



VOICES OF HOPE

Year in Review

2023 was a significant year for Voices of Hope, as **we returned to in-prison programming** following nearly 3 years of pandemic restrictions.

This has been our first full year of leading choirs in **two facilities**. On **January 15**, **Voices of Hope-Shakopee** returned under the direction of Dr. Amanda Weber. **Voices of Hope-Stillwater** launched on **February 5** under the direction of MaryLynn Mennicke. Both choirs are scheduled to rehearse weekly.

"Choir is definitely the highlight of my week."

"For me, this is like a booster shot of positive energy!"

Much has changed in Minnesota prisons post-Covid, such as limits on our class sizes and volunteer involvement. **Frequent staff shortages** have led to cancellations and restrictions in programming at both facilities. Voices of Hope staff, volunteers, and singers have navigated such **administrative challenges** with grace and resilience.

"Music makes you feel like a human being in a place where you feel like you're not."

"Being able to sing with this choir reminds me that my voice is heard."

Voices of Hope worked with over **75 incarcerated singers**, supported by a team of **10 weekly rehearsal volunteers** from the outside community.

2023

Outside Programming & Partnerships

Voices of Hope continues to connect with alumni singers and other collaborators, using our voices as one to build partnerships and support like-minded organizations. In 2023, we made music with **10 VOH alumni** and over **50 volunteers**, at events such as:

"Rising Tide" performance with See Change Treble Choir and Encore! ft. Emily Baxter

Second Chance Coalition's Day on the Hill

Mile in My Shoes Downtown Run Around

First Annual Amicus Champions of Change Gala

Children of Incarcerated Caregivers Gala

Events such as these have enabled us to make music and stay connected, but perhaps more importantly, they have also provided opportunities to give **"Section Leader" stipends to VOH alumni**. Throughout the year, we have also journeyed with alumni through personal ups and downs, offering support through job recommendations, baby showers, and more.

Presentations & Press

In 2023, Voices of Hope was featured on the *Enhance Life with Music* podcast, *Choir Fam* podcast, and on *MPR News with Angela Davis*. Articles were written in *Star of the North* (a Minnesota American Choral Directors Association publication) and Yale University's Institute of Sacred Music Alumni Spotlight (featuring VOH Founder Amanda Weber '13). VOH alum Lia Pearson's composition, *Just Believe with Me*, received performances in Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, and Arkansas.



Organizational Growth

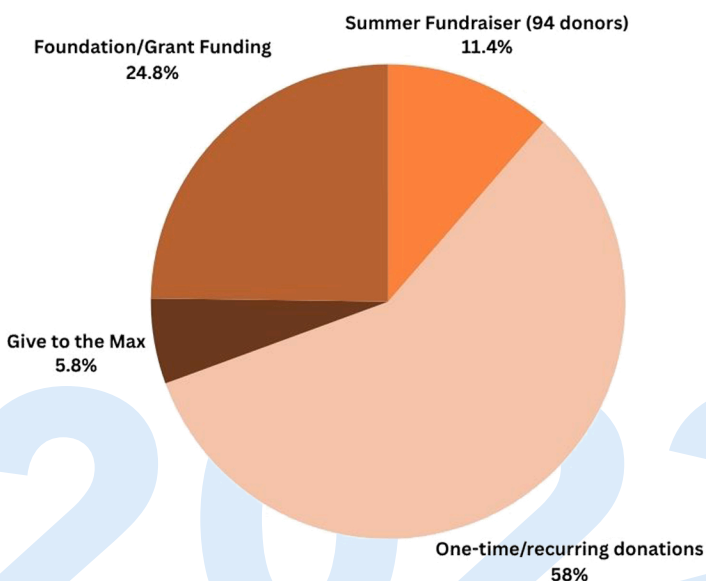
2023 has involved significant organizational growth for VOH. From the fall of 2022 through the spring of 2023, we were fortunate to add to our staff full-time fellow Laura Clapp through the Yale Glee Club Service Through Music Fellowship. Following the end of Laura's fellowship, we extended a part-time, year-long position as **Communications and Community Partnerships Coordinator**, expanding our administrative staff team.

Leading choirs at two facilities has necessitated **doubling our artistic team**. We are pleased to have paid leadership from two conductors and two accompanists.



In December of 2023, we said **farewell to VOH Executive Director Brittany Kallman Arneson**, after 6 years of gifted leadership. We welcomed **Jessi McKinnon as Interim Executive Director**. Jessi had been volunteering with Voices of Hope since March 2023 and brings skills in administration, management, fundraising, and development. She is serving Voices of Hope in a part-time capacity.

2023 Sources of Revenue 2023 Income: \$58,506.71



2023 Expense Breakdown 2023 Expenses: \$59,001.46

