

2024 IMPACT REPORT



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A Message From Our Executive Director

Together, we worked to organize as many of our family, friends, and neighbors as we could into our transformative movement for justice in Pennsylvania. Although many of us are disappointed and dismayed by the outcome of events, we have come into 2025 with renewed clarity. We know what we must do.

As I said in my New Year message, Pennsylvania's urban, suburban, and rural communities **MUST** stand together in mutual interdependence, building the collective power necessary to ensure justice and dignity for all. Together **we must BUILD A BIGGER WE**, and act courageously together.

POWER Interfaith started this work over a decade ago. We continued to build collective power in 2024, and we will not stop until liberation is our reality. To quote abolitionist Theodore Parker, "I do not pretend to understand the moral universe, the arc is a long one, my eye reaches but little ways. I cannot calculate the curve and complete the figure by the experience of sight; I can divine it by conscience. But from what I see I am sure it bends towards justice." **It is my pleasure to share with you the highlights of all we accomplished together in 2024. Thank you for walking with us. I wish you all blessings, peace, and solidarity always.**



Rev. Dr. Gregory Edwards
Executive Director



A Message From Our Organizing Director

Looking back, I'm most struck by the fact that in the face of the uncertainty of the presidential election, so many Pennsylvanians took responsibility for organizing congregations and communities, and had the courage to share their story, host a meeting, take public risk, and lead publicly.

We kicked off 2024 with the Roadmap to Justice Convention, where over 400 community leaders from across the state launched our Platform for a Prosperous Pennsylvania. These folks took action with their legislators to simultaneously win the largest increase of public education funding for chronically and systemically underfunded schools, and stopped corporate interests and billionaires from winning private education vouchers.

In Philadelphia, community leaders hosted house meetings, gathered their fellow congregants, and had sacred conversations about the city's housing crisis. Over 700 people shared their experience of how corporate interests and developers are driving up housing and rent costs, and pushing people out of their neighborhoods, rendering our neighborhoods unaffordable for our families.

Leaders in Lancaster County facilitated a community survey, unveiling similar concerns about housing safety and affordability. Lancaster leaders also hosted one of the largest Fair Funding rallies in the state, gaining momentum for full and fair funding for black, brown, and lower-income school districts across the commonwealth.

Throughout the year, our democracy fellows and faith leaders had more than 30,000 conversations with voters, encouraging them to vote and make a voting plan.

Everyday, people are deciding to build power and organize their communities with POWER Interfaith so that together we can make Pennsylvania a place where everyone can thrive. Thanks for being part of this work - I'm so glad to be with you in it.



Sara Melton
Organizing Director



Our Mission



POWER Interfaith uses our belief in the Devine's goodness and compassion for the suffering to organize and empower the people of Philadelphia, Southeastern, and Central Pennsylvania to live and work together so that God's presence is known on every block, that people work together to transform the conditions of their neighborhood, and that life flourishes for all.

Faith

Our faith is the foundation of our work. It is rooted in the belief that love, justice, and mercy are for everyone—especially those who have been pushed to the margins.

Across traditions, our shared spiritual conviction inspires us to organize, to lift up the suffering, and to co-create communities where dignity and divine presence can be felt on every block.

Courage

We act with courage because transformation requires it. We speak truth to power, confront systems that cause harm, and stand with our communities in the face of injustice. It takes courage to believe that change is possible and to work tirelessly for a world where every person can thrive.

Justice

Justice is our sacred calling. It is not just a dream but a demand of our faiths—a world where neighborhoods flourish, where power is shared, and where no one is left behind. Through organizing and collective action, we work to heal what is broken and build the Beloved Community we are all meant to share.

Roadmap for Justice



Building on 2023's house meeting and listening campaign, we began the year hosting our first statewide interfaith convention - Roadmap to Justice - on February 19, 2024.

The convention brought together **more than 400 faith leaders, congregation members, and members of Pennsylvania communities**. We discussed the current political climate, planned for the coming year, and led a dialog with PA House Majority Leader Matt Bradford and Education Chair Pete Schweyer. After hearing from Leader Bradford and Chairman Schweyer that they doubted they had enough power in the legislature to protect 2024-25 public education funding from new private school vouchers, POWER leaders met with more than 40 PA House representatives, and called and emailed others, to ensure they understood why vouchers are bad for public education. **Partners and allied organizations across the state wielded their power in the Senate, and the final budget passed with no new vouchers.**



Civic Engagement



In the spring, POWER's Democracy Fellows knocked on **22,000 doors** and made, with help from POWER faith leaders, more than **10,000 phone calls**, having more than **6,000 total conversations with prospective voters** to drive turnout for Pennsylvania's primary election. Several Democracy Fellows returned, along with new additions to the team, teaming up with volunteers to canvass another **143,000 doors and 140,000 phone calls**, and nearly **60,000 text messages** in Philadelphia, Lancaster County, Montgomery County, and the Lehigh Valley this fall. The more than **30,000 live conversations** we had not only helped turn out voters, but built our organizing capacity and power. Canvassing and phone scripts include asking voters what they know and how they feel about the issues around which POWER organizes, so that we are able to engage and follow up with those who have potential interest in POWER's ongoing organizing work.





Civic Engagement

At-A-Glance

143,000

Doors Knocked

140,000

Phone Calls

60,000

Text Messages Sent

Black Faith Votes



Our #BlackFaithVotesPA clergy leaders built on the success of 2023's Soul Food Dinner program pilot, organizing **82 dinners** hosted by members of **48 African American Christian and Muslim congregations** across the Commonwealth. Hosts were given a \$250 stipend, a conversation guide, video and materials to share with guests, including voter commitment cards. Guests had intergenerational conversations about the importance and mechanics of voting, and the issues that impact them the most. We engaged **more than 2,600 guests in intergenerational dialog** about the importance of civic participation, collected **more than 600 voter commitment cards**, and engaged new leaders in our organizing work. Voter commitment cards are a vital tool in our efforts—they allow us to collect contact information from voters so we can remind them to vote and help them create a concrete voting plan for Election Day. Additionally, the #BlackFaithVotes team also supported **20 Black congregations hosting voter registration drives** throughout the election season.



Black Values Research →



Thanks to support from the Democracy and Power Innovation Fund, POWER had the opportunity to work with HIT Strategies on a first-of-its-kind research project to really get to know eligible-to-vote Black Pennsylvanians. Part of HIT's national Black Values Research Project, we used surveys and focus groups to hear from a broad cross-section of this population about their feelings and perceptions around faith, power, identity, and civic life. Out of the responses emerged five clusters: Legacy Civil Rights Voters, Secular Progressives, NextGen Traditionalists, Rightfully Cynical, and Race-Neutral Conservatives. The insights gained to each will inform not only POWER's work, but will be shared with our partners across the state and around the country to move conversation and tactics away from a monolithic "Black vote" to more nuanced and tailored engagement and relationship building tailored to the needs and perspective of each cluster of voters.



Live Free

POWER Interfaith celebrated 2023's continued decline in violence in Pennsylvania and across the country. Still, there was much to be done this year, and our Live Free team has been hard at work to ensure that trend continues, that our prisons will soon no longer be filled disproportionately with Black and Brown bodies, that society invests in our communities to help them thrive, and that police are held to the highest standards of accountability.

Live Free's Ending Mass Incarceration Team supported geriatric/medical parole for those who have served 25 years of their sentence, and partnered with allies to end solitary confinement. We've continued to advocate for increased non-police responses to mental health crises, helping to secure increased funding and greater transparency, including public access to all police and non-police responses to 911/988 behavioral health calls.



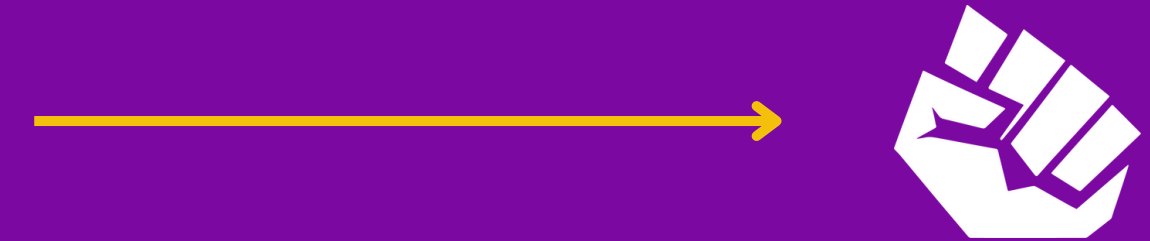
Live Free

Live Free's Police Accountability Team worked to change grievance arbitration so police officers guilty of misconduct receive appropriate discipline and consequences through arbitration. We're also calling for greater transparency, with results provided to the public. After unsuccessful attempts to bring about change through legislation, focus has shifted to the City/Fraternal Order of Police contract to bring consistency and accountability to the arbitration process.



Live Free's Immigration Justice Team has been supporting the Driving PA Forward campaign, advocating for drivers licenses being made available to all regardless of immigration status. This policy would increase public safety and revenue, and encourage fuller participation in communities for immigrants. As we brace for 2025's anticipated federal immigration crackdowns, we're working to strengthen ties with the organizations leading the work to protect immigrants in Pennsylvania.

Education Justice



We're SO close to winning our fight for full, equitable public education funding in Pennsylvania! With significant pressure from POWER and our allies, the PA legislature passed a 2024-25 budget that included nearly \$500 million in new basic education funding, plus an additional increase in "Level Up" funding for our most underfunded districts, increased accountability for cyber charter schools, and **no new private school vouchers, keeping funds in the public school system.**



Climate Justice & Jobs

POWER's Climate Justice & Jobs team has continued to hold public and private utilities accountable to our communities, and fight for increased funding for Pennsylvania's very popular and effective Whole Home Repairs program. Last spring, we once again called on our legislators to fully and permanently fund the Whole Home Repairs program, created with federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding. POWER leaders wrote and called legislators, and haunted the Senate. The program provides grants of up to \$50,000 to low-and moderate-income homeowners and loans to landlords owning fewer than five properties, for sustainable repairs and upgrades. Sadly, although PA Governor Josh Shapiro included funding in his 2023-24 and 2024-25 budget proposals, neither budget funded the program.



Climate Wins...

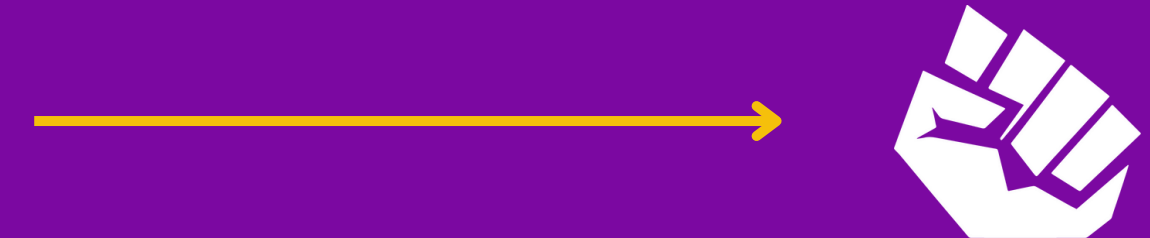


PECO, Pennsylvania's largest utility company, will enter into its first ever Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) for actual solar energy – not just energy credits. These are 10-year contracts, which will result in a new 25 MW solar facility. Although 25 MW is small, (equal to 5,000 solarized homes), this proof of concept opens the way for the solar energy we need.

Late last year, POWER and our partners secured a decision from the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) which **rejected the Philadelphia Gas Works' (PGW) request for a \$85.2 million annual rate increase**. Instead, the Commission approved an annual rate increase of \$26.2 million, a reduction of almost 70%, and ordered a series of adjustments to PGW's rates and policies to advance affordability and equity.



More Climate Wins



This spring POWER organized people power, a legal case, and expert testimony on PGW's proposed capital budget. We were able to cut 1.2 million dollars of excessive spending that would have gone into gas infrastructure. **Saving money for energy users in the poorest big city in the U.S. while ensuring a safe energy future** is a sweet victory.

\$25 million in the state budget for PA's first-ever state program to solarize schools

Working with our climate justice partners in Philadelphia, POWER fought for funding in the city budget for **comprehensive home repair for low and moderate income homes**. We called the Mayor, met with elected reps, testified at hearings and together we won \$5 million in the city budget for Built to Last. This funding will draw down \$25 million of additional federal funding for home repair for our neighbors who need it most.

Affordable Housing



In Philadelphia, POWER faith leaders hosted 43 house meetings, having **conversations with more than 700 Philadelphians about the issues impacting them most, and rising to the top was housing affordability** and its impact on community safety, gentrification, education, and more.

Meetings were held in every major neighborhood in the city, and in 9 out of 10 council districts. The data we collected was used to plan a January 26, 2025 Philadelphia leadership assembly to launch a visibility campaign to get the attention of our city's elected and business leaders.

Partnerships



POWER Interfaith is stronger for the company we keep.

Since our beginning, we've been members of the Faith in Action and PowerSwitch Action (formerly Partnership for Working Families) national networks. Within Pennsylvania, we work through statewide tables like PAYBAC, the PA Climate Equity Table, Pennsylvania Voice, PA Schools Work, and others. We bring to these tables the voices of Pennsylvanians of faith in a way no other organization does, building on the tradition of organizing communities through houses of worship.

Staff & Board Retreat →



Each year in the midst of summer, the POWER Interfaith board and staff gather to learn and plan together. This year, over the course of four days at Pendle Hill Retreat Center, we learned about the history of antisemitism, and discussed communications, fundraising, and, of course, organizing strategy.

We shared meals and faith reflections daily, engaged in 1:1s, clarified our “why?” and built a community playlist. The retreat is an important opportunity to focus, away from the day-to-day demands of our work, on how we work and move together to shape the world we want.



Community

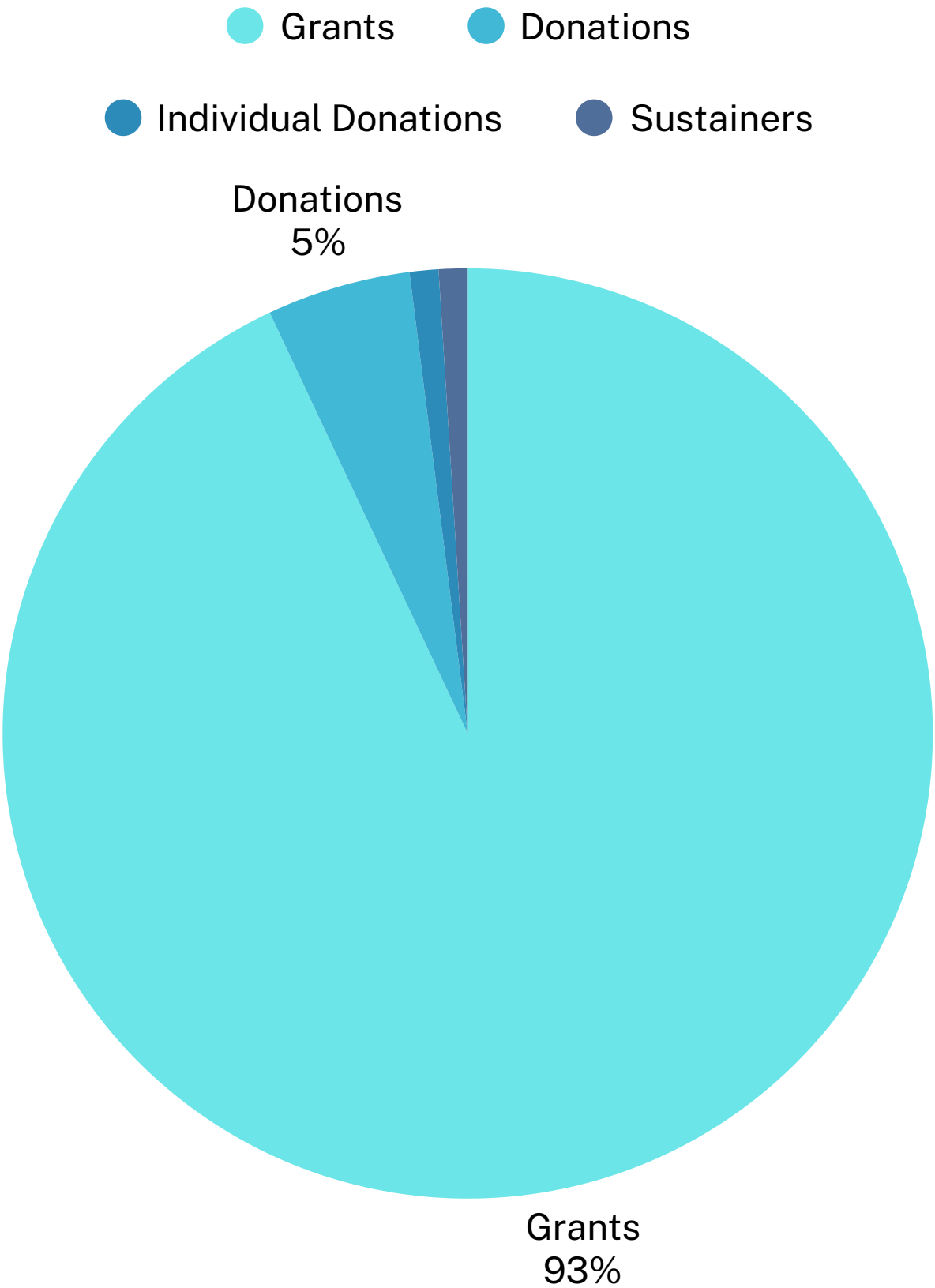


The richness of the POWER Interfaith community never ceases to amaze us! Every day our leaders step into the organizing work in powerful ways. Bob Brand helped us recruit new donors and encourage some of our existing donors to increase their annual gift, with his donation of his It Has Always Been About Voting collection of photographs taken at the 1966 Meredith Voting Rights March in Mississippi.



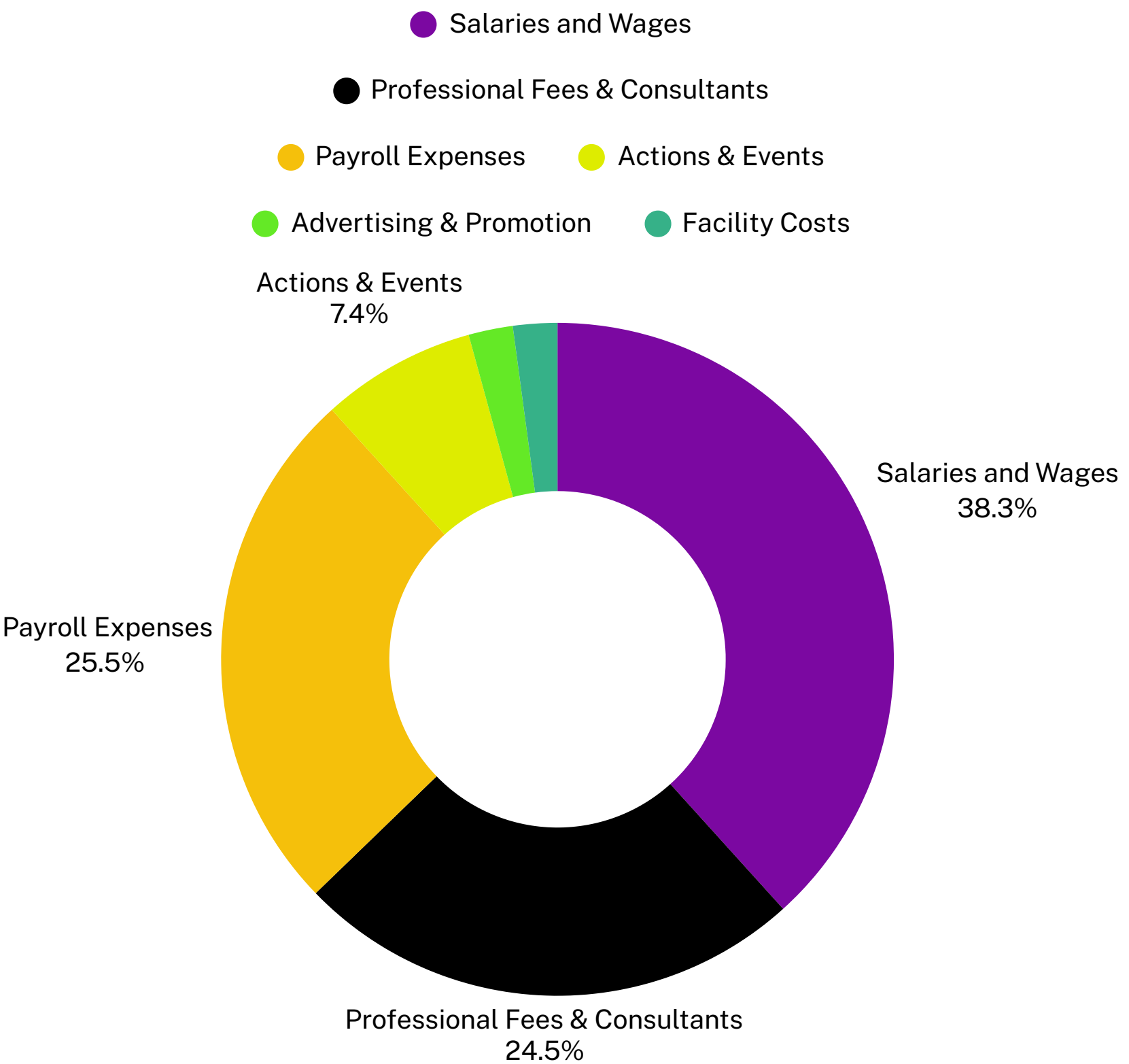
Income Report

Our income this year came from a diverse mix of sources, including individual donors, foundation grants, and contributions from our partner organizations. This broad base of support reflects the shared commitment of our community to advance justice and equity. Each contribution helped sustain our organizing work, advocacy efforts, and leadership development across the state.



Expenses

Our expenses were carefully allocated to maximize impact in the communities we organize. The majority of funds supported our core programming, including voter engagement, issue-based campaigns, and community outreach. Additional expenses covered staff salaries, operational needs, and events that brought people together to build collective power. Every dollar spent was rooted in our values and aimed at creating lasting change.



Digital Impact (Email)



- Total number of mailings: **209**
- Individual Emails Sent: **1.12 million**
- Total Email Subscribers: **10,589**
- New subscribers: **2,002**
- Conversions (Cultivation to Giving): **690**
- Retention rate: **85.8%** (subscribers); **75%** (donors)

Digital Impact (Social Media)



- Instagram – **1,997 followers; 23.6% increase**
- YouTube – **210 subscribers; 23.5% increase**
- Facebook – **7,500 followers; 2.73% increase**
- *Twitter/X – **4,200 followers**
- Over **13,000 people reached**

**Stopped using X in 2024. Platform no longer allows free access to metrics.*

Thank you for your support!



Connect with us.

POWER Interfaith

www.powerinterfaith.org

215.282.7697



