



# **U.S. International Council on Disabilities**

**UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON DISABILITIES**

**ANNUAL REPORT 2024**

**Delivered to Membership of USICD at the Annual Meeting in October 2024**

11 Hope Road, Suite 111, #254 , Stafford, VA 22554

◊ <http://uscd.org> ◊ [info@uscd.org](mailto:info@uscd.org)

## ABOUT USICD



### WHO WE ARE:

Through our vast network of disabled people's organizations and international development colleagues, USICD has the reach to impact critical emerging issues facing the global disability community. USICD serves both as a technical resource and as a relationship builder to people with disabilities for NGO, government, and corporate partners. USICD's 18-member Board of Directors includes the most recognized leaders in the American disability rights movement, providing a wealth of experience and strategic guidance. USICD implements projects that empower people with disabilities around the world through grassroots strategies, as well as national and international policy advocacy. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) has had a global influence, and USICD promotes those values through global engagement and United States foreign affairs. The USICD community is leading the world on global disability rights.

### OUR MISSION:

To advance international disability rights and inclusive development and to build bridges among the U.S. and foreign governments, disability and human rights communities, and the private sector through strategic advocacy, convening, and training and education.

### OUR VISION:

USICD envisions a world where the rights of persons with disabilities are universally recognized and respected, where persons with disabilities are afforded full and equal participation in their communities, and where persons with disabilities are self-sufficient and live independent and self-determined lives.



*USICD Executive Director, Isabel Hodge, seated at the end of the table, meets with government & disability NGO representatives from Central Asia in New York City.*

## Board of Directors, Staff, Consultants & Volunteers



<b>Officers</b>			
Candace Cable	Dr. Patricia Morrissey	W. Kirt Toombs	Jerry McCloskey
<i>President</i>	<i>Vice President</i>	<i>Secretary</i>	<i>Treasurer</i>
<b>Directors</b>			
Janet Lord	Abigail Akande	Susan Parker (Also, USICD's Liaison to Rehabilitation International)	Michael Brogioli
Carolyn Osolinik	Bill Abrams	Eric Rosenthal	Stephanie Ortoleva
<b>USICD Staff</b>	Isabel Hodge	<i>Executive Director</i>	
<b>USICD Volunteers</b>			
Dr. Rebecca Posante	Janice Dodd	Richard Hodge	Allistair Hodge
<i>Gala</i>			
<b>USICD Summer Intern</b>	Jakeel Abdullah (AAPD)		

Detailed bios for each of the above officers, directors, government representatives and USICD staff can be found on the [USICD website](#).

## MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS



Able South Carolina • Access Living • American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD) • American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) • American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR) • Association of Rural Independent Living • The Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD) • Autism Society of • Center for Independent Living for Western Wisconsin, Inc. • Community Options, Inc. • Disabled Resource Services • Disability Rights International • Eastern Oregon Center for Independent Living • Humanity & Inclusion • IFES • Institute for Disability Studies • National Council on Independent Living • New Jersey Association of Mental Health • Placer Independent Resource Services • Resource, Information, Support and Empowerment • TASH • The Arc of the United States • World Institute on Disability



*A photo of USICD Board member & Liaison to Rehabilitation International (RI), Susan Parker (center right side) speaking with RI Executive Committee members during RI's World Congress 24 Rehabilitation Work and Employment meeting held in September in Abu Dhabi, where 81 countries were represented. Susan also serves as the Treasurer of RI.*

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



*USICD President Candace Cable, PLY*

Hello Everyone!

Thank you for your continued belief in and support of the U.S. International Council on Disabilities (USICD). Your generous contributions with your membership dues and your ideas are an important mainstay for USICD to flourish.

Thank you to Isabel Hodge the Executive Director of USICD for compiling this annual report and for all her work throughout the 2024 year.

This year, 2024 was my tenth year on the Board of Directors for USICD. I first discovered USICD while I attended the 2012 Conference of the States Parties (COSP) for the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

I was one of a few Paralympians attending the COSP and during a side event I sat next to David Morrissey, the then Executive Director of USICD. We struck up a conversation about my idea that Paralympic sport is an unused opportunity to expand the narrative on the importance of ratification of the CRPD.

I talked about how Article 30 of the CRPD states that sports, recreation, leisure, and culture are human rights for everyone and that we could use this to attract more people to USICD's ratification efforts. But many folks still felt sports were trivial compared to building policy and creating employment. But I felt that sport could amplify all the Articles their implementations if given a chance.

I devised several ideas for initiatives focusing on Paralympic athletes and recreational sports for Disabled people so we could find ways to work together. During the 2013 COSP for the CRPD myself, Ohana, Bumble Bee wheelchairs and USICD held a side event on Article 20 of the CRPD that ensures personal mobility equipment is needed to create the greatest possible independence for people with disabilities.

In 2014, I was contracted by the US State Department to visit Armenia and Georgia US Embassy's to speak about sport diplomacy. I would also attend the Paralympic winter games in Sochi, Russia, as a journalist following my State Department work.

David asked me to find anything I could that had to do with the CRPD, while on my adventure and send it back to him. I was aware that during the 2014 Paralympic Games there would be a wall erected supporting the CRPD in the Athlete Village because a lot of human rights violations that were happening in Russia during this time. I sent video back to David of the CRPD wall being dedicated by the International Paralympic Committee and signed by athletes from all over the world.

David was able to use the video I sent him and then we had an idea bring Paralympic athletes to Capitol Hill in Washington DC for the final push to meet the Senators and inspire them to vote for ratification of this CRPD. Four athletes, including myself came to Capitol Hill, with our medals and met with Senators and had high hopes for ratification. We missed ratification by only a few votes.



These are just a few stories of what I brought forward to build USICD's authority on international relationships. I'm sharing this with you because it's important for you to be involved and use your imagination and talents to expand USICD's reach, education, advocacy, and convening opportunities as a member of USICD.

I hope that you will decide to give deep thought to what initiative you want to bring forward to support the growth of USICD. Once you decide what you want to bring forward, then determine how you can do this and work with USICD Board members or become a Board member.

It has been a great learning experience for me to have been a Board member for the past decade. This is my last year as a USICD board member. I thank everyone for our time working together and I am grateful for the experiences that I had with my fellow Board members and USICD's Executive Director. I wish everyone great success.

Sincerely with great joy,

*Candace Cable*

Candace Cable, PLY  
President  
U.S. INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON DISABILITIES



*A photo of USICD Board Members Janet Lord (Left), Susan Parker with USICD President Candace Cable & Secretary Kirt Toombs outside the United Nations Headquarters in New York during the Conference of State Parties to the CRPD.*

## A FEW 2024 KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Our key achievements this year are a direct result of the hard work of our USICD Board, staff, members, and volunteers!

### Advocacy

- Partnered with Disability Rights International on the continued advocacy for the International Children with Disabilities Protection Act and appropriations for the Bill and engaged with national and grassroots organizations, as well as members of Congress.
- Signed on to over 20 Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities letters and statements.
- Signed a letter to the White House to request increased support for essential programs that prevent and respond to violence against children globally in the FY2026 President's Budget Request.
- Signed a letter to demonstrate our support to Senator Shaheen and Senator Murkowski for their continued leadership for girls vis-à-vis getting this language in the U.S. Global Strategy to Empower Adolescent Girls
- Attended a two-day workshop held at the German Permanent Mission to the United Nations in advance of the April 2024 meetings of the UN General Assembly 6th Committee
- Upon request, participated in UN and USAID Consultations.
- Collaborated on A Joint Proposal for a White House-led Initiative for Children and Youth Globally
- Provided legislative updates at the monthly National Council on Independent Living (NCIL) International Subcommittee meetings.

### Training & Education

- Met with USAID to discuss the Global Disability Rights Library.
- Launched the USICD Learning Hub website
- Developed content for the Planning Accessible Conferences and Large-Scale Events Training Course and toolkit.

### Convening

- Held *Reimagining USICD* meetings to discuss USICD's priorities.
- Hosted a webinar titled "Understanding the History & Benefits of the UN CRPD."

### Representation

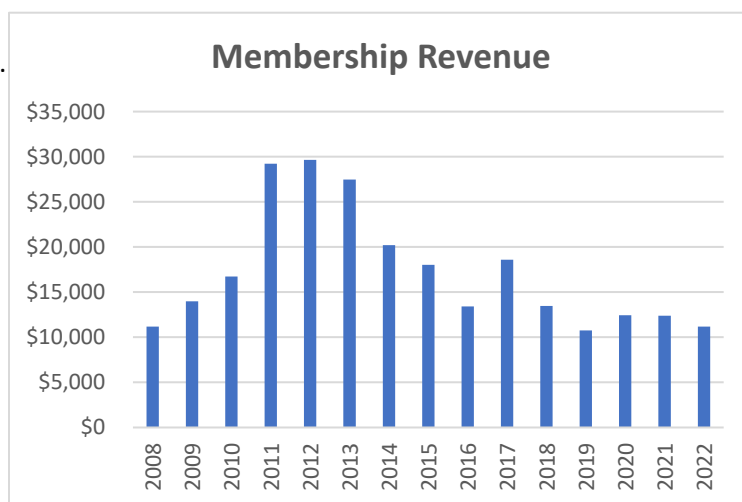
- Co-chaired the Consortium of Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) International Ad Hoc Working Group with USICD member, the World Institute on Disability (WID).
- Facilitated a discussion on the State Department's International Disability Rights Team at the 2024 M-Enabling Summit
- Participated in AUCD International Special Interest Group meetings.
- Attended the DPI North America and the Caribbean (DPI NAC) quarterly meetings. Executive Director Isabel Hodge serves as the Vice President of DPI NAC.
- Attended the Disabled Peoples International World Council Board of Directors meetings. Executive Director Isabel Hodge serves as the Board Secretary.
- Participated in the Disability Museum Working Group.
- Attended Rehabilitation International's World Congress 24 Rehabilitation Work and Employment which was held in September in Abu Dhabi. Over 81 countries were represented, with 1000 people attending.
- At the U.N., participated in the Civil Society Forum and side events at the Conference of State Parties (COSP). Isabel Hodge provided opening remarks at an independent living side event.

## TREASURER'S REPORT

A community of funding and project partners has made USICD's work possible. General operating support and program grants for USICD's education activities have formed a core of USICD's grant funding.

**Finance Committee:** Jerry McCloskey, Chair and Treasurer; Susan Parker, Michael Brogioli

USICD has consistently seen a drop in membership since 2014 in both organizational and individual members. Membership particularly surged during the campaign for U.S. ratification of the CRPD with an increase in individual members. Membership today spans 26 states and the District of Columbia, and includes centers for independent living, academic departments, protection and advocacy organizations, international development actors, and a breadth of others who are all committed to the fundamental rights of persons with disabilities.



### Our 2024 Sponsors:



**Patricia Morrissey**

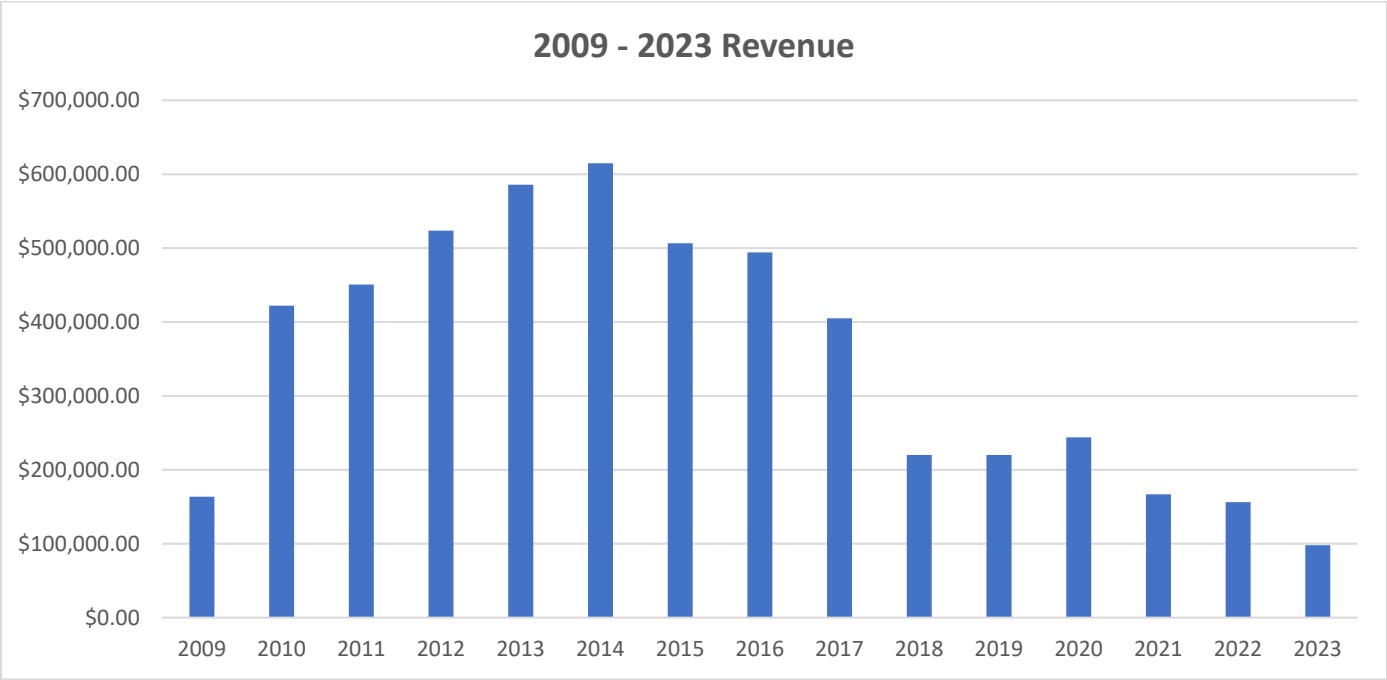
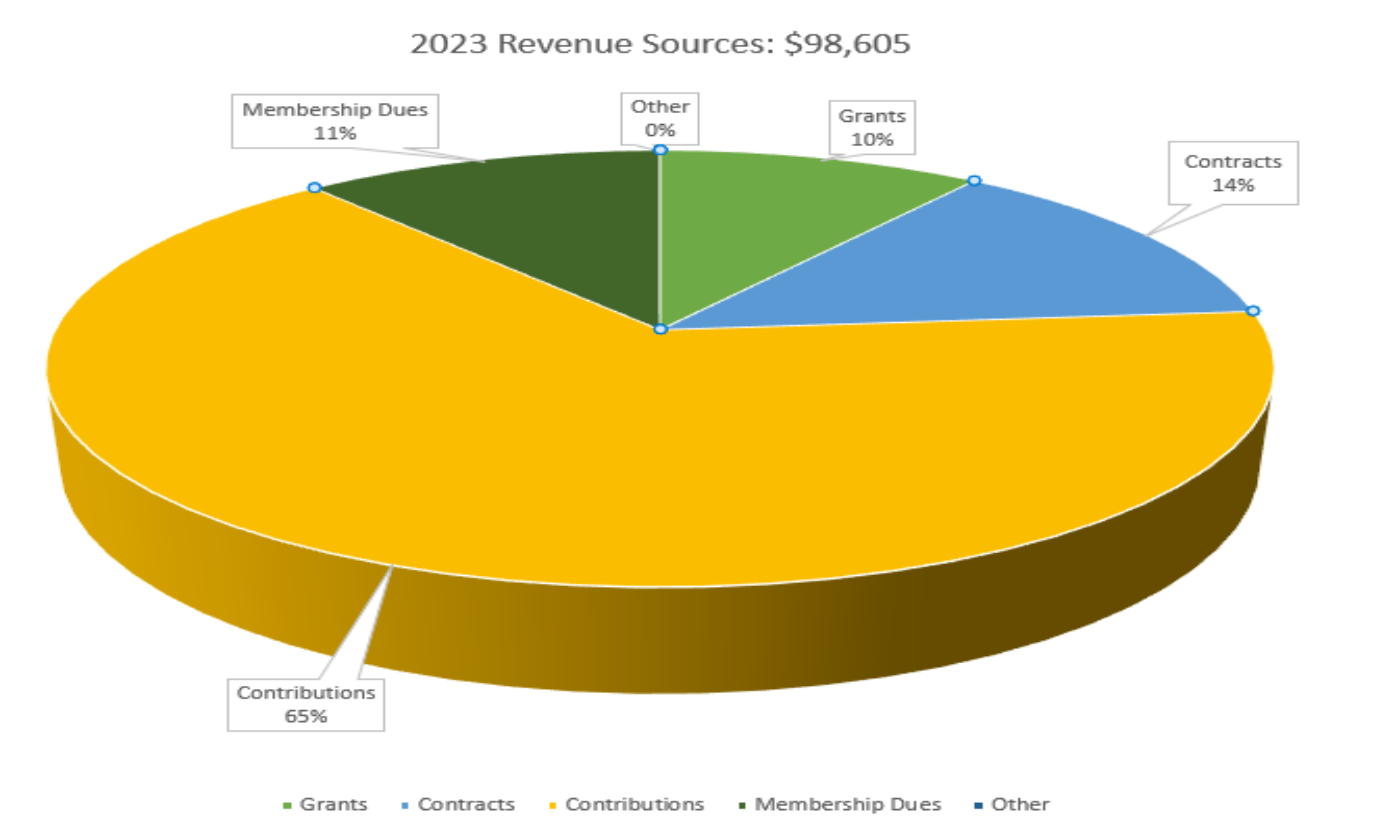
**William Abrams**

**John Wodatch**





2023 Revenue Sources: \$98,605.00



Purchase Gala Tickets at:  
<https://tinyurl.com/mwfk6z>

# Celebrate

## NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH

With our Board, Donors, Friends,  
and Congressional, Corporate, and  
other Partners of the U.S.  
International Council on Disabilities

21 October 2024  
6:00 PM until 7:30 PM  
VIRTUAL FUNDRAISING GALA



**Special Remarks by American  
Actor, Ron Livingston**

*Known for:  
Music Within, Loudermilk, Band of  
Brothers, Office Space, The Conjuring*

### **Special Thanks to Our Sponsors Thus Far:**

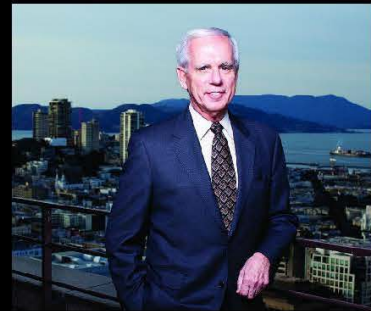
Google  
SCI  
Eastern Oregon Center for Independent Living  
Ruderman Family Foundation  
Frances West Co.  
Inclusive Development Partners  
Dr. Patricia Morrissey  
Mr. John Wodatch  
Mr. Bill Abrams  
Bender Consulting Services  
Bender Leadership Academy

Tickets available for \$100  
USICD Members - 10% Discount  
Visit [USICD.org](https://USICD.org) for Ticketing  
Information



### **2024 HONOREES**

#### **Dole-Harkin Award**



**The Honorable  
Tony Coelho**

#### **International Advocate Award**



**H.E. Ambassador  
Luis Gallegos**

Contact USICD's Executive  
Director, Isabel Hodge, for  
Sponsorship information:  
[ihodge@usicd.org](mailto:ihodge@usicd.org)

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