

Four of these perpetrators were arrested from the location itself. In a follow-up arrest, two more perpetrators were arrested. Mona, now free from the cycle of abuse, has shown great courage and hope. She and the other rescued girl are in an aftercare home to heal.

"I have been given a second chance, and I'm willing to do anything if it means my life will finally change."

THE 2018 DRESS COLLECTION

A fair-paid, dignified job is key to keeping survivors from being re-trafficked.

That is why we have collaborated for the past four years with Elegantees to create the Dressemer Dress Collection, a line of ethically made dresses hand sewn by survivors of trafficking in Nepal. With an estimated 12,000 girls trafficked over the border from Nepal to India each year, there is a need for intervention that goes beyond traditional aftercare. Elegantees partners with KI Nepal, a local NGO, to employ women who have been trafficked or nearly trafficked into India's commercial sex industry. KI Nepal provides a safehouse focused on trauma therapy and vocational training where survivors can choose to learn trades they are interested in.

We're encouraged to report that 18 girls are now receiving fair and dignified training and employment through Elegantees' sewing center. There is currently a waitlist of over 500 girls who are wanting to work at the sewing center. In July of 2018, members of the Dressemer team took a trip to Kathmandu to visit the sewing center and meet the women who bring the dress collection to life. Our team came back with renewed determination to provide more opportunities through future collections.

We remain passionate about creating economic opportunities to allow women and girls to realize their potential and flourish. The creation of our dress collection sustains dignified and fair paying employment for the women who make them. That is one of the many reasons why we say #itsbiggerthanadress.





2018 DRESS DESIGNERS

Jennifer Morrison
Actress & Producer

Anna Ptak
Speaker & Overcomer

Blythe Hill
Founder & CEO, Dressemer

Laura Spencer
Actress & Director

Jessica Rey
Founder, Rey Swimwear

Caitlin Crosby Benward
Founder, The Giving Keys

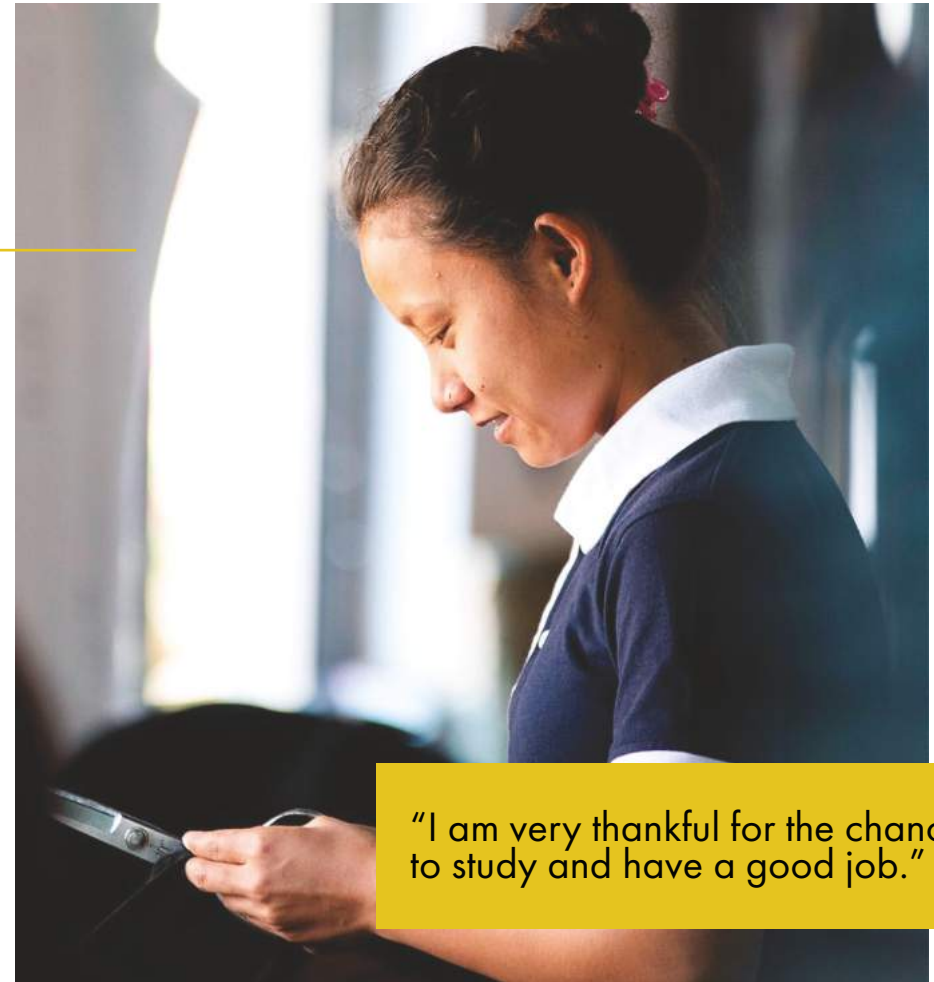
Penny Lovell
Celebrity Stylist

Danielle Urban
Advocate Design Winner

Because of the growing demand we were able to make through our Dress Collection, Elegantees was able to hire Mira. **This is her story.**

My mother gave birth to three daughters, but most of Nepal thinks girls have little or no worth. My father abandoned us and married another woman for a chance to conceive a son. My sisters and mom were neglected, even by our maternal family. Things got worse when my mom was nearly murdered by my uncle. Her wound from the stabbing made her body too weak to work hard. We depended on others to give us a place to live, but we were a burden to them. I didn't go to school for many years. Instead, I worked a job to help us survive.

Some of my friends wanted to go to India. They told me to go with them to have a better life, and I was very hopeful of that. When I crossed the border, KI Nepal inquired with me. They helped me realize that going to India was a trap for sex trafficking. KI Nepal protected me and gave me skills to sew garments. I started taking classes for completion of Grade 8, and then was hired to work as a seamstress. I am very thankful for the chance to study and have a good job.



"I am very thankful for the chance to study and have a good job."

This photo is not of Mira but a representation of her to protect her identity.

A NEW OPPORTUNITY TO ADVOCATE

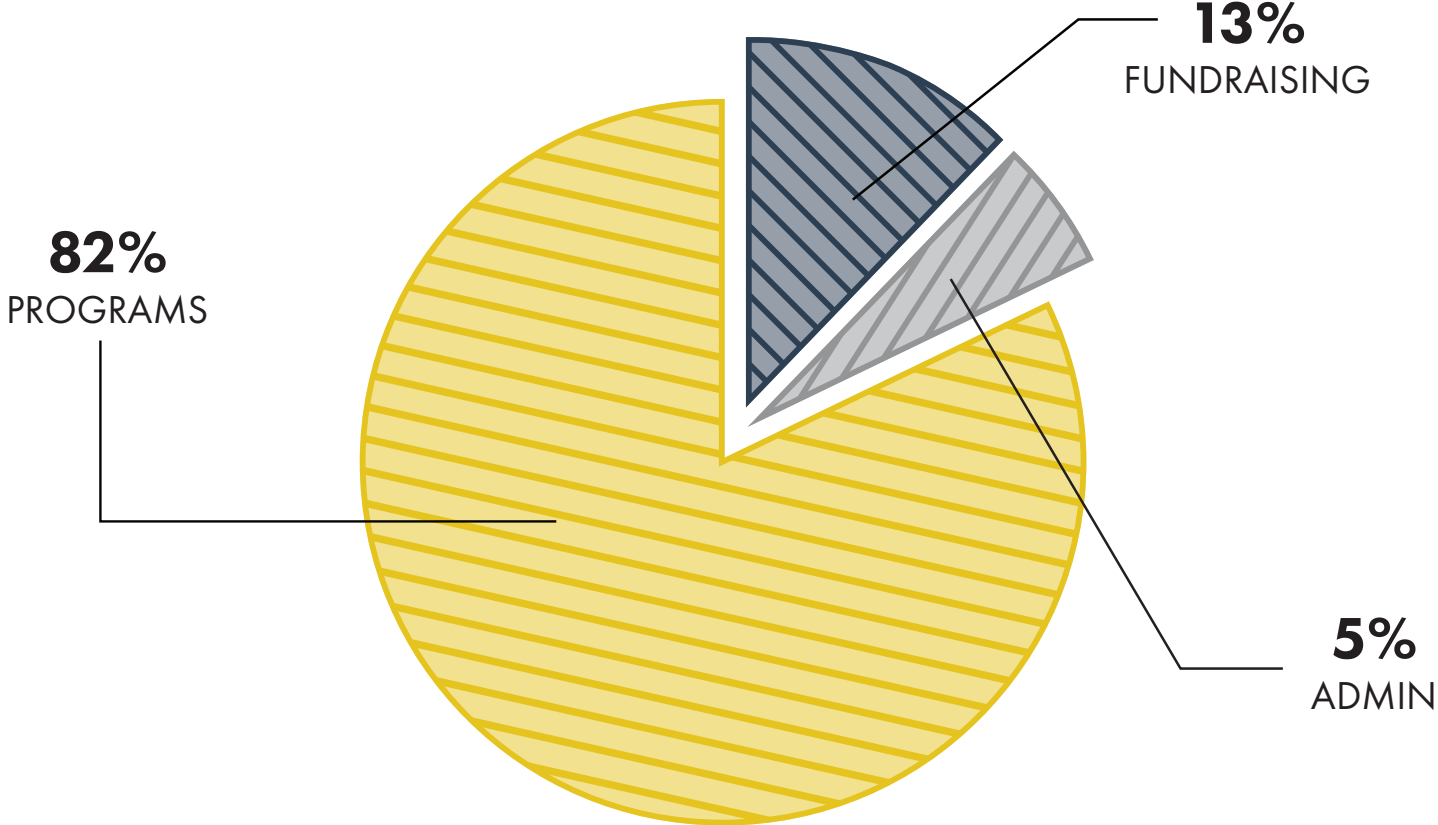


On May 20th, 2018, we hosted our first annual 'You Can Do Anything in a Dress (or Tie)' 5K.

Over 200 people came to our official 5K walk/run event at Griffith Park in Los Angeles, California with remote runs taking place in 12 cities around the United States. We ended our 5K with a yoga session, showing that you really can do anything in a dress.

Through the Dresseember 5K, we were able to fund a \$40,000 project to provide support at every phase of a human trafficking victim's journey as they seek to become an empowered survivor. This project specifically targeted case management and services through a Transition Age Youth Program.

HOW WE SPEND OUR FUNDS



PROGRAMS:

Grants to anti-human trafficking programs, trafficking education, grants management expenses



FUNDRAISING:

Online campaign platform, credit card fees, other fundraising expenses



ADMIN:

Salaries, operations & supplies

FINANCIALS

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
ASSETS					
Cash	\$560,928	\$344,183	\$169,831	\$113,983	\$32,368
Contributions receivable	7,222	-	-	-	-
Accounts receivable	-	7,553	2,690	-	-
Prepays	27,125	15,284	6,486	5,735	735
Inventory	12,450	2,638	2,397	1,018	-
Property and equipment, net	1,931	552	1,061	-	-
Deposits	1,528	-	-	-	-
Total Assets	<u>\$611,184</u>	<u>\$370,210</u>	<u>\$182,465</u>	<u>\$120,736</u>	<u>\$33,103</u>
LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS					
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	41,203	28,254	13,208	11,391	8,179
Grants payable	140,000	-	-	-	-
Deferred revenue	8,447	-	-	-	-
Total liabilities	<u>\$189,650</u>	<u>\$28,254</u>	<u>\$13,208</u>	<u>\$11,391</u>	<u>\$8,179</u>
Net assets without donor restriction	421,534	341,956	169,257	109,345	24,924
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	<u>\$611,184</u>	<u>\$370,210</u>	<u>182,465</u>	<u>\$120,736</u>	<u>\$33,103</u>

FINANCIALS CONT.

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITES	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
REVENUES					
Contributions	\$ 2,499,308	\$ 2,113,161	\$ 1,502,749	\$ 942,547	\$ 470,988
Events	37,946	7,785	7,592	-	-
Sales	67,743	10,129	5,738	2,357	-
Other income	14,685	212	143	848	-
Total Revenues	2,619,682	2,131,287	1,516,222	945,752	470,988
EXPENSES					
Grants	1,955,000	1,606,627	1,255,102	783,747	394,791
Events	36,108	15,998	10,101	-	-
Cost of goods sold	40,541	6,157	3,357	1,029	-
Payroll and employee benefits	190,349	81,848	52,998	-	-
Contract services	173,818	152,112	66,987	38,573	30,066
Operations	46,853	19,669	9,573	3,672	7,070
Travel	23,417	7,557	10,012	2,565	-
Other	74,018	68,620	48,180	31,745	14,137
Total Expenses	2,540,104	1,958,588	1,456,310	861,331	446,064
Change in Net Assets	79,578	172,699	59,912	84,421	24,924
Net Assets, Prior Year	341,956	169,257	109,345	24,924	-
Net Assets, Current Year	\$ 421,534	\$ 341,956	\$ 169,257	\$ 109,345	\$ 24,924

Form 990 and Audited Financial Statements available: <https://www.dressember.org/financials>

OUR BOARD AND TEAM

OUR TEAM

Blythe Hill

CEO/Founder

Tracy Palermini

Controller

Marissa Peden

Director of Strategic Partnerships

Madeline Kronenberg

Communications Manager

Jillian Rae Saldaña

Admin/Operations

OUR BOARD

Talitha Baker - Board Chair

Sr. Manager Communications, Children's Miracle Network Hospitals

Arianna Harrison - Board Secretary

Virtual Administrator, Belay Solutions

Michelle Hart - Board Treasurer

Freelance Accountant

Blythe Hill - CEO/Founder

Dressembler Foundation

Rachel Repko

Founder and Grant Consultant, Repko Grants

Johanna Tropiano

Director of Strategic Initiatives, Prison Fellowship

Taylor Thompson

Financial Advisor - The Thompson Katzaroff Group at UBS Financial Services, Inc.

LOOKING AHEAD: OUR ENDURING VISION

The fight to end human trafficking requires a new kind of creativity. With the advancements of technology, it has become easier than ever to expose injustice in the world, but it has also become easier than ever to turn a blind eye to it. As we prepare for our 2019 Dresseember campaign, our goal is to harness the power of our growing community to bring the topic of human trafficking to the forefront.

We continue to refine our partnership vetting process to ensure strategic and lasting impact with each project that we back. This includes diversifying our expert advisory committee members and including survivor experts and voices.

Heading into 2019/2020, we look forward to continuing and strengthening relationships with our partners. We have adjusted our reporting requirements for our project partners in order to better measure the impact that supporters like you have helped

create. Additionally, we are leaning into new partnerships with fair trade and ethical fashion brands, offering more partnership and co-venture opportunities to have an impact in an industry that is, unfortunately, often fueled by slave labor. We will continue to communicate to our community the importance of purchasing goods that don't exploit the individuals who make them.

Human trafficking is not a seasonal issue but a daily reality for millions of people around the world. Because of this, we will continue to identify ways that we can support our community to be everyday advocates. We are committed to providing further resources to equip our community with the tools they need to live a life of everyday advocacy. This includes the addition of an Ethical Fashion Directory, a comprehensive online directory to help our community make a difference with their consumer dollars.

**The best is yet to come. As our funding grows, so will our impact.
We invite you to be a part of it!**

WWW.DRESSEMBER.ORG