

## Parkinson's Resource Organization – J. Rosen 9/30/20

### What is your financial sustainability plan to fund the IT support for future?

Currently, our IT/Communications Director splits his time between fundraising and managing IT needs. As IT needs have dramatically increased, his ability to fundraise has dramatically diminished. The additional IT support will fund itself in the future by virtue of freeing our director to refocus on sustaining and expanding our direct fundraising programs.

Similarly, we canceled several key fundraising events this year because of COVID-19. We have already begun our pivot to more creative fundraising, including digital fundraisers. Facebook fundraisers generated \$19,106 in 2019. This year we've already raised \$17,589 without the time to really market and stimulate this revenue producer. With three months to go and the help of the new assistant, this is just one of the social media platforms that will generate sustainability. We just launched a Patreon and, with virtually no time for promotion, we've already raised \$1,600.

Memorials used to generate 33% of our income, back when we did everything through the US Postal Service. Today we have developed a Memorial Wall on our website, which is managed by our IT/Communications department. Since COVID-19 we have added 57 names and obituaries to the Memorial Wall. So far this year we have generated \$10,325 in memorials funds.

Right now we're in the midst of planning a virtual annual gala and we're on track to hit our goal for that event. We fully anticipate returning to self-sufficiency by mid-year next year -- whether live fundraising events are permitted or not.

### How will clients benefit from virtual meetings? What will Zoom meetings accomplish?

Our constituents/members -- people living with Parkinson's and people supporting friends, family, spouses with Parkinson's -- report deep feelings of loneliness and isolation. They find themselves alone in an experience they can't share with neighbors, coworkers, etc. With the added threat of COVID-19 -- to which Parkinson's patients are particularly susceptible -- they now find themselves cut off from even casual daily encounters as they quarantine within their homes.

Our Zoom meetings are, in my opinion, our most crucial service at the moment. These virtual support groups sustain our members in the knowledge that they AREN'T alone, that they have a (weekly to monthly - their choice) place to cry, complain, laugh about the absurdities of life with other Parkinson's people, and stay in touch with their community. I have included just a few comments we have received about the importance of these support groups, and I'm happy to provide more.

*I've had the pleasure of knowing Jo for many years and we've shared pertinent news, ideas and stories together. And I'm sure there are many that share my sentiments - not only is she tireless and remarkable (where does she get all that energy?), but she is a godsend for the Parkinson's community. I have sat in the previously possible monthly meetings and heard tales of woe and joy as well as the thanks expressed for the knowledge she has shared with so many!*  
—Allen Shores, Sep 4, 2020

*When we first got diagnosed in Jan 2020, it was a shock. Finding Jo and her heartfelt words and invite to the meetings was a blessing. I believe the caregiver programs have helped me immensely. Manfred saw that he was not alone and we continue down the unsure road. Thank you Jo for giving us hope and inspiration and we look forward to hugging again in the near future.*  
—Manfred Kros

*My sister was diagnosed with Parkinson's 6 years ago. Nothing was working for her and we were hard-pressed to understand what was wrong. After a particularly difficult day, my sister Maureen called me in tears. I was so angry and sad that we couldn't get any answers. So in desperation, I looked up Parkinson's while in Palm Springs and was connected to Jo. The kindness and caring she gave me and subsequently my sister was overwhelming. She is truly a light in the darkness of this horrible disease. Thank you Jo for all you do from Michele, Norie, and Eileen.*  
—Michele Waldner

*You have opened up a whole new world for me by having meetings I can join [remotely]. You always led the meetings with a professionalism and grace. You took the time to make all feel welcome. You also took the time to find interesting speakers and topics. For all these things I remain eternally grateful.*  
—Barbara Hill

[Is the funding request for staff or IT upgrade and support? Please revise your Budget to reflect your response. If for staff, salary and benefits need to be included.](#)

While our IT expansion program includes funding for staff and for IT upgrades and support, the funding we hope to receive from RAP will go directly towards the salary for our new bilingual IT assistant. The budget has been updated to make that clear.  
Karina's salary is \$33,000 per year and there are no health or retirement benefits

How many clients are estimated to be served in Coachella Valley?

5,924 (and growing! As mentioned in our original application, we have seen membership skyrocket since our initial success with digital pivoting in the first few months of COVID-19.)

Describe how the software chosen will help serve people.

Our business subscription to Zoom directly serves our clients by providing more channels for live support groups, access to translators -- which is crucial in Coachella Valley -- and freeing us from daily time limits. WeVideo, a cloud-based video editing platform, allows us to work remotely as we produce informational videos, interviews with doctors, and more. There's a two-fold benefit here: we can produce higher quality videos, faster to get info out to followers, and we can collaborate as a team while working from our homes, protecting us and our work from the pandemic spread. Hootsuite helps us manage our multiple social media channels. This has become increasingly important as our social media following has increased by upwards of 3,000% across platforms. We use social media to broadcast crucial COVID updates and to bring in new clients -- in pursuit of our goal to ensure no one suffers from Parkinson's alone.

What measurement tools are used to evaluate the benefit to clients?

We are tracking Zoom attendees and periodically polling them for feedback on how to improve their user experience. We incorporate this feedback into the services we provide. Our mission as an organization is to ensure no one is isolated because of Parkinson's, so our goal always is to increase usership. With that in mind, we track attendee drop-off and follow up with clients who disappear unexpectedly. We track membership and retention to evaluate client benefits.

Since COVID-19 our Support Group participation has increased exponentially - one year ago for this period, our meeting population was 616. Since April 1, our first virtual meeting, through September 28th, our population has grown to 1,814. We now host forty-two meetings with an average of 43 people per meeting.