



# USICD

## Connecting Global Advocacy & Action

**UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON DISABILITIES  
ANNUAL REPORT 2025**

**Delivered to the Members of USICD at the Annual Meeting in January 2026.**

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.



*A flyer from a joint USICD & USICD Member, Disability Rights International (DRI) with images of side event hosts Isabel Hodge & Eric Rosenthal, panelists & facilitator and keynote speaker & 2014 USICD International Advocate Award recipient, Professor Gerard Quinn.*

## Board of Directors, Staff, Consultants & Volunteers



<b>Officers</b>			
W. Kirt Toombs	Janet Lord	Andrew Gurza	Jerry McCloskey
<i>President</i>	<i>Vice President</i>	<i>Secretary</i>	<i>Treasurer</i>
Dr. Patricia Morrissey			
<i>Past President</i>			
<b>Directors</b>			
Kimberly Tissot	Jakeel Abdullah	Susan Parker	Steve Taylor
Stephanie Ortoleva			
<b>USICD Youth Advisory Committee</b>	Jakeel Abdullah (Chair – USA)	Johna Wright (USA)	Kashaf Alvi (Pakistan/UAE)
	Polly Maton (UK)	Saran Tugsjargal (USA)	Gene Sung-Ho Kim (USA)
	Bryce Hollander (France)	Felicity Chapman	Zoe Sullivan (USA)
	Ashira Vantrees (USA)	Alexander Tofler (Australia)	Jessica King (USA)
<b>USICD Staff</b>	Isabel Hodge	<i>Executive Director</i>	
<b>USICD Consultant</b>	Omara Khan Muneeb		
<b>USICD Volunteers</b>			
Celine Bacily	Dr. Rebecca Posante	Richard Hodge	Allistair Hodge

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 • American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) • American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR) • Autism Society of America • Center for Disability Rights • Center for Independent Living for Western Wisconsin, Inc. • Center on Disability Studies, University of Hawaii at Moanoa • Community Options, Inc. • Developmental Disabilities Institute, Wayne State University • Disabled Resource Services • Disability Rights International • Eastern Oregon Center for Independent Living • Independent Living Resources • Institute for Disability Studies • K. Lisa Yang and Hock E. Tan Institute on Employment and Disability • National Council on Independent Living • New Jersey Association of Mental Health • Not Dead Yet • The Arc of the United States • Umpqua Valley Disabilities Network, Inc. • World Institute on Disability



*A photo of the USICD President, Mr. Kirt Toombs (right), Vice President, Janet Lord (far right) and Board Members Jakeel Abdullah (left) and Susan Parker (left) with the President of Rehabilitation International, Dr. Christoph Gutenbrunner (Center).*



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



*Photo of USICD President, Mr. Kirt Toombs*

Dear USICD Members & Allies,

Greetings, hello, hola, bonjour, to our USICD members and partners around the world.

As we enter January 2026, I am proud to reflect on a year in which USICD strengthened its role as a trusted national and global voice for disability rights, while also setting a clear course for the work ahead. Across every part of our work, we have been guided by a simple belief: the United States must lead with, and not speak for, people with disabilities. That principle continues to shape our advocacy, our partnerships, and our vision moving forward.

One of our most urgent priorities over the past year has been advancing the rights and protections of refugees and displaced people with disabilities. In 2025, USICD worked closely with international partners and disability-led organizations to ensure that U.S. humanitarian policy recognizes disability as central to safety, dignity, and inclusion. That advocacy elevated disability considerations in refugee processing, resettlement, and global protection frameworks, and this work will continue to deepen throughout 2026.

USICD also represented its members on the global stage at the 17th Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (COSP-17), ensuring that U.S. disability perspectives, grounded in lived experience and human rights, were present in international dialogue shaping the future of disability inclusion.

In parallel, USICD continued direct advocacy with the U.S. Department of State, including engagement with Secretary Rubio, to underscore the importance of USAID in advancing disability-inclusive international development and humanitarian assistance. At a time of shifting global priorities, we remained firm in advocating for sustained U.S. leadership and accountability in disability-inclusive foreign policy.

Like many organizations working at the intersection of human rights and global policy, USICD is navigating a changing funding landscape. Shifts in corporate giving and international priorities reinforce an important truth: a strong, diversified membership base is essential to sustaining independent, disability-led advocacy. These moments reaffirm why investment in community-driven leadership matters now more than ever.

This moment also represents an opportunity for renewal. Across the disability community, there is growing energy, new voices stepping forward, long-standing advocates recommitting, and partners seeking meaningful ways to engage. USICD is uniquely positioned to bring these threads together. As a membership-driven organization with global reach, our strength has always come from active participation, shared leadership, and members who are willing to step into the work alongside one another.

Over the past year, I have also had the opportunity to spend time with Centers for Independent Living in places like Oregon, Texas, and Austria, listening directly to local leaders about their priorities, challenges, and strengths. These

conversations reinforced a core belief of USICD's work: when local disability organizations and international advocacy efforts move together, our collective voice is stronger. USICD is committed to ensuring that our grants and projects meaningfully include member CILs in design and implementation, because strong global advocacy should also help strengthen local capacity. We believe not only in members supporting USICD, but in USICD's work helping our members become stronger, more visible, and more fiscally resilient in their own communities.

Looking ahead, we are preparing for meaningful engagement in the D20 meetings, where disability leaders from around the world are coming together to shape global policy recommendations. We are committed to ensuring that USICD's participation reflects the diversity, expertise, and lived experience of our community, and that disabled people remain at the center of global decision-making.

In January 2026, USICD launched *Ten for 2030*, a bold membership campaign designed to rebuild and strengthen the national disability community's connection to USICD. For just \$10 a year, our goal is to bring 100,000 people into this movement by 2030, creating a powerful grassroots foundation for U.S. leadership in global disability rights. *Ten for 2030* is more than a membership campaign; it is an invitation to shape the future of our movement together. Whether through advocacy, committee service, leadership development, or peer outreach, there is a meaningful role for every member to play, and this is the moment to step into it.

As we move through 2026, USICD's priorities are clear and focused. We will continue advancing disability rights through strategic advocacy and leadership development, including protecting and strengthening the Americans with Disabilities Act, advancing U.S. leadership toward ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and investing in the next generation of disability leaders. To support this work, USICD has established dedicated funds, including the ADA Defense Fund, the U.S. CRPD Ratification Fund, and the Youth Leadership Fund, that allow members and allies to invest directly in the areas of impact that matter most to them. These funds ensure that disability-led advocacy remains strong, independent, and influential, both nationally and internationally.

None of this progress would be possible without the commitment of our members, partners, and allies, many of whom have sustained USICD's work through years of change and challenge. Your leadership, persistence, and belief in global disability rights continue to anchor this organization and propel it forward.

Thank you for your support, your engagement, and your dedication to ensuring that disabled people are included in every conversation and every decision. Together, we are building the momentum, and the leadership, needed for the years ahead.

With gratitude and appreciation, thank you.

W. Kirt Toombs, MMDS  
President  
U.S. International Council on Disabilities

## A FEW 2025 KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

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

### Advocacy

- Advanced federal disability policy through multiple Congressional engagements, including meetings during AAPD Hill Day and targeted outreach on SSI reform, competitive integrated employment, and FY26 appropriations.
- Elevated the rights of refugees with disabilities in U.S. policy discussions, including direct engagement with Senate offices and integration of refugee issues into all Hill meetings.
- Coordinated and contributed to national coalition advocacy through CCD sign-on letters, including IDEA Part D and healthcare affordability legislation.
- Supported reintroduction efforts for the International Children with Disabilities Protection Act, engaging key House offices and identifying potential co-sponsors.
- Submitted FY26 appropriations requests to both House and Senate, including a \$20M request for State Department disability rights programming.
- Conducted research on Congressional committees (Foreign Affairs/Foreign Relations) to identify disability-related connections for future advocacy.

### Training & Education

- Completed and published the research study titled, *Assessing Barriers & Support for Refugees with Disabilities in U.S. Resettlement Programs*, including a full research paper and grant proposal development.
- Co-hosted a high-profile UN COSP side event with Disability Rights International, featuring U.S. and global disability leaders and drawing over 100 attendees.
- Delivered closing remarks at the DPI Korea & EU humanitarian inclusion event at the UN Conference of State Parties (UN COSP) to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with disabilities.
- Participated in the NCIL Conference workshop on newcomers with disabilities, once again bringing USICD's research into the independent living movement.
- Engaged in the Disability AI Learning Community to explore accessible AI applications for people with disabilities.

### Convening

- Led the planning and execution of the Disabled Peoples International (DPI) World Council Meeting, including constitutional review, leadership elections, and global governance discussions. USICD's Executive Director, Isabel Hodge, serves as the Board Secretary of DPI.
- Advanced planning for the DPI North America & Caribbean (DPI NAC) Regional Assembly meeting, including drafting a funding proposal with an OPD in Jamaica and engaging the potential donors. USICD's Executive Director, Isabel Hodge, serves as the Vice President of DPI NAC.
- Supported the strategic planning of the D20 ahead of the U.S.-hosted G20 Summit.
- Coordinated DPI's global registration and reinstatement process with pro bono legal counsel in Canada.
- Held the USICD's 2025 virtual Gala, highlighting youth leadership, global advocacy, and movement champions.

### Representation

- Launched the USICD Youth Advisory Committee with youth represented from the U.S., United Kingdom, Australia, France, and Pakistan

- Represented USICD at major global and national events, including the Global Disability Summit, UN COSP, Rehabilitation International Governing Assembly, and the CrescentCare Empowerment Conference.
- Delivered a keynote address for the Goodwill Ambassador for Kosovo, broadcast nationally on Radio Television of Kosovo, highlighting diplomacy, disability, and human rights.
- Engaged with international organizations including the New Zealand Human Rights Commission and global OPDs.
- Participated in NCIL's International Subcommittee and co-chaired CCD's International Task Force, contributing to joint statements and global policy coordination.

# DISABILITY ADVOCACY IN CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

**TUE, NOV 4 2025**  
 11 AM EST | 5 PM CET



challenges, victories and support



THE US

**Elizabeth Sammons**



THE US

**Isabel Hodge**



THE US

**Theresa Metzmaker**



HUNGARY

**Zora Molnar**



ROMANIA

**Petra Pintelei**



ROMANIA

**Andreia Bruckner**



ALBANIA

**Enron Seiti**



BULGARIA

**Ashod Derandonyan**



THE US

**Amber Smock**

VIDEO ADDRESS BY



**Anca Vasile**

MODERATED BY



**Vladislav Petkov**



Alumni Network

CONNECTED FOR CHANGE




*A GLC Alumni Network event flyer titled Disability Advocacy in the Changing Environment featuring USICD's Executive Director, Isabel Hodge.*

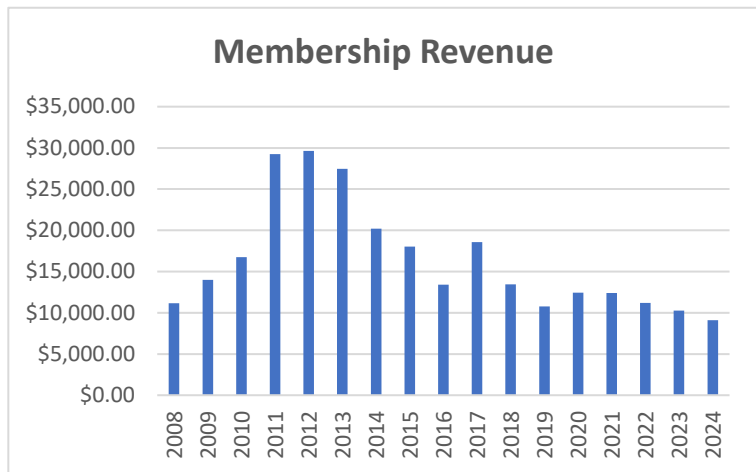


## TREASURER'S REPORT

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, and Kimberly Tissot.

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 2025 Sponsors:

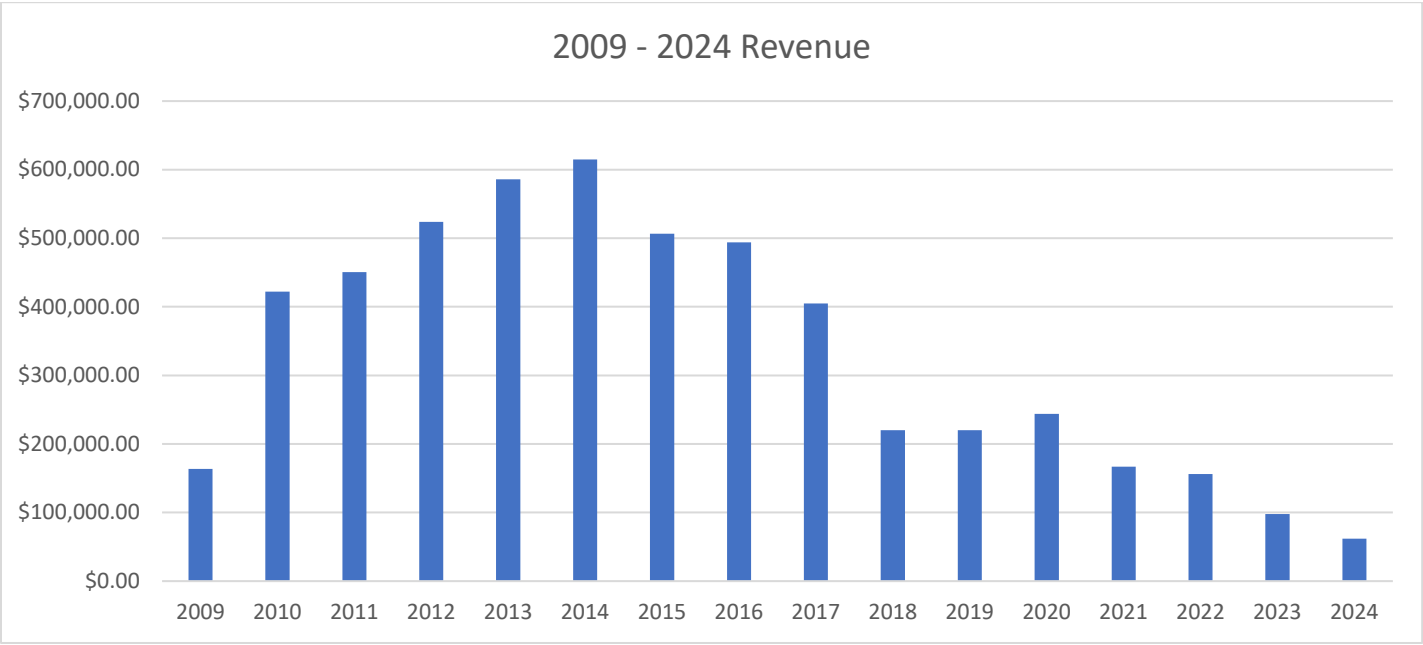
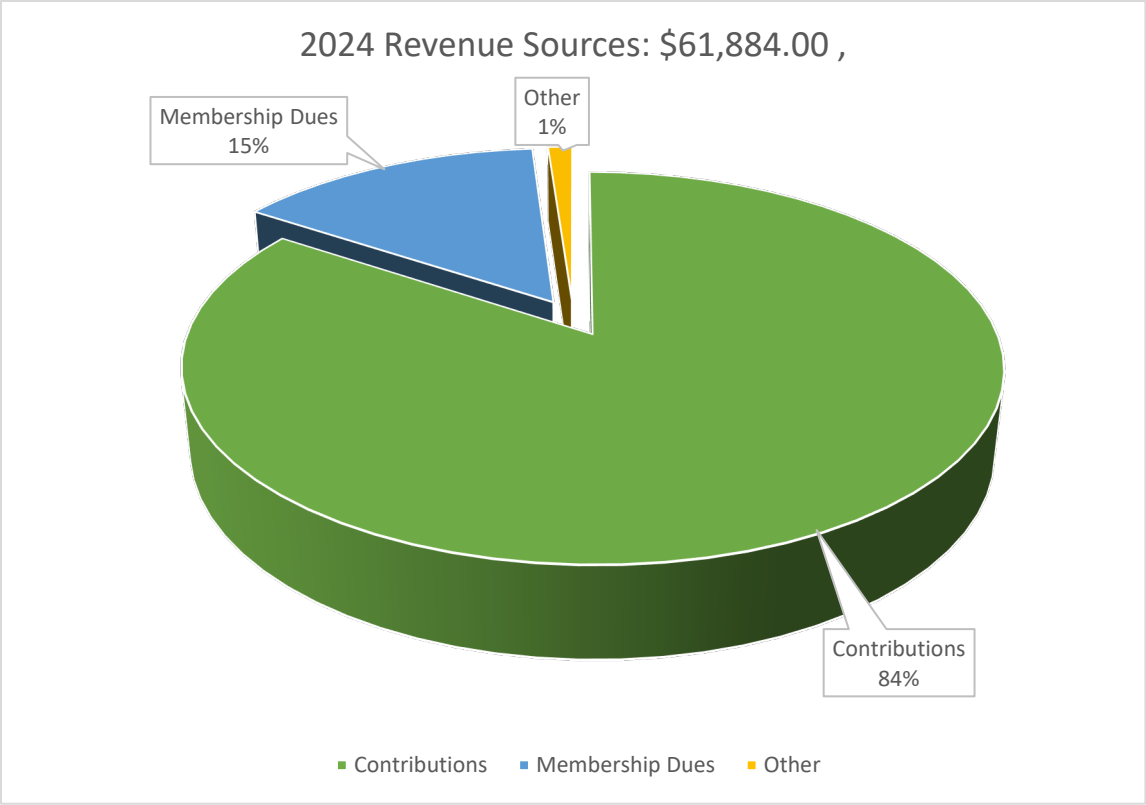


**Dr. Patricia Morrissey**

**Hodge Family**

**John Wodatch**

2024 Revenue Sources: \$61,884.00



## USICD YOUTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE



*Photos of the USICD Youth Advisory Committee Chair and Members with country affiliations.*

The USICD Youth Advisory Committee launched in September 2025 and has met three times. Each Committee member was asked to present project initiative proposals to be delivered to the USICD Board of Directors. Five proposals have been received. Visit the USICD website for more information about the Committee: <https://uscd.org/uscd-youth-advisory-committee/>

# Ten for 2030

***Rebuilding the U.S. Disability Community's Global Voice!***



**THE DECISION:** USICD is launching a bold national membership campaign to reconnect our movement, strengthen our influence in federal policy, and build the next generation of disability leaders.

**THE STRATEGY:** **\$10 a year. 100,000 individual members. \$1 million annually until 2030.** Ten for 2030 transforms USICD from an organization supported by grants into a movement backed by people.

## WHY THIS IS NECESSARY

USICD was strongest during the push to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) when the disability community felt ownership of the work. When ratification stalled, membership declined and connection weakened. **Ten for 2030** reverses that loss and restores legitimacy rooted in community.

**CORE PRINCIPLE** - Power grows when participation expands. Global disability policy must reflect the full diversity of lived experience.

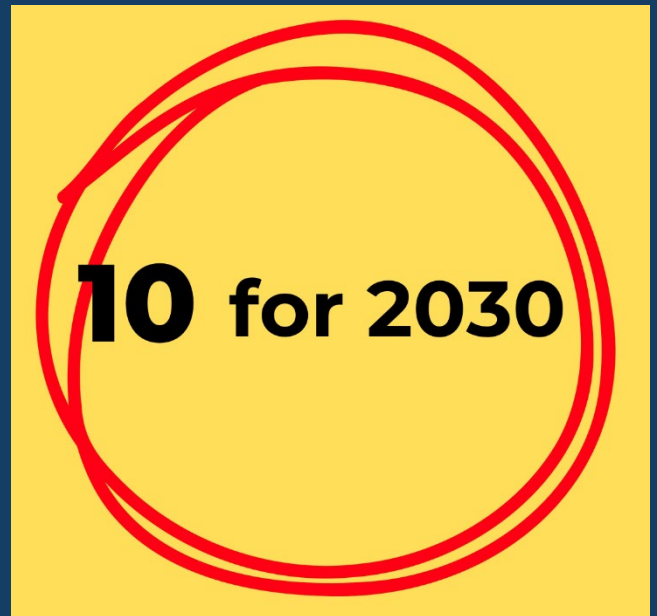
**IMPACT** - Your impact starts at just 84 cents a month!

100,000 members = \$1,000,000 annually. Every individual membership strengthens USICD's ability to advocate, convene and lead.

## WHAT TEN FOR 2030 DELIVERS:

- A renewed national push for U.S. ratification of the CRPD.
- Stronger relationships with the State Department and other federal agencies.
- Community-informed technical assistance grounded in lived experience.
- A sustainable leadership pipeline through intergenerational mentorship.
- Support for USICD's strategic priorities: **ADVOCACY, EDUCATION & TRAINING, CONVENING & REPRESENTATION.**

For additional information, contact USICD's Executive Director, Isabel Hodge at [ihodge@uscd.org](mailto:ihodge@uscd.org)  
Visit [USICD.org](http://USICD.org) to learn more about individual, organizational, and corporate level membership.



*The Logo: A bright yellow background with a hand-drawn red circular brushstroke looping around itself, surrounding bold black text that reads "10 for 2030."*

**JOIN USICD**

**BECOME A MEMBER TODAY**

**INVITE OTHERS**

**HELP US REACH 100,000 BY 2030**

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