

# Durham People's Alliance - Donation Analysis Report

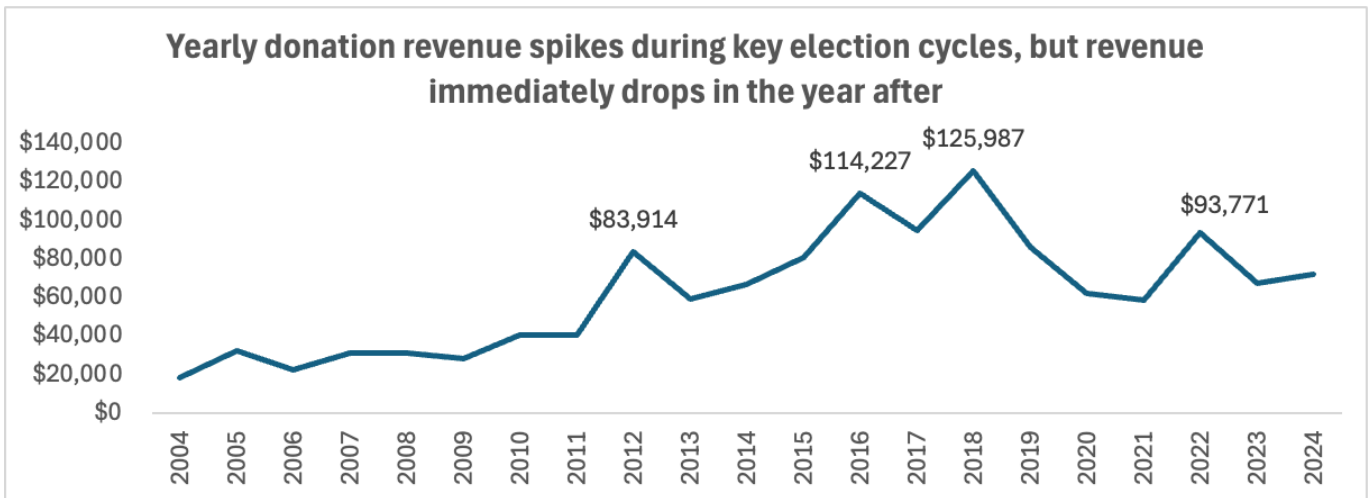
Created by Michelle Qiou (Aug 2025)

## Project Background

Durham People's Alliance (Durham PA) is a grassroots political organization in North Carolina that has been organizing locally to fight for a more progressive world. This project was conducted to help Durham PA better understand its donation revenue history from 2004-2024\*, by drawing insights about patterns in donor behavior and revenue drivers. The data is pulled from Durham PA's CRM platform, NationBuilder. The insights are shared with the goal of informing decisions about future fundraising and outreach strategy.

\*Note: There is only data for half of 2025, so 2025 is included where relevant

## Summary



Across the past 20 years, the People's Alliance has earned total donation revenue of over \$1.3M, with over 30K donations and over 4K people donating. The average yearly revenue is \$64K, but since 2015 this yearly average increased to \$86K. Revenue had been increasing yearly until an all-time highest value of \$126K in 2018. A significant, persistent decline in revenue took place from 2019 through 2021, which is likely due to the COVID-19 lockdown impacting member engagement.

There is a mix of factors impacting revenue peaks during election years. One-time donations drive the tremendous spikes, with donations from new donors also contributing to these revenue peaks. However, many new donors stop donating after the election season, which means revenue tends to dip in the years after. During election years, new donors spend more than during other years, while existing donors and monthly donors don't change their donating amounts during election years.

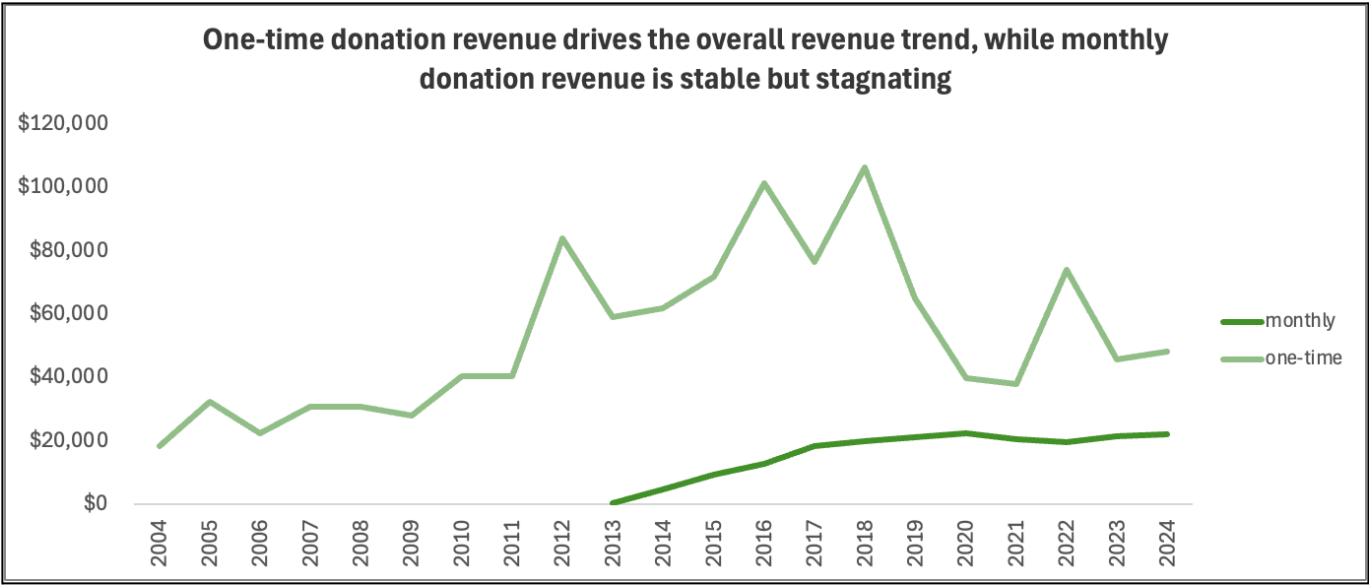
Overall donor count has been declining steadily since 2018, and donor retention rates have been decreasing slightly since 2023. At the same time, donors aged 30-45 have been a growing contributor to overall revenue since 2016; in comparison, donors aged 65+, who have historically constituted the largest portion of revenue, have been a shrinking donor segment.

The main challenge and opportunity for Durham PA is to take advantage of the incredible spikes in donor engagement during key election years and find new ways to sustain this engagement for the long-term. Additionally, Durham PA can encourage recurring donations in order to stabilize yearly revenue, as well as target outreach to lapsed or lapsing donors to turn around a recent decline in the past few years.

## Insights Deep-Dive

### Revenue Factors

#### Donation Frequency Type



One-time donations take up 85% of all-time revenue and are the clearest driver of revenue trends over the years. They contribute to spikes in revenue growth during election years, as well as to the declines in revenue post-election and post-COVID lockdown.

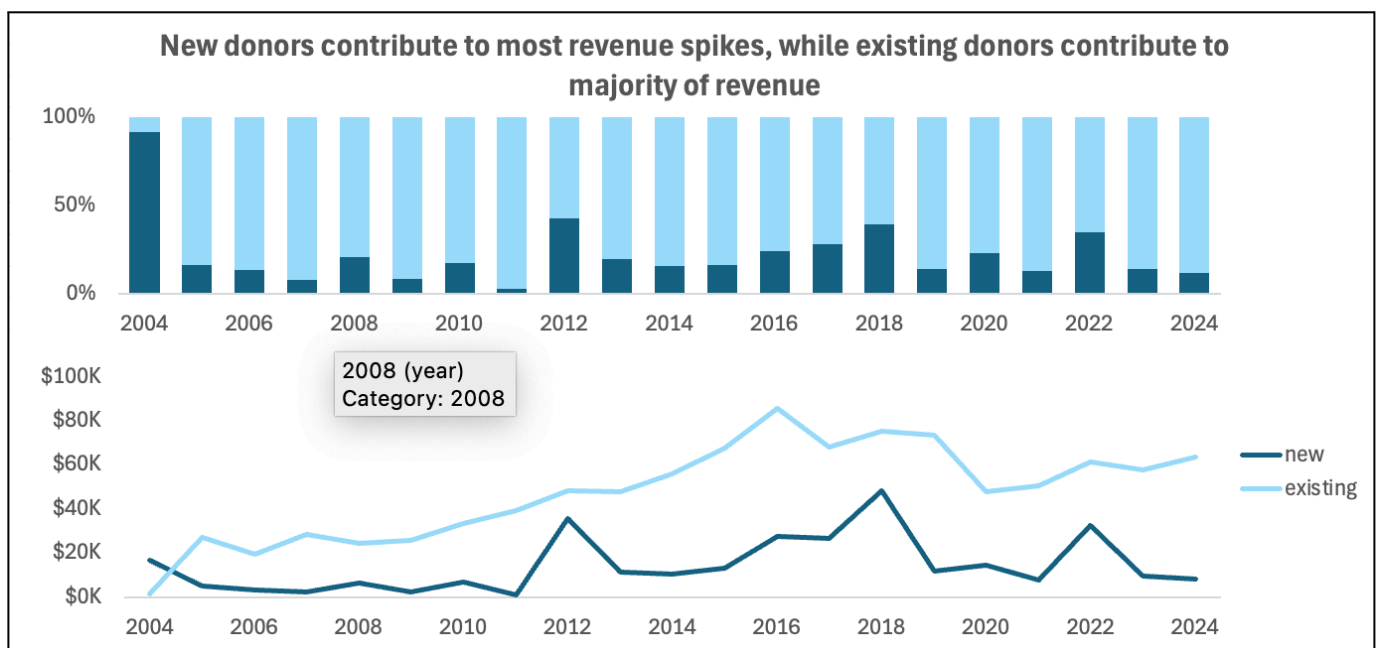
- Revenue peaks in 2016 and 2022 are driven in part by higher donation sizes: The average size of one-time donations is \$77, and this peaked in 2016 (\$124) and 2022 (\$116)
- Revenue peaks in 2012 and 2018 are driven in large part by high donor counts: The number of donors giving one-time donations peaked in 2012 (866 donors) and 2018 (1128 donors)

Meanwhile, monthly donations have served as a more stable and reliable revenue source, even through election years and the COVID lockdown. Since its onset in 2014, donation revenue and donor count for monthly donations had increased until 2017 but has generally plateaued since.

- The monthly average revenue for monthly donations is \$21K between 2018-2024.

Annual donations only began in November of 2024, so data is limited. However, they are likely to become another reliable and stable source of revenue. There are already small spikes in revenue in January and June of 2025.

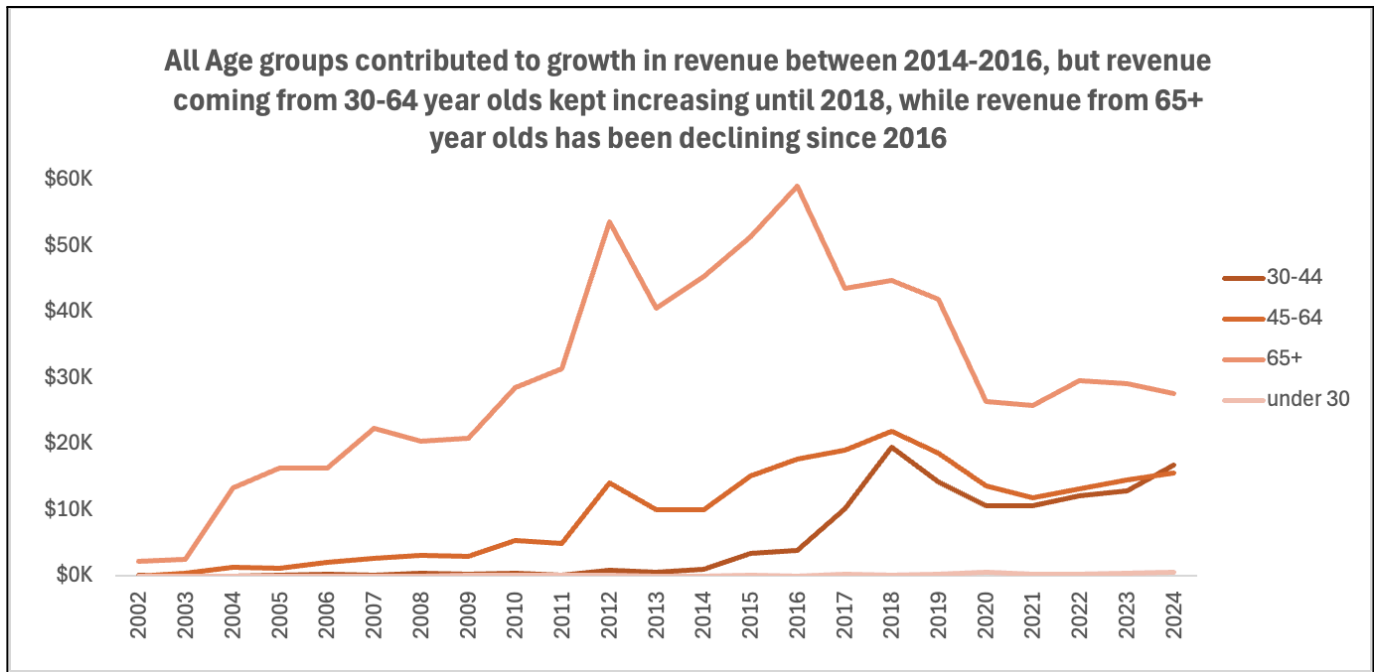
## Donor Type



Revenue generated from new donors contributes more substantially to revenue spikes during key years. Still, over half of total revenue each year comes from existing donors.

- Revenue from new donors spiked in 2012, 2018, and 2022. Interestingly, revenue from returning donors spiked in 2016, while have relatively smaller increases in other election years.
- Revenue from existing donors had steep declines in 2017 and 2020.

## Donor Demographic



**Age Group Patterns:** Revenue generated from the 30-44 age group has been growing the fastest, while revenue generated from the 65+ age group has been in decline. Under 30 age group has been consistently less than 1% of yearly revenue.

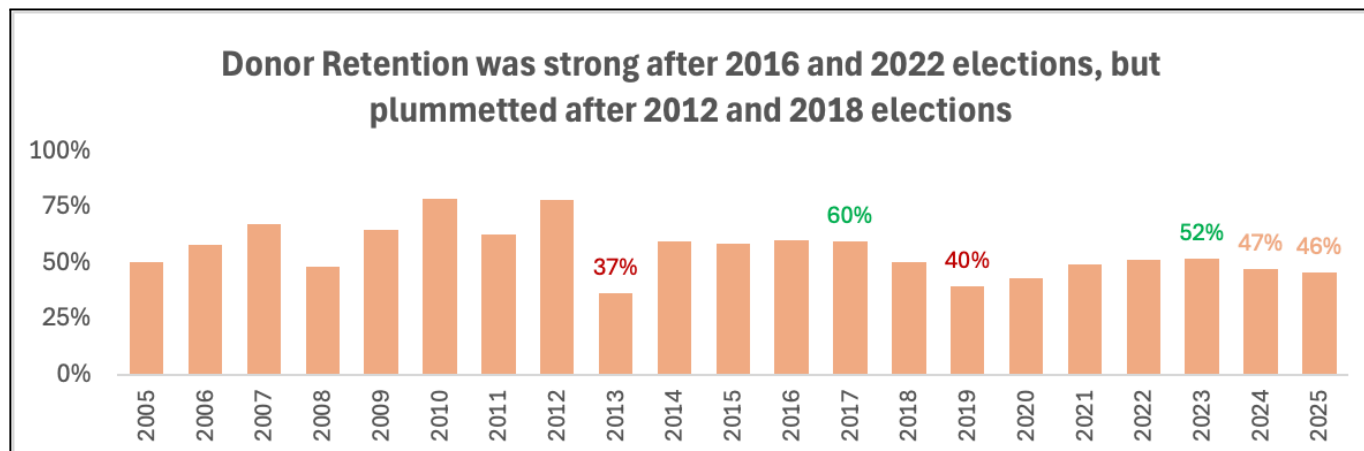
- The 30-44 age group began giving more in 2015, with a steep increase between 2016 and 2018
- In 2014, the 65+ age group contributed 80% of all revenue, while the 30-44 age group contributed just under 2%. In 2024, the 65+ age group contributed 46%, the while 30-44 age group contributed 28%.

**Precinct Breakdown:** Over 60% of all revenue has come from the following 10 precincts (out of 58 total precincts), in order of highest to lowest revenue: 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 17, 20, 43

- Precinct 4 has the highest revenue total at \$80K.
- Precinct 40 has the highest donor count with 140 donors.
- Precinct 39 has the highest average donation size at \$121.

## Donor Base Trends

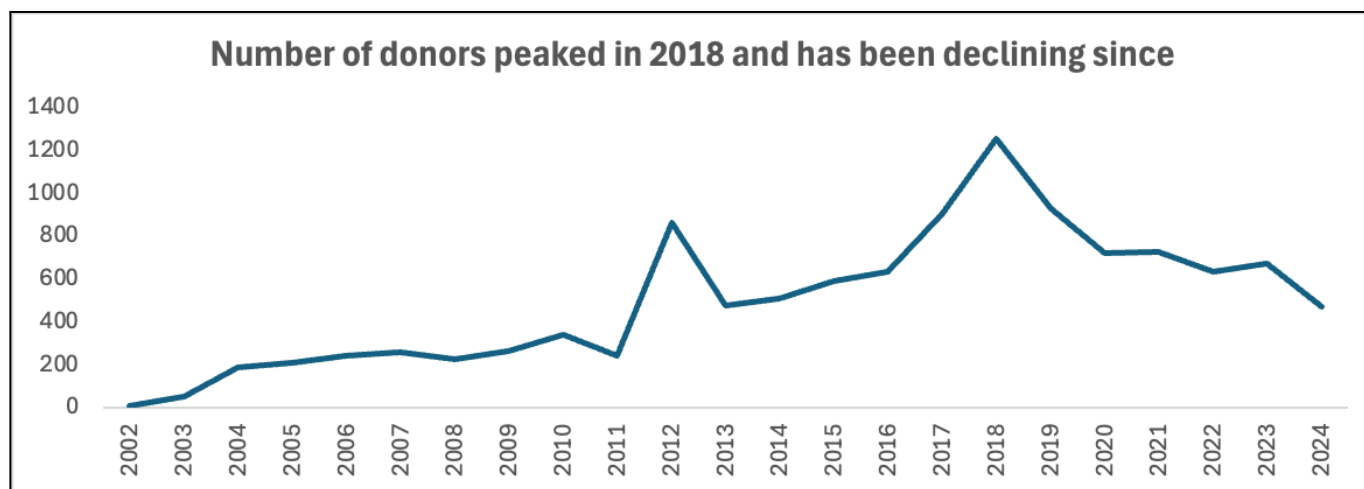
### Donor Retention



Yearly donor retention rates for Durham PA average at 55%. However, retention rates have been slightly declining since 2023.

- Lowest retention rates were in 2013 and 2019, which is likely a result of losing many of the first-time donors who gave in 2012 and 2018.
- On the other hand, retention rates were high after the 2016 and 2022 elections.

### Donor Count



New donor count had enormous peaks in 2012 and 2018, which was driving peaks in overall donor count in these years. Both new and existing donor count have been declining since 2019.

- About 25% of all historic donors donated for the last time in 2012 and 2018.
- Many donors stopped donating in the recent five years: 36% of all historic donors had their last donation date occur in the years 2019 to 2023.

# Giving Behavior Trends

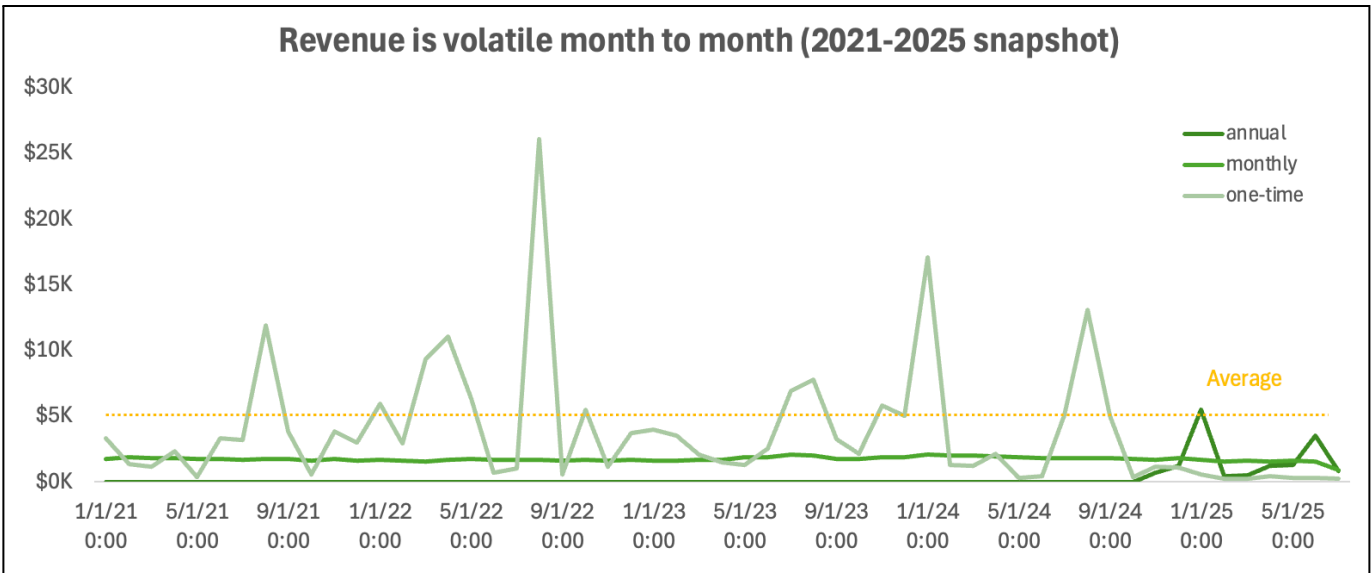
## Year-to-year Seasonality

Revenue Seasonality by Donor Type			
	new	existing	total
Jan	\$22,431	\$118,485	\$140,916
Feb	\$20,954	\$62,323	\$83,276
Mar	\$23,649	\$102,672	\$126,320
Apr	\$18,715	\$76,626	\$95,341
May	\$15,161	\$49,821	\$64,982
Jun	\$16,986	\$57,293	\$74,279
Jul	\$17,278	\$80,507	\$97,785
Aug	\$57,406	\$132,350	\$189,756
Sep	\$41,193	\$121,207	\$162,400
Oct	\$39,077	\$78,054	\$117,130
Nov	\$13,558	\$45,501	\$59,059
Dec	\$13,857	\$85,215	\$99,072

Across all the years, there are some seasonal trends in monthly revenue:

- Overall, the highest revenue months are in August and September, while the lowest revenue months are May and November.
- Existing donors also tend to drive more revenue in January.

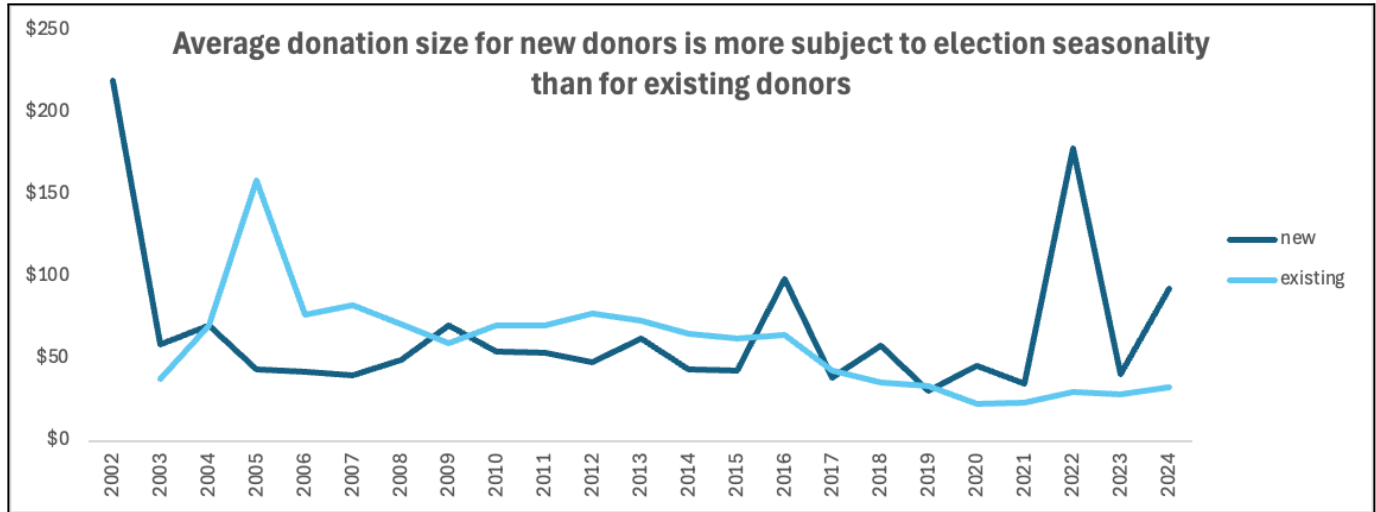
## Monthly Revenue Volatility



There is also noticeable month-to-month volatility in donation revenue, with many peaks and lows throughout each year.

- In the past five years, the highest performing month was August 2022 (\$28,000) while the lowest performing month was October 2024 (\$2,068). The average monthly revenue for these years was \$5,845.

## **Average Donation Size**



The average donation size of new donors and existing donors are impacted differently during election season.

- The average donation size of first-time donors tends to peak in key election years, with a tremendous spike in 2022. Meanwhile, the average donation size for returning donors does not change that much.
- It's possible that the average donation size for existing donors is more stable and decreasing due to a shift to recurring monthly donations.

## **Recommendations**

### **Optimize Revenue Sources and Stabilize Revenue**

- Retain the spikes in revenue during election years by maintaining engagement of new donors who gave one-time during election season. Emphasize monthly and annual donation options to new donors, and then after the height of elections, conduct campaigns to shift any new one-time donors to start giving at a recurring rate.
- Conduct a campaign to transition existing donors to start giving monthly or annually

### **Re-engage and Increase Donor Base**

- Re-engage donors who have lapsed in the past 5 years. These donors have a high chance of giving again. It could be helpful to conduct a survey to hear why people stopped giving, to see if there are any trends.
- Try an outreach campaign that targets 30-44 year olds, since this is a growing segment. Consider hosting multi-generational events as a way to re-engage older donors, and also to bring in younger donors.

### **Strategize on Outreach Cadence**

- Look into any correlations between outreach and event timelines, and revenue trends, to see what may be impacting monthly volatility in donation revenue.
- Continue to conduct outreach to take advantage of high-giving patterns in January and August.
- Consider running outreach campaigns during typically low-giving months (May and November) and years (years following big elections); this helps to stand out when other electoral noise might be low, and to help build relationships with urgency is low.