



NETWORK  
DELAWARE

*presents*

# THE 2019 ANNUAL REPORT



# Introduction

## Continuing to build “civic infrastructure” through leadership development, civic engagement, and policy change

Earlier this year we shared the story of three Network teams all meeting at the same time one night, and how we weren't involved in coordinating or leading any of them. To us, this was a perfect image of what we're trying to create.

A network of individuals and teams working together to create change in multiple areas (e.g. criminal justice reform, community engagement, immigrant rights, etc.) that don't rely on one “charismatic leader” to enact change. Our teams continue to show how much engaged civic volunteers can accomplish.

One of the things we most appreciate about the Network is how our community has created such a culture of learning and support. We all have strengths and experiences to share, along with areas of growth and opportunity.

People who've been involved for a year or so are now training others, and those who are new are quickly demonstrating they have more to contribute than they realized themselves.

We believe in the power of regular people getting involved in the political process. Whether that's discovering how to make a difference in your own community, organizing people to action, learning how to run for office, or even running an issue campaign to change policy.

Everyone should be a participant in our democracy, whether you're a parent, student, long-time advocate, first-time advocate, resident, immigrant, or just someone who wants to make a difference. In particular, we look to build power among communities of color, working people, women, immigrants, LGBTQ communities, and young people.

**That's why our main metric of success is “the number of people who increase their civic leadership through their involvement with Network Delaware”** (e.g. contacting your first legislator, joining an issue campaign team, facilitating your first training, becoming a coach for someone with less experience, etc.).

If we rebuild our civic infrastructure we can start to move ahead on so many issues of racial and economic justice, whether it be for our health, environment, or education.

If we continue to develop the capacity of our “network of members,” then we believe change will continue to come.

Drew Serres  
Executive Director

Eugene Young  
Board Chair



## Accomplishments

### Leadership Development

This year has seen significant growth in new members getting involved, developing their own skills, and sharing their talents/experiences with others. Some of the projects include:

- Launched the Ella Baker Black Organizers Group with Apryl Walker. In 2019 we successfully finished the 2nd cohort and are looking forward to continuing in 2020.
- Developed both the Candidate School and the Campaign Management Program. Some people in both programs are already running and managing campaigns!
- Young members created the Youth Activism Program which is preparing folks to take action to fight for justice.
- Most trainings are now led and organized by members (i.e. they went through the trainings as participants previously, but now are training others!).

## Civic Engagement

We're starting to both deepen and broaden the base of those involved with the Network. Some of our projects include:

- Our Civic Action Alerts share weekly policy, news, actions, and events across the state. Approximately 800 people read these each week!
- The People's Congress had a 2nd successful year with nearly everyone writing their own policy resolution and learning what it takes to research legislation.
- Started the District Advocate Program to prepare members on how to build relationships and communicate with elected officials. So far we have members that cover 25% of Representative Districts in Delaware.
- Our new Network Action Teams (i.e. think "Network chapters") have started in Wilmington and New Castle/ Rt. 9 corridor. Each month people get trained, hear from a guest speaker, and connect to take action

## Policy Change

The issue campaigns we work with continue to learn and grow. We're excited to work with the following campaigns:

- Safe Communities Campaign: Promoting policies that foster trust and transparency with our immigrant communities.
- Campaign to End Debtors' Prison: Working to overhaul Delaware's system of court assessed fines and fees and their impact on low-income communities.
- Mothers in Power: The Campaign to Improve Black Maternal Health: Working to end the high Black mortality rate of mothers and babies & to improve the health of Black mothers & babies.



# Dalissy's Story



I joined Network Delaware just about two years ago. Prior to that, my professional life involved providing direct social and psychological services.

Hearing many stories of resilience and sacrifice, while connecting many individuals and families to needed support was very fulfilling. However, my direct service was not affecting the need for systemic change.

I believe traditional social work goes hand in hand with activism. Network Delaware has formed me into a community organizer and activist, committed to social justice.

Network Delaware has something for everyone and a space for everyone. I encourage those interested in having an impact on our world to join Network Delaware. Attend a rally, attend a training, attend an event or just ride the wave as you engage with different opportunities.

The biggest and unexpected gift I have received from Network Delaware has been discovering my love for Delaware. Understanding how systems work and the power I have, has fueled my commitment to see change right where I live.

As a direct benefit of my involvement with Network Delaware, I have a newfound sense of belonging and purpose.

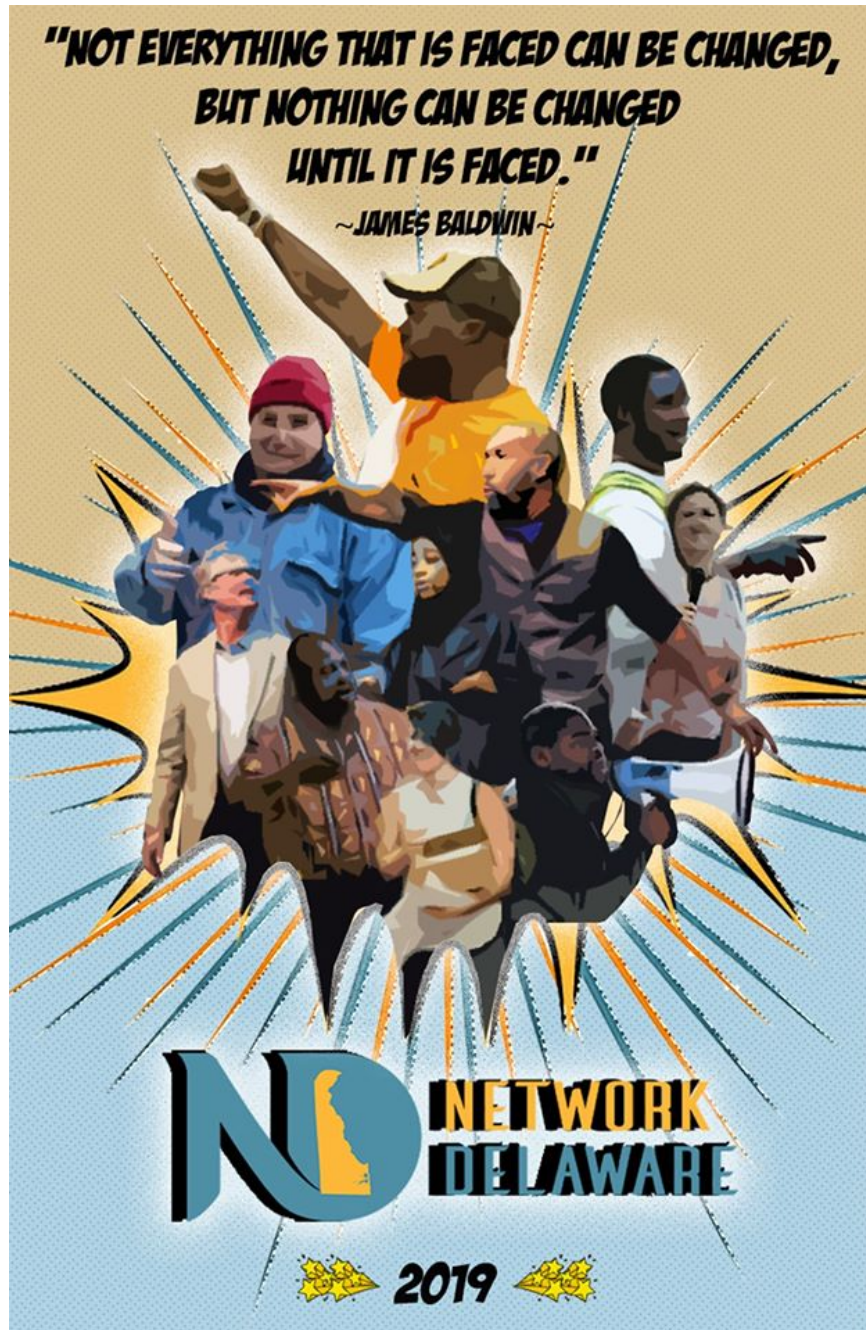
Dalissy Washington  
Safe Communities Campaign Co-Coordinator



# 2019 Metrics of Success

Here's a look at how we track our success at the Network. These numbers look at data over 2019:

- **Average Survey Ranking of "Would you recommend Network Delaware to others?"**=8.71
- **Inclusive Leadership** % of individuals of color in volunteer leadership positions such as coordinator, team lead, trainers/facilitators, etc.=67%
- **Volunteer Retention** % of volunteers who got involved and stayed involved over this year=86%
- **Donor Retention** % of donors who got involved and stayed involved over this year=58% (3-year donor retention is 72%)

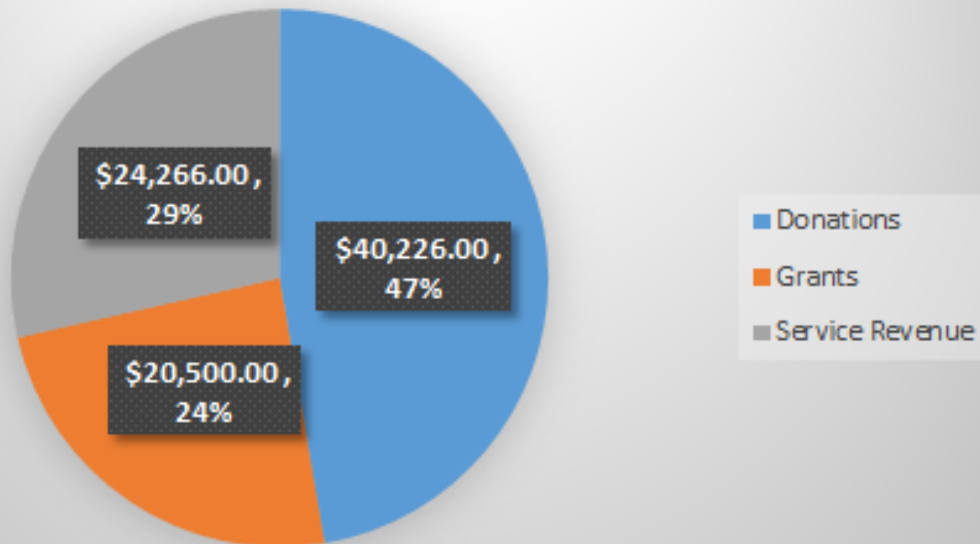


# 2019 Financial Summary

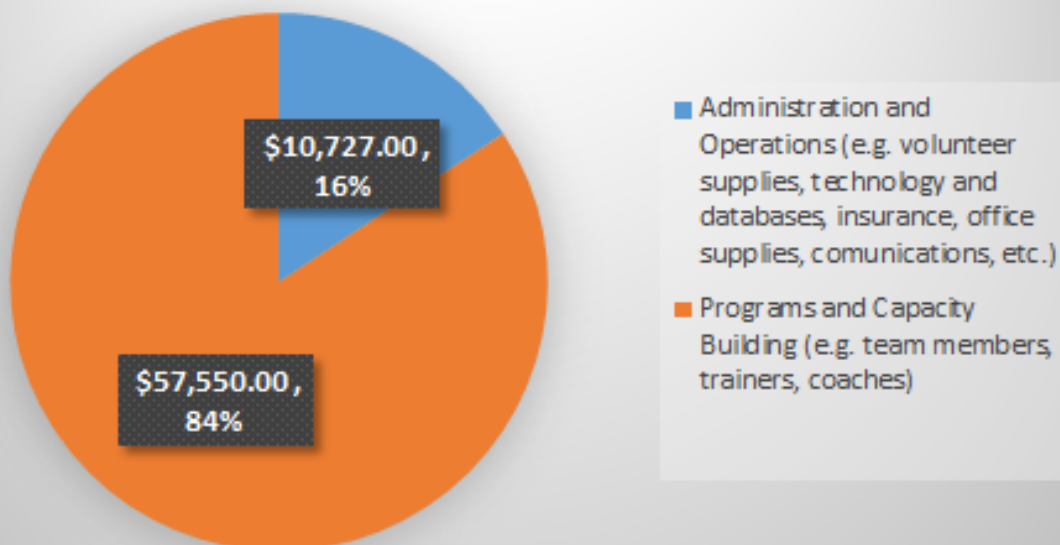
Here's a snapshot of Network Delaware's 2019 financials:

- Raised \$84,992
- Spent \$68,277
- We have \$25,642 in assets (includes some leftover from 2018)

## 2019 Revenues



## 2019 Expenses



# Kuno's Story

Lately I've been crying more frequently, and I think Network Delaware is responsible.

I've been tearing up over a novel, reaching for the tissues while watching a movie, and even getting watery-eyed from reading the news. Now this isn't an accusation against the Network; in fact it's just the opposite.

This is a salute to the organization for rebuilding in me something valuable that I think was beginning to fade away: empathy.

So often in activism, I've found that we are forced to play into the self-interests of stakeholders. This may mean justifying measures that help people who are recently incarcerated through the benefits to the rest of society (saving tax-payer dollars and reducing crime), or advocating for immigrants' rights by highlighting the ways that they boost the American economy.

We tend to minimize or decenter the genuine positive impact that these measures will have on oppressed groups because we fear that those in power will not be swayed by their stories; we fear that they won't be able to empathize.

The people I have met through the Network seem to have no such fear, and our commitment to grassroots organizing is a testament to that.

Through its various issue campaigns and its welcoming and encouraging volunteer structure, I have noticed how the Network prioritizes the voices of people who have been impacted by these issues, allowing these narratives to be the only argument for change. Through this unique grassroots structure we force decision-makers to interrogate their own motivations and importantly urge them to just care.

So the next time you find yourself on the verge of tears over something that may seem trivial or that has nothing to do with you, let them flow.

We could all use a little more empathy in our lives.

Kuno Haimbodi  
Summer Organizing Fellow





# What's Next For 2020?

**For Network Delaware, 2020 will be a mix of improving our existing leadership development programs, expanding our civic engagement programs, and continuing to push for justice across our communities.**

Here's just a short summary of what's upcoming:

- **The “Change Agent Journey”:** This program is a tailored leadership development program where you identify key skills you want to learn (e.g. management, instituting equity/justice within your team, pushing policy, etc.) and you work with a small group and coach to reach your learning goals. We have 8 core areas where you can earn “badges” for accomplishing certain skills.
- **Expanding Network Action Teams:** We're continuing to develop strong organizers across the state. We're looking to continue to expand to new areas (e.g. Dover, Middletown, etc.).
- **Increasing our member base:** One of the reasons Network Delaware is able to grow and build “people power” is that we have members like you who support us and refer family, friends, and colleagues to join us. So if you know anyone who's looking to develop their skills, let them know about the Network Delaware community!

