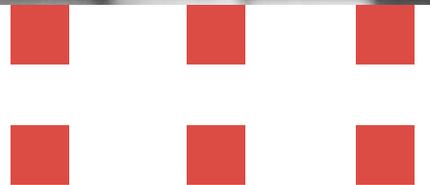


Union of
Concerned Scientists

2020 ANNUAL REPORT







WE USE
SCIENCE
TO MAKE
CHANGE
HAPPEN

*UCS tackles the most urgent problems.
We are scientists, engineers, economists,
activists, and everyday people using
science to protect our health, safety, and
environment in an equitable way.*



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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT & CHAIR



Dear friends,

As we write this letter, we don't yet know the outcome of the presidential election. But we do know that this year has been hard on all of us.

The scale of our losses is enormous. We've been tossed from crisis to crisis with hardly a moment to mourn or regroup. So above all, we hope you are taking good care of yourself, your loved ones, and your community. We're especially thankful for your support in such uncertain times. Because of you, UCS is still strong, and still fighting for a better world.

As the pandemic changed everything about how we live and work, UCS adapted on the fly. We expanded our reach online, finding new ways to push for our priorities, and new opportunities to engage with a broader range of people.

With your support, we pivoted nearly all of our campaigns to address the intersecting crises we face: the pandemic and the federal government's inadequate, science-denying response; the resulting economic fallout; climate disasters ranging from the West Coast wildfires

to a series of Gulf Coast hurricanes; episodes of police violence; and how each of these expose stark inequities throughout our society.

As we worked to show the connections between systemic racism, COVID-19, and climate impacts, UCS was confronted with painful evidence of the racial injustices we have unwittingly perpetuated as an organization. For our staff, for our partners, for our work, and for you, we are committed to dismantling the racism inherent in our structures and culture (see page 11).

As you will see in the following pages, our work in 2020 helped to build a case for the dramatic changes we need, and to mobilize the scientific community to speak up and advocate for these changes—regardless of election outcomes. It has never been clearer that we must work for systemic change, and evidence-based solutions that benefit all.

No matter how tough the circumstances, our environment, health, and safety are worth fighting for. We're committed to that fight and grateful that you are with us.

KEN KIMMELL President

ANNE R. KAPUSCINSKI Chair

KEEPING SCIENCE IN THE FIGHT

COVID-19 disrupted our work on nearly every issue, but UCS responded with our trademark blend of analysis and advocacy, making the case for why science should guide decisions that affect our health and safety.



In responding to the pandemic, the Trump administration sidelined science, prioritized politics and profits over public health, and relied on disinformation to obscure its irresponsible and incompetent actions. UCS fought back, exposing the administration's tactics and the implications for vulnerable communities.

We documented how the administration dismissed scientists who warned about the virus's spread, failed to ramp up testing and tracing, hoarded protective equipment, and even allowed a quarter of states to avoid reporting death by race—despite evidence that people of color were dying in disproportionately high numbers from COVID-19.

A UCS analysis detailed how the Trump administration gave CDC scientists fewer opportunities to speak to the press about COVID-19 than previous administrations

had during other disease outbreaks. This spurred more than 3,500 scientists to sign a letter demanding that government scientists be allowed to communicate without political interference, and our own experts blogged about the disastrous federal response and its impact on marginalized communities. The public proved eager for the facts: UCS blog traffic more than doubled in the first three months of lockdown.

We also continued our broader efforts to preserve the integrity of government science:

PROTECTIONS FOR SCIENTISTS. After more than a year of advocacy by UCS and its Science Network members across the country, the House of Representatives passed the Scientific Integrity Act with bipartisan support as part of its COVID-19 stimulus bill. We will work on Senate passage of this critical act—which would prohibit the



manipulation or misrepresentation of scientific findings and give scientists final review of materials based on their research, the right to correct misrepresentations of their research, and the right to talk about their research publicly—during the next Congress.

ADVISORY PANELS. Scientists from universities and industry routinely volunteer their time to serve on panels that provide federal agencies with expert advice on difficult technical matters. The Trump administration vowed to eliminate one-third of these panels, and has attempted to skew the influence of those that remain by replacing university scientists with more from industry.

When the administration disbanded a panel that helps set science-based limits on air pollution, UCS responded with a strategy that had never been attempted before: convening the scientists ourselves. They accepted our invitation to meet in a Virginia hotel, followed all the protocols of their previous meetings, and subsequently released a detailed assessment that found the EPA's current standard for particulate pollution is not sufficient to protect public health. As a result, if the agency makes a decision inconsistent with this scientific advice, it can expect to face a stiff legal challenge.

AGENCY NOMINEES. As we have done before, UCS spoke out effectively against President Trump's choices to run federal agencies where science—not political or business ties—should set the agenda. We alerted the public that Barry Myers was both unqualified to lead the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and had a blatant conflict of interest: he could have used his position to benefit his former company, AccuWeather, which is run by his brother. And Nancy Beck would bring to the Consumer Product Safety Commission an alarming record of fringe scientific views and support for weaker oversight of corporations. UCS rallied scientists and helped shape media coverage including a monologue by late-night TV host John Oliver; Myers' nomination was withdrawn and Beck's nomination stalled in the face of bipartisan opposition.

PUBLIC HEALTH SAFEGUARDS. The Trump administration's EPA proposed banning the use of scientific studies based on data that are not publicly available, thereby eliminating a host of respected studies that use anonymous personal medical records to assess health impacts. Any existing rule based on such data—including the Clean Air Act—could be overturned. When the EPA failed to hold a public hearing on the proposal (using the pandemic as an excuse), UCS again held a hearing of our own. Over the course of the year, our focus on this disaster in the making led to stories by CNN, *The Hill*, *Mother Jones*, the *New York Times*, NPR, *Science*, and *Vanity Fair*, as well as editorials in the *Boston Globe* and *Nature*.

We defended the Obama administration's clean car standards—the most significant federal action to confront climate change of the past decade—against the Trump administration's proposed rollback, organizing hundreds of scientists to sign a letter to the EPA, polling GM and Toyota owners about these automakers' support for the rollback (many of whom said they would consider switching brands), and provided the technical rationale for lawsuits to fight the rollback.

UCS also pushed back against the administration's attempts to weaken rules on methane emissions (an even more powerful heat-trapping gas than carbon dioxide), pollution in streams and wetlands, and the environmental impact reviews required prior to construction of polluting facilities, which would bring even more harm to the communities living next to these facilities—often people of color and people with lower incomes.

Overall, the Trump administration has committed more than 150 attacks on science by our count, a milestone that led ABC News to confront a White House press secretary about it. UCS has countered these attacks by driving hundreds of thousands of public comments from our members and supporters demanding federal agencies preserve safeguards vital to our health and environment.



ENSURING ELECTIONS ARE SAFE, SECURE, AND FAIR

Many states had already taken steps before the pandemic to disenfranchise voters, often targeting low-income communities or those with high numbers of Black or Latino voters. COVID-19 raised the barriers to voting even higher. And as the Trump administration threatened to undermine the US Postal Service and directed violence at protesters, democracy itself felt threatened in 2020. Pushing back, the Center for Science and Democracy at UCS worked to expand voting, through policies that research shows can protect voters and the integrity of our elections at the same time.

In February we launched the Science Rising Challenge with our partner organization SACNAS (Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science) to encourage students in the STEM fields not only to vote, but also to undertake an activity that would motivate others to follow suit.

As many states changed their rules to allow for more voting by mail, President Trump repeatedly claimed the process would lead to widespread fraud. UCS pushed back in a report with the UCLA Voting Rights Project and the University of New Mexico's Center for Social Policy,

effectively debunking this myth—and finding no evidence of partisan advantage from absentee voting.

Another UCS report, *Our Unhealthy Democracy*, demonstrates a link between poor health outcomes and lack of access to the ballot box (due to partisan gerrymandering and restrictive voting laws, for example). The report recommends a slate of electoral reforms we are promoting with a number of coalition partners. In an online town hall meeting with Declaration for American Democracy—comprising more than 160 groups—our message reached more than 380,000 viewers (along with Senators Amy Klobuchar, Elizabeth Warren, and Ron Wyden). With that same coalition and New York University's Brennan Center for Justice and the Center for American Progress, we called on Congress to allocate the funds needed to protect voters and their votes during the pandemic.

And in three states we expected would play a pivotal role in the 2020 election—Arizona, Michigan, and North Carolina—we supported local groups calling for similar reforms. Regardless of this year's election outcome, UCS will continue to push for changes that strengthen our democratic processes and make them work for all people.

BRINGING GROUNDBREAKING ANALYSES TO NEW AUDIENCES

Even in the midst of the pandemic, the protests supporting Black lives, and the presidential election, UCS kept our issues in focus with leading-edge research that often highlighted COVID-19's compounding effect on existing problems.

CLIMATE CHANGE. UCS teamed up with researchers at Columbia University to produce two timely analyses on the intersection between the pandemic and climate risks: in March, we warned state and county officials to be ready in areas we projected were at the highest risk for both spring flooding and COVID-19 outbreaks—generally rural areas where access to health care is limited. Then, before the peak of the US hurricane season, we showed how tens of thousands of people could avoid COVID-19 infection during hurricane evacuations if authorities send them to communities with low transmission rates and take the precautions we outlined to keep those rates low.

Another UCS analysis exposed the risks posed by President Trump's 2017 reversal of an executive order intended to protect contaminated sites from coastal flooding. Even under the lowest projected rates of sea level rise, thousands of these sites are likely to be inundated within 20 years—disasters waiting to happen for neighboring communities.

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE. As the nation's more than 2 million farmworkers do the essential work of planting and harvesting our food, they are exposed to pesticides and extreme heat with little protection offered by their employers or the law. The UCS report *Farmworkers at Risk* showed how climate change magnifies these threats and, as COVID-19 added still another, we called for passage of a proposed bill that would finally require protections for farmworkers.

When already crowded and dangerous meatpacking facilities suspended operations due to COVID-19 outbreaks, UCS joined a coalition demanding safety measures for these workers too. Our analysis of the situation showed how COVID-19 cases could explode in communities near meat and poultry plants, and how those areas lack the capacity to treat the potential number of



patients. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi cited these findings in a letter to fellow lawmakers.

RIDE-HAILING. Before the pandemic drastically altered daily life, UCS had been investigating an overlooked source of global warming emissions: ride-hailing services like Lyft and Uber. Our analysis found that, because of “deadheading” (the miles driven looking for passengers), a solo ride-hailing trip produces an average of almost 50 percent more carbon emissions than the same trip in a privately owned car. And ride-hailing trips were displacing other lower-carbon modes of transportation including public transit, bicycling, and walking. More than 100 news outlets reported our findings, and in June, Lyft announced its vehicles would be all-electric by 2030. Uber made a similar announcement in September.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH. UCS also sought to emphasize how the Trump administration, instead of protecting the nation's children, has actively been putting them in harm's way. *Endangering Generations*, the first UCS report to focus on children, documented the many ways political appointees have refused to ban toxic chemicals, failed to enforce consumer protections on goods ranging from food to baby strollers, separated children from their immigrant parents and held them in cages, and attempted to restrict access to the Supplemental Nutrition Access Program (or SNAP benefits). To present this sobering information in a way that would appeal to parents, we took the unusual approach of creating a companion storybook called *Breathe in the Smog, Drink in the Lead*.



MAKING CLIMATE PROGRESS— FROM A DISTANCE

While lawmakers argued over masks and reopening the economy, UCS made the point in multiple venues that COVID-19 must be seen as a dress rehearsal for the catastrophic disruptions we can expect from climate change if we don't dramatically reduce carbon emissions. And despite having to move all our advocacy online, we were able to achieve some noteworthy victories.

CLIMATE AND ENERGY POLICY. UCS continues to make its presence felt at all levels of policymaking where decisionmakers value expert advice. On the international front, we participated once again in the annual United Nations climate negotiations, briefing the US delegation that included House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senator Sheldon Whitehouse, and receiving recognition in more than 3,000 news articles.

Back stateside, UCS succeeded in persuading Xcel Energy—one of the Midwest's largest utilities—to shut down its coal-fired power plants during those months when their output is not needed. The company conceded that the switch will save its customers millions of dollars while lowering emissions. And, after Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker pledged to reduce the state's carbon emissions to net zero by 2050, the state senate

followed through by passing a suite of bills that included provisions advocated by UCS.

At the same time, our efforts to lay the groundwork for federal action bore fruit in the form of a report by the House Select Committee on Climate Change that provides a framework for future legislation. UCS contributed ideas for “decarbonizing” the US economy in ways that would improve public health, create opportunities in farming and clean energy, and bring benefits to historically marginalized communities.

CLIMATE ACCOUNTABILITY. The work UCS began in 2012 to hold the biggest fossil fuel companies liable for climate-related damages gained additional momentum in 2020. We launched a Science Hub for Climate Litigation to provide research support for legal cases against the industry, and added more damning evidence with a peer-reviewed paper that demonstrates how 88 companies are responsible for more than half of the ocean acidification caused by climate change.

Honolulu became the latest municipality to sue for climate damages, with UCS helping city officials understand the threat from rising seas. Our science also lent support to a federal appeals court's decisions that



allowed lawsuits filed by some California counties and cities to proceed, and revived others that had previously been dismissed. Connecticut, Minnesota, the District of Columbia, and the city of Hoboken, New Jersey, announced lawsuits accusing oil and gas companies and their trade association of intentionally misleading shareholders about climate change—all standing on a foundation built by UCS analysis.

The companies are also feeling pressure from shareholders motivated by our work. Chevron shareholders passed a nonbinding resolution calling on the company to disclose its spending on climate-related lobbying, and BP announced a major concession: cutting ties with three trade associations that misrepresent climate science and reducing carbon emissions from its operations to net zero by 2050.

CLEAN TRANSPORTATION. Although diesel trucks and buses make up only 7 percent of vehicles on the road

in California, they are responsible for 23 percent of the state's global warming emissions from vehicles, and a similarly disproportionate amount of toxic pollutants. When California proposed increasing the number of electric trucks on its roads—but only to 4 percent of the total—UCS saw an opportunity for broader progress. We conducted an analysis showing that California could make 15 percent of its trucks electric with existing technology, which, along with a letter signed by more than 120 experts and comments from about 5,000 supporters, became a critical advocacy tool for our coalition partners. In June, state officials voted to double the number of electric trucks they had originally proposed. And as evidence of the nationwide impact one state's actions can have, 15 states and the District of Columbia have announced their intention to accelerate the deployment of electric trucks.



REDUCING THE THREAT OF NUCLEAR WAR

UCS made sure the public—and politicians—remained aware of our country’s risky nuclear weapons policies.



COVID-19 may have pushed the Trump administration’s faceoff with North Korea from the headlines, but the threat of nuclear war is as real as ever. The US arsenal of intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) stands on high alert, ready to be launched by the president at his sole discretion, with only a moment’s notice.

UCS took the lead in elevating these issues during the presidential campaign, mobilizing thousands of our supporters to sign petitions, write letters and opinion pieces, and ask the candidates to state their positions on nuclear weapons policies for the record. And when the Trump administration wanted to resume explosive nuclear tests for the first time in nearly 30 years, UCS moved to stop it by helping Congress understand the risks, organizing letters of opposition signed by scientists and “downwinders” (people living with the effects of earlier testing), and working with House members on an amendment to ban explosive testing that passed with bipartisan support.

On the 75th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, UCS joined some 170 other organizations under the name #StillHere to honor the experiences of the hibakusha—survivors of the bombings—and underscore the tragic consequences of using nuclear weapons. We contributed blog posts, opinion pieces, and a video featuring actor George Takei (who was imprisoned with his family in a US internment camp

during the war), and helped collect some 80,000 signatures for the Hibakusha Appeal, which calls for the elimination of nuclear weapons worldwide. UCS and a partner organization in Japan also succeeded in establishing a direct channel between US and Japanese legislators seeking progress on nuclear arms control.

As a founding member of the coalition Back from the Brink, UCS calls for the United States to take five specific steps that would make nuclear war less likely. To date, more than 340 organizations have endorsed the campaign, along with the state legislatures of California, Maine, New Jersey, and Oregon, and cities including Baltimore, Honolulu, Los Angeles, and Salt Lake City.

Finally, UCS pushed back on specific technologies that increase the risk of nuclear war. We worked with Congress to defeat the administration’s space-based missile defense proposals, and contributed to the case for eliminating ICBMs altogether with the report *Rethinking Land-Based Nuclear Missiles*. We explained that the United States’ original rationale for ICBMs is outdated, and that their continued existence is costly, unnecessary, and dangerous—yet the Pentagon is proposing to spend \$100 billion on a new generation of ICBMs. Congress appears more willing to re-examine military spending in light of the pandemic and its impacts, so our report is likely to play a key role in this debate going forward.



RECKONING WITH RACIAL INJUSTICE

UCS has committed itself to confronting racism head-on—both in the world around us and in our own workplace.

As police killings of Black people this spring and summer renewed public attention and outrage, UCS pledged our support to the Black Lives Matter movement and denounced the Trump administration's crackdown on protesters. Outwardly, UCS appeared strong and unwavering in support of racial justice. But behind the scenes, our organization was struggling to address long-established racist structures and practices in our workplace that were hurting UCS as an organization and hurting our staff as individuals, particularly our Black staff members.

The author Zora Neale Hurston once wrote, "If you are silent about your pain, they'll kill you and say you enjoyed it." This summer, several former and current UCS staff members bravely and publicly called out longstanding structural concerns—including the predominantly White leadership at UCS—and unacceptable behavior toward employees of color.

At this overdue moment of reckoning, staff members and managers have committed to transforming UCS into an anti-racist organization—that is, one that does not merely avoid racist and anti-Black practices but actively works to identify

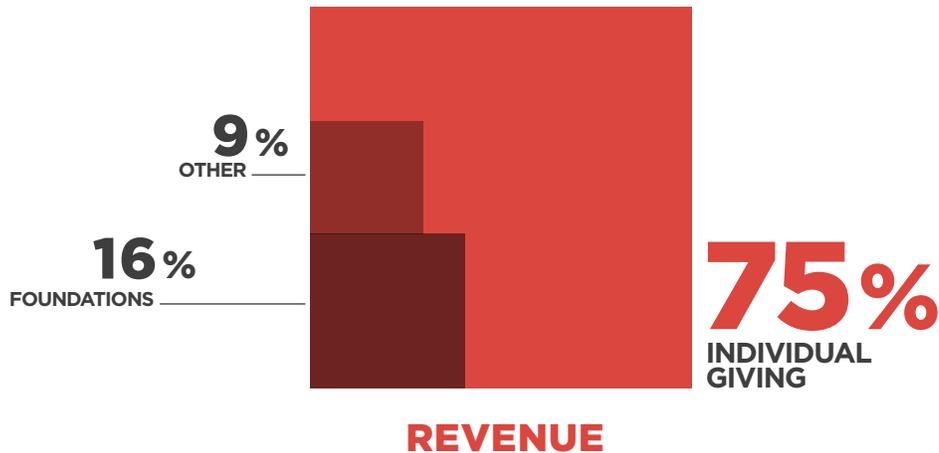
and end them. UCS has explicitly prioritized anti-racism both within the organization, where leadership will implement recommendations centering the perspectives of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and people of color) staff, and within our work, where, as the preceding articles have shown, science can—and must—play a role in exposing and confronting racial inequities.

The organization is committing to live up to the ideals we signed onto with our endorsement of the Equitable and Just Climate Platform, which unites national nonprofit groups such as UCS with environmental justice organizations dedicated to addressing systemic racism. Managers and staff are working to find a balance between preventing immediate harm and recognizing that it takes time to thoughtfully dismantle longstanding structures without doing more damage.

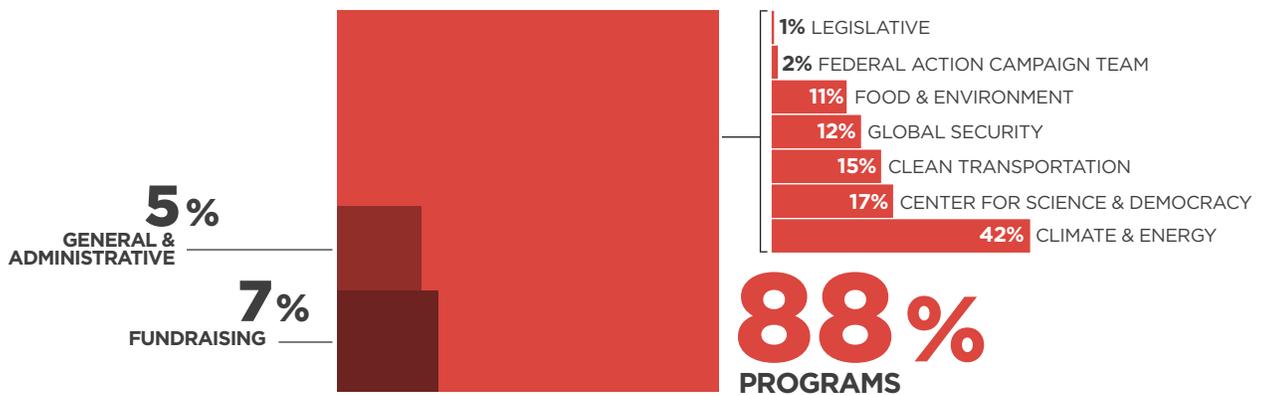
Reckoning with racism is a messy, painful process. Knowing it is the right thing to do helps lessen the pain. No one has a perfect formula for ending racism, not even scientists. But UCS won't stop trying.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Fiscal year ending September 30, 2020



The Union of Concerned Scientists continues to benefit from the generosity of our more than 124,000 members and foundations, who work in partnership with us to build a healthy planet and safer world. In fiscal 2020, the majority of our support—75 percent—came from generous individual donors through outright and planned gifts, while support from foundations represented 16 percent of our revenue. Other sources provided the remaining 9 percent of revenue, including our board reserve funds, which provided \$1,133,274 to support operations.



Eighty-eight percent of every dollar donated to UCS in fiscal 2020 directly funded our program work, with the remaining 12 percent spent on the critical administrative infrastructure and fundraising that support our programs. With an annual budget of \$41 million, UCS continues to strengthen our unique ability to help solve our planet’s most pressing problems with the power of independent science.

Note: These results had not been audited at press time; for our audited results, visit the UCS website at <https://ucsusa.org/about/funding-financials>.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Fiscal year ending September 30, 2020

OPERATING REVENUE AND OTHER SUPPORT	UNRESTRICTED			RESTRICTED	TOTAL
	GENERAL OPERATING	BOARD DESIGNATED	TOTAL UNRESTRICTED		
Membership and contributions	\$26,142,907		\$26,142,907	\$3,319,871	\$29,462,778
Foundation and other institutional grants	91,250		91,250	7,728,750	7,820,000
Net investment income	8,988	2,914,114	2,923,101	494,803	3,417,904
Realized planned gifts	3,751,858	3,751,858	7,503,717		7,503,717
In-kind contributions	100,125		100,125		100,125
Other revenue	358,716		358,716	4,380,847	4,739,563
Spending policy transfer	1,133,274	(1,133,274)			
Net assets released from restriction	9,453,797		9,453,797	(9,453,797)	
Total operating revenue and other support	41,040,915	5,532,698	46,573,613	6,470,474	53,044,087
OPERATING EXPENSES					
Programs:					
Center for Science and Democracy	6,179,307		6,179,307		6,179,307
Clean Transportation	5,247,083		5,247,083		5,247,083
Climate and Energy	15,040,712		15,040,712		15,040,712
Federal Action Campaign Team	914,030		914,030		914,030
Food and Environment	3,989,748		3,989,748		3,989,748
Global Security	4,348,607		4,348,607		4,348,607
Legislative	349,303		349,303		349,303
Total program expenses	36,068,790		36,068,790		36,068,790
Supporting services:					
Fundraising	2,880,146		2,880,146		2,880,146
General and administrative	2,091,979		2,091,979		2,091,979
Total supporting services expenses	4,972,125		4,972,125		4,972,125
Total operating expenses	41,040,915		41,040,915		41,040,915
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	0	5,532,698	5,532,698	6,470,474	12,003,172
NET ASSETS AT BEGINNING OF YEAR	\$7,837,730	\$33,133,971	\$40,971,701	\$6,636,187	\$47,607,888
NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR	\$7,837,730	\$38,666,669	\$46,504,399	\$13,106,661	\$59,611,060

Note: These results had not been audited at press time; for our audited results, visit the UCS website at <https://ucsusa.org/about/funding-financials>. Shaded area indicates operating budget.

NATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD

The following individuals dedicate their exceptional expertise, time, and resources to UCS.

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Recipient, Ocean Award 2019

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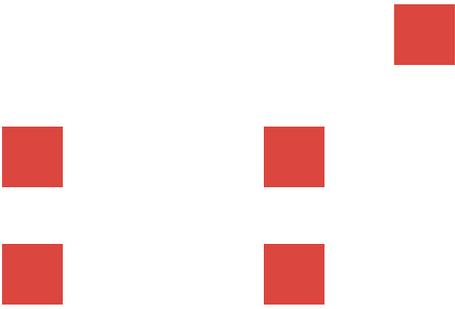
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YOU MAKE IT ALL POSSIBLE

We are deeply grateful for your passion and loyalty. Change is possible—and achieved—because of you. Thank you.



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