

2023-2024

Peace & Justice Center Annual Report



Table of Contents

- 01** Introduction
- 02** Budget Overview
- 03** Public Assembly
- 04** Collective Ritual
- 05** Peace-Building
- 06** Special Events
- 07** Conclusion

Introduction

Since 1981, the Peace & Justice Center (PJC) has been a Vermont leader in mobilizing action, tackling the interconnected issues of human rights and economic, social, and environmental justice.

Our political, social, and economic institutions were built on principles that favored some (male, white, typically abled, straight, cis-gendered, wealthy, powerful) at the expense of others (women and gender non-conforming people, people of color, differently abled, LGBTQI, the 99%, and the nonviolent). These dynamics are embedded in our culture's DNA. The PJC is committed to raising awareness of injustice, redressing the harms of generational oppression, and equipping people with tools to lead viable social change movements that include and empower all people and, ultimately, create a peaceful and just world.

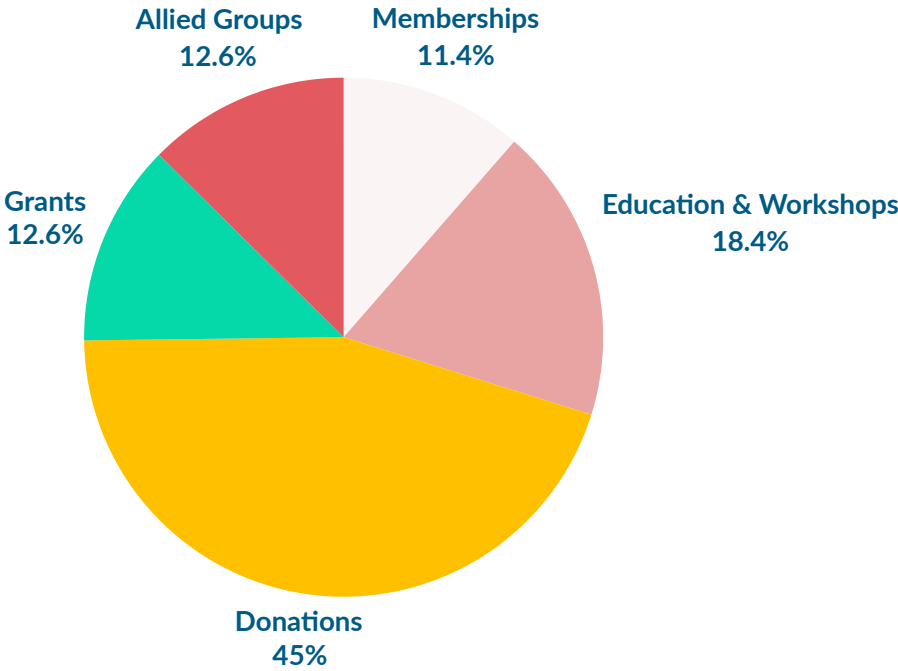
This year, we have created a new way to present our work. We are focused on three main areas of ground work: Peace-Building, Public Assembly, and Collective Ritual.

We have held more than a dozen regular public events, all focused on both building citizens of democracy through public assembly, education, and rituals of togetherness. This is in addition to the private racial justice workshops, community conversations, and peace-building book groups we have done. We are so proud of all the work we have accomplished! We have written more than 100 letters to prisons, sang protest songs in community with all of you, and had enlightening conversations about ways that our collective history can inform our current work. We can't wait to continue this work with all of you over the course of the next year!

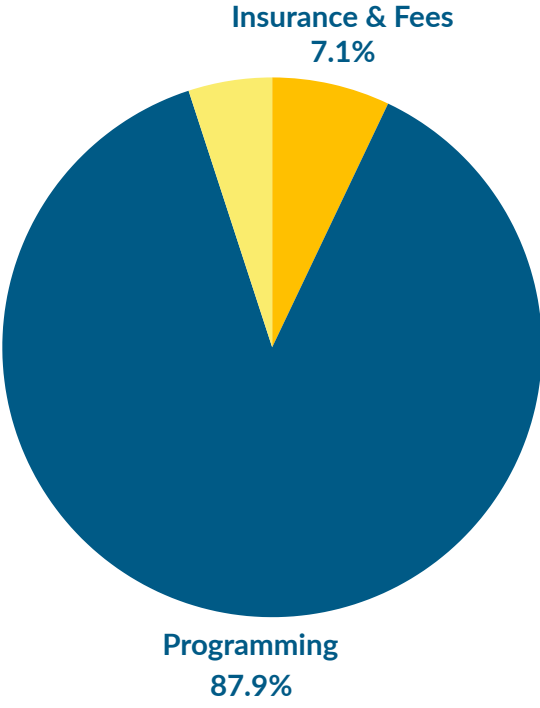


Budget Overview

Total Income: \$119,067.16



Total Expenses: \$113,204.00



- Number of First Time Donors: 165
- Number of Recurring Donors: 121
- Number of Recaptured Donors: 44

Adapting to a Changing Landscape

Private Clients for DEI
training in 2023:
16 organizations

Private Clients for DEI
training in 2024:
5 organizations



OUR ROADMAP FOR CREATING CITIZENS OF DEMOCRACY IN THE AGE OF PROJECT 2025



Our North Star:
Beloved
Community*



Peace-building work, regular public assembly & collective rituals all strengthen our ability to take meaningful action for the protection & regeneration of a living antiracist culture, and in doing so move us closer to realizing Beloved Community. The arrows guide us to understanding that this process may be cyclical and happen iteratively. In all likelihood, some work will be happening in each area at any given moment in time.

Public Assembly



**Creating public spaces to gather, learn,
organize & connect is the PJC's current
priority.**

Community Conversation

With the changing landscape around DEI trainings and the bleak political horizon, the Peace & Justice Center has adapted to having free public facilitated conversations around race & racism, environmental justice, and social justice. In addition, the Peace & Justice Center has begun holding monthly lectures on historical figures, events, and ideas that can influence our current work.

One of the most impactful of these public conversations happened in Montpelier, when we facilitated a discussion on race & racism after a few racist incidents. We heard from so many at that event that holding these public conversations is so important, and we are excited to expand that work in the coming years.

The history series has also been enlightening. Our largest event, held in June, detailed the history of Waterfront Park in Burlington and how activists fought to preserve this ecological jewel in the city. It was a packed house, with multiple attendees having been there in the 1980s when the fight was happening.

We are excited to collaborate with other non-profits and organizations to expand these conversations throughout 2025. We hope that you can assemble with us and we can all learn together!

Collective Ritual



Rebuilding the Commons

In addition to our formal workshops and lectures, the Peace & Justice Center was proud to offer collective action opportunities every month this year! We are passionate about creating community spaces where people feel some joy together in rebuilding the commons. It was so much fun to sing, create, and write in community with all of you. Here are some of the things we did this year, and we hope to continue (and expand) this work next year!



Prison Letter Writing

The Peace & Justice Center was proud to host 8 prison letter writing events, writing more than 100 letters to our incarcerated neighbors with more than 30 total participants. In collaboration with FreeHer VT, we mainly wrote to women incarcerated at the Chittenden Regional Correctional Facility.



Folk Song Singing

We held 2 events where we taught and sang folk songs from the American protest song tradition together. These proved to be so popular that we will make them regular events next year! All participants received their own free songbook with chords, lyrics, and a short history about the songs we sang.



Zine + Button Making

We held 6 art making events where we taught people how to make their own zines and buttons! This was one of the most rewarding regular events we held. We got so many incredible zines from community members - some of whom could absolutely publish! It was a joy to see so many artists come through our doors, including locally renowned artists like Raph Brice!

Wellspring Community of Practice

Wellspring is a group of 12 organizers who are training in an international, storybased framework called The Work That Reconnects. This framework was created to help people, particularly frontline movement workers, process heavy emotions like despair and rage, so that they can continue doing life protecting & sustaining political work. Once we complete our training (April 2025), Wellspring Community of Practice will offer workshops to the community at large to help them process their own emotions and provide inroads to movement work.



The Spiral of the Work

“As someone of the diaspora--an immigrant to the U.S.--and exploring my nonbinary existence, Wellspring helps me to ground and find language for myself within the state of Vermont and the country in general. I find myself learning new words and concepts from a place of care and understanding. Beyond self-help books and works that shed light on the systemic issues at play, Wellspring creates a space to build trust between humans sharing lived experiences, creating more fulfilling and empowered lives.” -Wellspring Participant

Read more about it here:

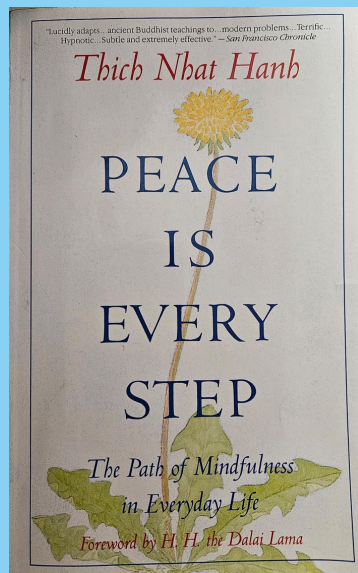
<https://workthatreconnects.org/what-is-the-work-that-reconnects/>

Peace-Building



Study Peace

Study Peace is a learning & practice group that has met for 2 iterations to learn about peace from renowned practitioners and scholars. We've all learned plenty about war in school, but we've learned very little about creating peace - we aim to change that!



“If you've been feeling like everything is moving too fast, the Study Peace group is a safe space to pump the brakes and generate thoughtful discussion with other curious community members. Together, we have read books like Kazu Hago's *Healing Resistance* and Thich Nhat Hanh's *Peace is Every Step*, taking the time to dig into what it means to be nonviolent. During a time when our culture puts emphasis on violence, especially on the geopolitical stage, it can be hard to conceptualize other ways to resist. This group focuses on exactly this, giving context to peace work in our hyper-polarized environment.” -Study Peace Participant

Kingian Nonviolence

Through Study Peace, we came into contact with an amazing framework called Kingian Nonviolence Conflict Reconciliation. This curriculum is an African American legacy created in the wake of Martin Luther King Jr.'s death by some of his closest collaborators.

The PJC and the VRJA are working in partnership to bring a Kingian Nonviolence Level 1 Core training to Vermont in January. We need your fundraising support to make this happen!



Special Events



Stop Cop City Event at Democracy Creative

The Peace & Justice Center was proud to host Jamie Peck of the Block Cop City movement in October 2023 at Democracy Creative to talk about the work to stop the authoritarian Cop City police training ground in Atlanta. We learned about this nationwide movement of building police training grounds and how the grassroots movement to stop it can succeed



Hosted Randolph Social Justice Youth Group

We hosted a group of amazing kids from Randolph Union High School who started their own anti-racism and social justice group to combat all forms of oppression in Randolph, VT. It was so amazing to meet with these young leaders! They had so much to teach the Peace & Justice Center, and we look forward to collaborating with them in the future!



Attended 2 Events with VCWA Global Leaders

The Vermont Council on World Affairs twice asked the Peace & Justice Center to speak to their global ambassadors that they brought to Vermont. It was a joy to speak to people from Iraq, Yemen, Libya, Egypt, and other states about the shared global problems we are facing and our paths toward world peace. A few of the participants in these events later turned up at some regularly scheduled PJC Events, which was so wonderful to see!



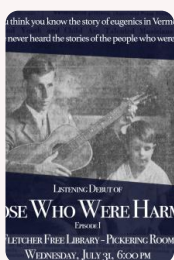
Tabled at ESWD 1st Annual Multicultural Festival

The Peace & Justice Center was proud to have been invited to table at Essex High School for first annual ESWD Multicultural festival! We met so many other amazing vendors and organizations, and we are looking forward to participating in the same event next year!

New Allied Groups

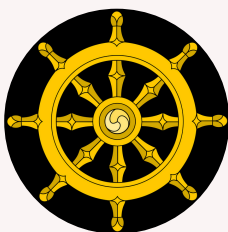
The PJC was thrilled to welcome four new Allied Groups this year. Our Allied Group program offers fiscal sponsorship to grassroots activist groups, allowing them to receive tax-deductible donations and grant funding.

We also offer a number of other services to our groups, including access to our meeting space and volunteer database and marketing assistance.



Those Who Were Harmed Podcast

Those who were harmed is a podcast that highlights the people harmed by Vermont's history of eugenics



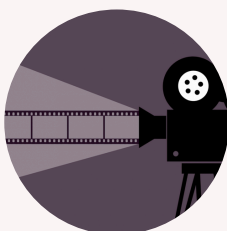
Burlington Dharma Collective

A group of peace-building people meeting weekly to practice a progressive Buddhist meditation



Blueprint Basketball

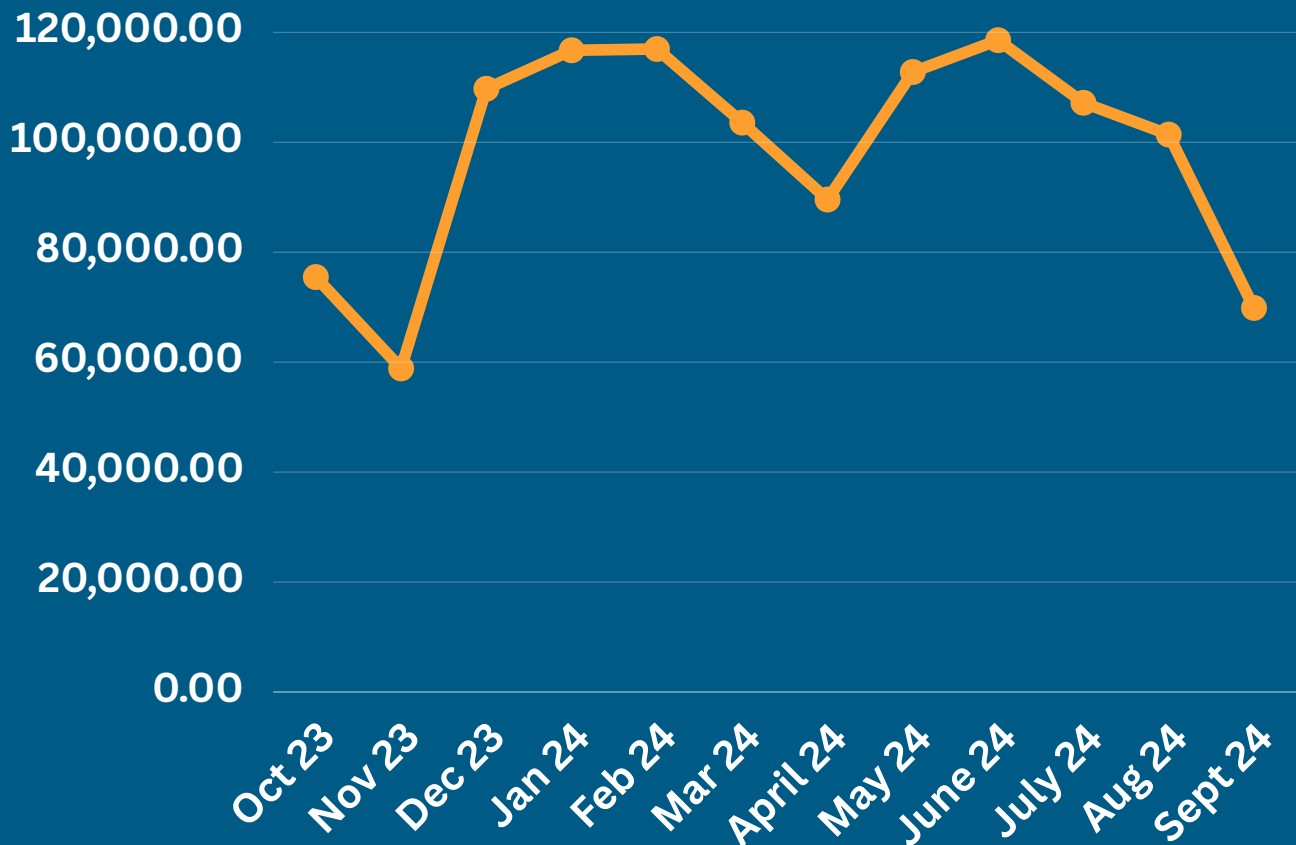
Blueprint Basketball provides basketball coaching and scholarships for poor and under-served high school students



Reel Defense: Mitigation Film Collective

A collective of film producers making films to help mitigate long sentences for people convicted of crimes

Total Allied Group Funds 2023-2024 FY



Allied Group Funds Growth

Throughout the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year,
we raised a total of \$297,520.35 for our
Allied Groups

10/01/24 Allied Group Balances

Blueprint Basketball	0.00
Brooklyn Strong	68.57
Burlington Dharma Collective	516.12
Burlington Free Meals	40.00
Extinction Rebellion VT	18.65
Hope Beneath the Tree	0.00
InterAmerica CASA Expenses	0.00
Loving Day Vermont	16611.10
Milton Inclusion & Diversity In	528.19

10/01/24 Allied Group Balances

Rutland NAACP	33458.00
Save Our Skies VT	1323.55
Social Equity Caucus	659.62
SURJ Middlebury	150.25
Those Who Were Harmed	275.03
The People's Farmstand	2150.50
Vermont Freedom & Unity Chorus	3452.57
Voices of St Joseph's Orphanage	3145.24
Vermonters for Justice in Palestine	4050.66
Waterbury Area Anti-Racism Coalition	7904.98
Winooski Parents & Students Project	14642.83

Conclusion



Conclusion and Acknowledgements

The PJC is proud to present the results of our hard work in this annual report. We could not have had such success without our integral staff members, past and present. We also recognize the contributions of our members and the PJC community, who are absolutely vital to our organization. You make all of this work possible, and we here at the PJC are eternally grateful.

Our organization is stabilizing after years of uncertainty. We are so grateful for all of your dedicated support that allowed us to transition to free public programming and build up our community once again. Despite the dark political clouds that have crowded the skies at the end of this year, we know that with all of us working together, we can tackle the future and build a better Vermont and world for all people.

In Solidarity,
Peace & Justice Center Staff



**Peace &
Justice Center**

The Peace & Justice Center Annual Report 2023-2024

was compiled by:

Fenix Gonzalez and Kason Hudman