



2016
Annual Report

CLOWNS
WITHOUT
BORDERS

USA

In 2016, CWB-USA served 32,546 people through workshops and performances. That breaks down to 89 people a day. For every person we served, we hope they in turn shared joy, lightness, wonder, and inspiration with those around them, making our impact even more profound.



**11 Projects
9 Countries
18 Partners**

**32,546
People Served**

**167 Shows
72 Workshops
40 Clowns**



Clowns Without Borders originated in Spain, and is now established in Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Spain, South Africa, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

All chapters operate independently within their home countries, and collaborate whenever possible. Clowns Without Borders International (CWBI) is an international NGO that acts as an umbrella organization for all Clowns Without Borders Chapters. It facilitates collaboration between chapters, and provides the common ethical standards shared by all. One board member from each chapter serves on the international board. Sarah Liane Foster is the CWB-USA representative to CWBI.

Professional artists donate their time to Clowns Without Borders. It is hard to put a number on the value of their work. All together, they donated 589 days. If we were to pay artists a conservative rate of \$300 a day, that would total \$176,700.

Clowns Without Borders goes where invited, and always works in partnership with local organizations. The support varies, often including in-country transportation, logistics, and housing for our artists. The following list of official partners provided financial support for our projects.

- Clowns Without Borders - Sweden
- CRIPDES San Vicente
- FUNDACCO
- Fundacion Global Smile - Ecuador
- International Organization for Migration
- Lutheran World Federation
- Prefectura del Guayas
- Project Troubadour
- Refugee Services of Texas
- Saint Peter-Saint Joseph Children's Home
- Sister Cities El Salvador
- Solidarity Association for Asylum Seekers & Refugees
- Turkish Red Crescent
- UNHCR Kenya
- Youth Theatre & CEVA Drama Repertory



A photograph of a clown with red hair and a red clown nose, wearing a black and white striped shirt, a pink tutu, and colorful leggings, performing for a group of children and adults. The children are sitting on the ground, some clapping. The clown is in the center, gesturing with their arms. In the background, there are buildings, a white van, and a blue car. The scene is outdoors on a sunny day.

LESVOS, GREECE

February 1-12

**Partner: Clowns Without
Borders - Sweden**

Budget: \$7,557

Shows: 10

People Served: 1,415

**Sabine Choucair
Jan Damm
Kolleen Kintz
*Tamara Palmer**

EL SALVADOR

February 21 - March 4

Partners: CRIPDES San Vincente & Sister Cities El Salvador

Budget: \$8,948

Workshops: 1

Performances: 21

People Served: 3,561

Production Still:
Lauretta Prevost



Lucho Guzman, Gwen Rooker, *Molly Rose Levine, Gabi Winters, Giovanni Zoppe

Our first project of 2016 was to the Greek island of Lesvos, where thousands of Syrian refugees arrived each day. We were denied access to the refugee camps, due to increased security measures.

While clowning in Lesvos this past spring, we arrived at the shore and saw families who had survived the water crossing, already loaded onto the bus. We think that we have missed our chance to perform, but a group of children at the back of the bus spot us. They cram against the windows, pointing and laughing. A small boy laughs a deep belly laugh that I can almost hear through the glass. As the bus pulls away, we wave until they are out of sight, so happy to have been part of their journey.

~Kolleen Kintz, Artist and Board Member



Photo Credit: Jean-Sebastion Lopez



Photo Credit: Lindsay Arden Cooper

Disruption from gang violence in El Salvador impacts everyone, including children. CWB-USA performed in San Salvador and rural communities to share laughter and celebrate the generosity of Salvadorian culture.

One of our smallest shows in El Salvador was also one of our most beautiful. After driving for two hours up the winding mountain roads, we arrived in a small town of about 200 people. We met the community, and paraded away from the buildings, down a small winding dirt path, through a large pasture to a giant tree, the stage for our show. Our audience sat along the root system of this tree. We performed for them to a backdrop of the mountain range, and Honduras was winking in the distance. ~**Giovanni Zoppe**

HAITI

February 29 - March 16

Partner: Project Troubador

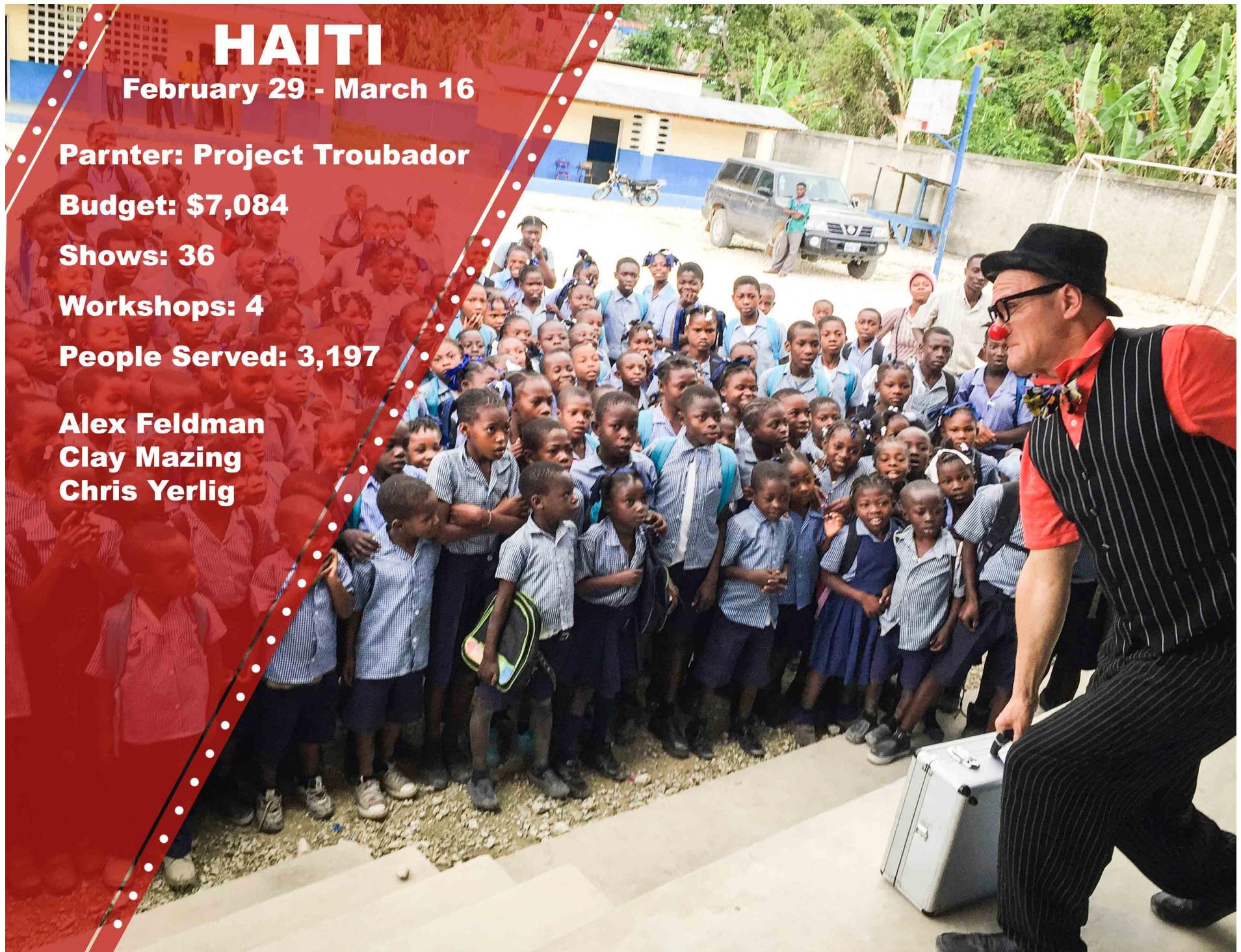
Budget: \$7,084

Shows: 36

Workshops: 4

People Served: 3,197

**Alex Feldman
Clay Mazing
Chris Yerlig**



NICARAGUA

April 4 -15

Partner:
FUNDACO

Budget:
\$5,478



Shows: 13

Workshops: 4

People Served:
2,488

**Erin Leigh Crites
Geoffrey Marsh
Aline Moreno
Molly Shannon**

In March, CWB-USA returned to Haiti to perform for people who continue to be displaced from the 2010 earthquake and for refugees exiled from the Dominican Republic.

Louise explains that Haitians aren't used to seeing white people act in any of these ways: like clowns. More typically, they confidently tell Haitians how to do things. From the missionaries, who explain how to pray, to the well-intentioned NGO's that instruct on hygiene, all they keep saying, is, "Do it this way!" We don't sound anything like these "experts"! By showing another, perhaps more human side of foreigners, we can break up the drumbeat of earnest pleading, and build more trust. ~ Alex Feldman



In Nicaragua, our clowns spent part of their time running a four-day workshop with pre-school teachers interested in learning how to better connect with their students through play.

We led a workshop for pre-school teachers, in one of the small school buildings in a barrio in Managua. This group of women impressed us with their openness to receive what we had to offer, while at the same time conveying a sense of autonomy and pride in the work they already did. They wanted to share with us the songs, games, and exercises they used with their students, just as much as they wanted to learn new ones from us. ~ Molly Shannon

INDIA April 15 - May 1

Partners: Youth Theatre & CEVA Drama Repertory

Budget: \$5,609

Shows: 16

Workshops: 2

People Served: 3,334



Sukhmani Kohli, Sampo Kurppa, Gaby Munoz, Noah Phoenix

ECUADOR

May 23 - June 8

Partners:

**Prefectura Del Guayas
Fundacion Global
Smile - Ecuador**

Budget: \$4,535

Shows: 21

**People Served:
6,770**

**Andrés Aguilar
Erwan Gronier
Julia Register
Gabi Winters**



CWB-USA partnered with local artists to lead workshops and perform in India. In Chandigarth, we led workshops for social workers, before moving to Delhi, where we performed for children living in slums and brothels. The tour concluded in Udaipur, where the team led workshops for domestic workers and their children.

At one of our workshops, we expected 20 participants, but 40 people turned up in a small space. All with different ages and various backgrounds creating another wonderful challenge! But we as a team we managed pretty well to accept and adapt our work and space together. After the first session we headed towards the lake, it was a Sunday, so lots of people were out and about. We put on a spontaneous show, and by the end more than 400 people had gathered to watch.

~Gaby Munoz



In response to the 7.8 magnitude earthquake suffered in Ecuador on April 16, 2016, Clowns Without Borders organized an emergency project to support earthquake relief.

In every CWB mission, there's always a special person, a kind of angel, who mysteriously and unexpectedly shows up from the least expected place to make everything right. Javier Bracho is our man. He is the father of Sebastian; a kid Global Smiles just gave reconstructive surgery and who happened to have a car and was looking for a job since he lost his. Global Smiles made him our driver, and he became our angel. Javier and his family survived the earthquake. We are living in their house (a single room with a bed and a bunk bed) in Jama, one of the most affected areas in Manabí. He knows the area and has all of the contacts to find out where help has not yet arrived. ~ Andrés Aguilar

SAN ANTONIO;

TEXAS

June 4 - 24

**Luther Bangert
Marisol Soledad
Sayda Trujillo**

People Served: 415

Budget: \$6,000

Workshops: 30

Shows: 6



Partner: Saint Peter-Saint Joseph Children's Home (St. PJ's)

TURKEY

July 18 - 31

Budget: \$2,496

Shows: 19



Partners: Turkish Red Crescent, International Organization for Migration, Solidarity Association for Aylum Seakers and Refugees, Life Support Center

People Served: 5,000

Güray Dinçol, Ezgi Keskin, Zeynep Kuyumcu, Selene Framarine,

***Gökçe Türkmen, *Bora Öğünç Shows: 19 People Served: 5,000**

CWB-USA returned to St. PJ's, a home for children who are victims of abuse, as well as unaccompanied minors who have crossed the southern border of the United States. These migrant minors reside at St. PJ's while awaiting their court dates, deportation proceedings, or entrance to the foster care system.

"Vamos a empezar en circulo, vengan vamos a formar un circulo!" (We'll start in a circle, come, come, let's form a circle!), and we invite them. Eventually most sheepishly join our circle. These young men had a lot of responsibility back home. Their parents left them when young, so they are used to looking after themselves and helping their grandparents. The invitation to play is initially not something they are up for doing. The staff at St. PJ's explained to us that the students feel guilty for being here without work to send money home. However, we have been able to get all of them to play, and once they are hooked, it's wonderful to see them express their creativity. ~Sayda Trujillo



As a result of the Turkey coup attempt on July 15, 2016, the two United States based artists did not join the project in Turkey. Due to the lack of information, combined with concerns for the safety of our artists, it was determined the volunteers not travel to Istanbul. However, there is a silver lining! The five Turkish artists carried on with the project. They brought laughter, joy, and happiness to many refugee camp locations throughout Turkey.

We performed in 3 different cities (Hatay, Antep, Urf). We performed in villages, streets, community centers, child-friendly tents organised by NGO's, and refugee schools. We performed for Syrian, Kurdish, Turkish and Persian-Syrian children. We also interacted frequently with adults, especially with women before and after the show. ~ Güray Dinçol



KENYA
August 28 -
September 17

People Served: 4,372

Partners:
UNHCR Kenya
Lutheran World Federation

Budget: \$10,646

Workshops: 13

Shows: 12

**Henrik Bothe, Lucho Guzman
Melissa Knowles, Gabi Winters**

Project South Sudan: Cancelled Monies Spent: \$3,426

Clowns Without Borders-USA doesn't let physical or mental borders keep us from sharing laughter, love, and messages of hope. However, sometimes we have to make the call to keep our volunteers grounded. Civil violence and fighting in South Sudan forced the decision to postpone the project. We arrived at this decision with our project partners, INTERSOS and Save the Children Juba. Without a safety/evacuation plan from our partners and support from the consulate, it is impossible for us to send our artists into active conflict areas, and in the end we could not assure the safety of our team in the event of increasing conflict. This was a very difficult decision.

With a heavy heart, we notified the artistic team around the world, in Brazil, Russia, and Colorado, that we would be postponing the project. Spent the time on hold with the airlines to cancel tickets and file insurance claims. Sent messages of support to our friends in South Sudan. So much time, energy and enthusiasm screeching to a halt, barred by violence that none of us have any control over. Each artist, upon hearing the news, shared sadness and grief at the worrisome turn the country has taken, and in the same breath re-dedicated themselves to our work: "I'm here when it's time. I'm ready for the project. When it's safe, we're ready to go."

~ Molly Rose Levine, Executive Director



CWB-USA returned to Kakuma Refugee Camp in Kenya, in partnership with UNHCR-Kenya. Kakuma is home to more than 185,000 people, and has been in existence since 1993. We typically think of refugee camps as temporary solutions. In Kakuma, it is clear that for many being displaced is a life-long struggle.

During one of the first shows, I made a comedic run into the crowd. I felt a sudden and immediate fear from the audience. Of course, I retreated as fast as I could and see that fast and incisive movement is threatening to the audience. I learned to be subtle. We wanted deeply to connect; we wanted to break this barrier in a place where there is no artistic reference, no relation to a clown. In Kakuma, it does not mean anything to appear with big shoes, a red nose. People just think you are strange. Many people asked me, "What's that on your nose?" ~ Gabi Winter



November 6 - 18
**DALLAS,
TEXAS**

**Partner:
Refugee Services
of Texas**

Budget: \$2,298

Shows: 1

Workshops: 15

People Served: 350

**Becky Baumwoll
David Lichtenstein
Bekah Smith**

HAITI

December 16 - 27

Partner:

CWB - Sweden

Budget:

\$8,864



Shows: 12

Workshops: 3

**People Served:
1,644**

**Camilla Rud
Naomi Shafer
Chris Yerlig**

CWB-USA partnered with Refugee Services of Texas to teach physical theater and circus for three different groups the refugee community in Dallas. Refugee children seek and need outlets to express themselves in whichever way they feel most comfortable. Since most of them have fairly low levels of English, verbal communication can be extremely frustrating. Circus offers and outlet through which they can channel their passions, interests, and voice.

I don't pretend to believe that laughter can heal all. I'm not sure what state of mind I'll be in a week from now, let alone what state of mind you'd be in as a Bhutanese refugee still in search of a job. I do know, with confidence, that in this one hour together we can have fun. We can play and hang out, and you don't have to speak English for any of it. You can remember what you know; what you've always known since you were a child: How to pass a ball, how to make a joke, how to call and respond. That is something I can say without reservation. ~ Becky Baumwoll

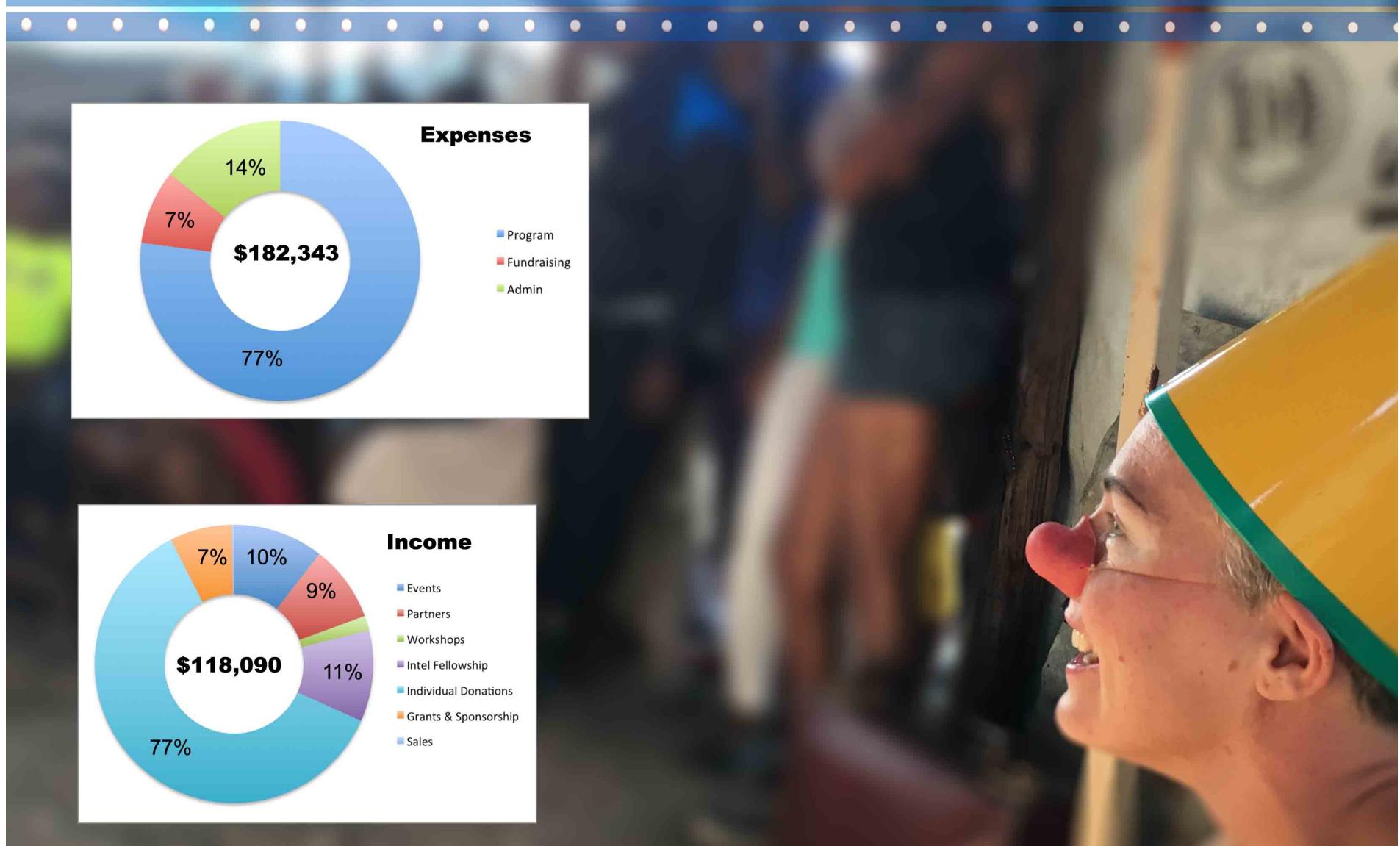
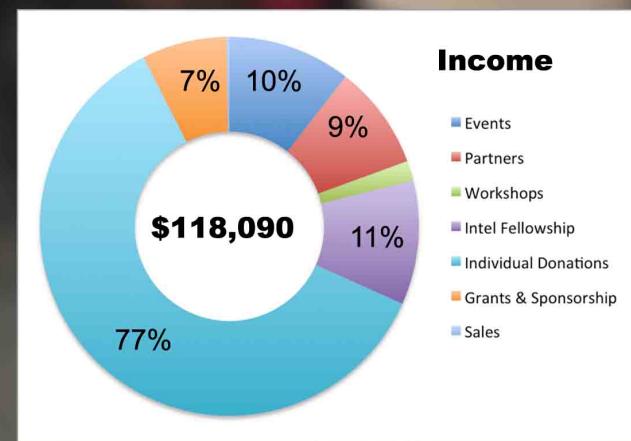
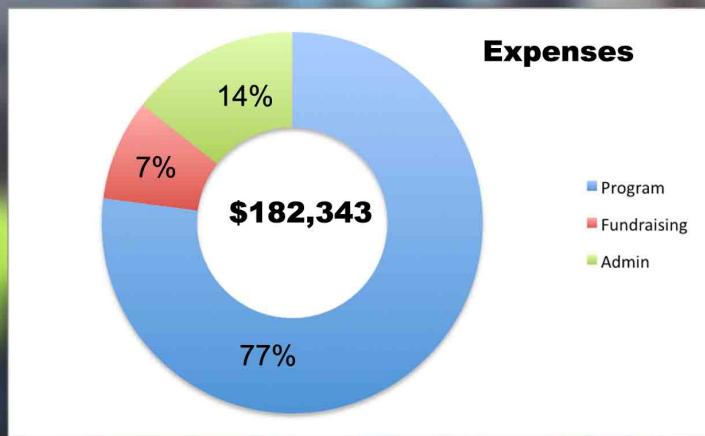


We were surprised when our local partners reached out and asked us to come to Haiti two months after Hurricane Matthew. We asked: Is it too soon? Will people want to see a show? Will we be able to travel? Is it safe? Our local partners told us that laughter was needed, especially during the holiday season.

Before one show, the school director came up to me and asked, "So, will you be giving gifts to the children?" I replied, "We're here to do a show." He pressed on, "But what about gifts?" I said, "The laughter is the gift," feeling a little lame. He stared blankly so I just repeated in my school-girl French, "The laughter, the happiness, the good-feelings. That is the gift." He looked dubious, and to be honest, I shared his apprehension. It was hard to offer laughter when there were so many other needs to meet. At the end of the show, he came up to me, and said, "Yes, laughter is the gift." ~ Naomi Shafer

2016 Financial Overview

2016 was a year of capacity building. Thanks to a generous grant from the Tecovas Foundation, CWB-USA hired a part time staff. We received the grant in 2015, which is why expenses exceed income in 2016. We created new systems for project oversight, outreach, fundraising, and financial management.



THANK YOU!

This work would not be possible without your support.



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Production Still: Lauretta Prevost

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**Photo Credit:
Lindsay Arden Cooper**