

Annual Report

DEATH WITH DIGNITY NATIONAL CENTER & POLITICAL FUND

2020



THRIVING AMIDST UNCERTAINTY

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On the cover: Passionate advocates push our movement forward.



MISSION

The mission of the Death with Dignity National Center is to promote death with dignity laws based on the model Oregon Death with Dignity Act, both to provide an option for dying individuals and to stimulate nationwide improvements in end-of-life care.

DEATH WITH DIGNITY NATIONAL CENTER

DEATH WITH DIGNITY POLITICAL FUND

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Thriving Amidst Uncertainty



In last year’s Annual Report, I noted the political climate in 2020 would be volatile. What none of us could have known then is that 2020 would prove to be one of the most challenging years in modern history.

RESILIENT AND RESPONSIVE

Fortunately, Death with Dignity has spent decades responding to our constituents’ urgent needs while also investing resources to keep our organization resilient and prepared to weather challenging times—even a global pandemic. Our work over the past year, detailed in this report, exemplifies this approach

and illustrates how we are well positioned to thrive in the midst of uncertainty.

THANKS TO YOU

None of this work would be possible without your generous support and your belief in our movement. Thank you for helping us succeed in tumultuous times. We are truly grateful.

George Eighmey, JD
 President, Board of Directors

OUR STATEMENT OF SOLIDARITY

At Death with Dignity National Center, we value the inherent dignity and worth of all human beings. We work every day to realize a future in which all people have the freedom to decide how they live and die. Our commitment to these values places us in solidarity with the Black community and those protesting against centuries of oppression, injustice, and lives cut short by violence.

Black lives matter.

A Medical Milestone:

Conference and Clinicians Academy Advance the Death with Dignity Movement

Clinicians are on the front lines of helping patients navigate death with dignity laws. But there have been precious few opportunities for clinicians and others involved in implementation of medical aid in dying to connect with others in their field and discuss best practices.

FIRST OF ITS KIND

When we were approached about fiscally sponsoring a conference to facilitate these connections, we jumped at the chance.

Last February, the National Clinicians Conference on Medical Aid in Dying brought together more than 200 physicians, pharmacists, hospice workers, nurses, medical ethicists, social workers, members of the clergy, and others doing work connected to death with dignity.

EXPLORING BEST PRACTICES

Attendees explored best practices for supporting patients who wish to access a death with dignity law. They gained both practical knowledge and a network of professional contacts who can provide ongoing support and insights.


One Maine physician who attended the conference described his

experience as “just the thing I needed to feel confident as an attending [physician].”

A NEW ACADEMY

The most significant development at the conference was the establishment of the American Clinicians Academy on Medical Aid in Dying. The group will continue the work begun at the conference, described in an official statement from the Academy as “informing and educating clinicians about medical aid in dying, from clinical discussions to evidence-based knowledge, from nursing care to the work of volunteers at the bedside, from medical ethics to pharmacology, and more.”

A STEP FORWARD

The formation of the Academy is a step forward for the death with dignity movement: proof that clinicians are integrating medical aid in dying into the standard of end-of-life care. We are proud to be the fiscal agent of this groundbreaking conference and will continue to support the innovative work of the Clinicians Academy. 

A National Collaboration:

State Leadership Incubator Supports Local Leaders Across the Country

Campaigns aren’t won overnight. Successful policy reform efforts require sustained organizing, strategy, and dedication—and the resources to support local leaders for the long haul.

INVESTING IN CHANGE

Since 2017, we’ve trained and supported advocates in states across the country through our State Leadership Incubator. From nurturing relationships with

FACILITATING CROSS-COUNTRY CONNECTIONS

We lead a training series for Incubator participants covering a number of key topics, including an overview of the legislative process. We also host a monthly Leadership Chat where leaders of grassroots organizations connect with one another and share knowledge, resources, and stories from life in the trenches of grassroots organizing.

12

Number of states supported through our State Leadership Incubator


aspiring advocates to providing grant funding to grassroots organizations, we invest in the future of our movement by partnering with local leaders.

GROWING OUR MOVEMENT

As support for death with dignity continues to grow nationwide, we’re hearing from individuals across the U.S. who want to know what they can do to bring the option to their state. Our answer: join the State Leadership Incubator. Through the program, we’re providing training to advocates and building a nationwide community of grassroots organizations.

EXPANDING STATE LEADERSHIP

In the past year, we’ve helped launch a new organization in New Hampshire; strengthened our support of organizations in Arizona and New Mexico; and forged new relationships with advocates in a number of states, including Georgia, Missouri, and Virginia. The map on the next two pages shows the breadth and impact of this work.

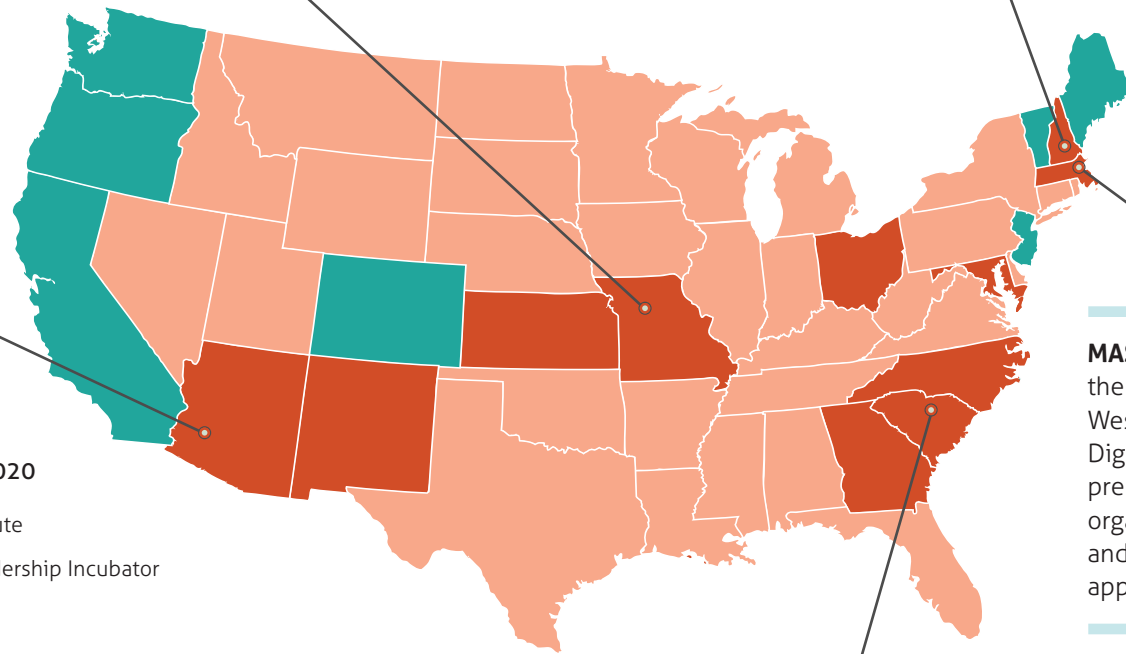
To learn more about the State Leadership Incubator, contact State Leadership Incubator Manager Val Lovelace: vlovelace@deathwithdignity.org. 

Death with Dignity Across the Nation

MISSOURI: We're building relationships with local leaders in the early stage of their advocacy work who are interested in growing grassroots support for assisted dying in their state.

NEW HAMPSHIRE: In the Granite State, local leaders are engaged in building support for a bill for an upcoming legislative session. We awarded New Hampshire Death with Dignity grant funding in February 2020.

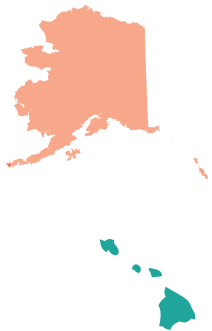
ARIZONA: In December 2019, we awarded Arizona End-of-Life Options grant funding to further their goal of passing a death with dignity law by 2022.



MASSACHUSETTS: We're supporting the efforts of our grassroots partner Western Massachusetts Death with Dignity. We've helped advocates prepare legislative testimony, organize events, and write op-eds and letters to the editor that have appeared in papers across the state.

DEATH WITH DIGNITY MOVEMENT IN 2020

- States with a death with dignity statute
- States participating in our State Leadership Incubator



This movement is about building authentic relationships and listening to what people need.

—VAL LOVELACE,
STATE LEADERSHIP INCUBATOR MANAGER

The amount of support Death Positive South Carolina has received from Death with Dignity has been amazing.

—MICHAEL BRAZELL,
ADVOCATE

Our 2019–2020 Finances*

Consolidated Statements of Financial Position

| | 2020 | 2019 |
|---|---------------------|---------------------|
| ASSETS | | |
| Cash and cash equivalents | \$ 1,115,279 | \$ 677,115 |
| Contributions receivable | \$ - | 25,000 |
| Prepaid expenses and other assets | \$ 5,640 | \$ 5,130 |
| Investments | \$ 2,345,318 | \$ 2,417,858 |
| Property and equipment, net | \$ 6,012 | \$ 7,349 |
| TOTAL ASSETS | \$ 3,472,249 | \$ 3,132,452 |
| LIABILITIES | | |
| Accounts payable and accrued expenses | \$ 75,121 | \$ 53,024 |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES | \$ 75,121 | \$ 53,024 |
| NET ASSETS | | |
| Net assets without donor restrictions: | | |
| Undesignated | \$ 1,318,001 | \$ 962,708 |
| Board designated | \$ 1,980,276 | \$ 2,072,037 |
| Property and equipment, net | \$ 6,012 | \$ 7,349 |
| Total net assets without donor restrictions | \$ 3,304,289 | \$ 3,042,094 |
| Net assets with donor restrictions | \$ 92,839 | \$ 37,334 |
| TOTAL NET ASSETS | \$ 3,397,128 | \$ 3,079,428 |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS | \$ 3,472,249 | \$ 3,132,452 |

* The amounts in the sections "Consolidated Statement of Financial Position" and "Consolidated Statements of Activities" are derived from audited financial statements for the 2020 fiscal year, which ran from April 1, 2019, to March 31, 2020. Full financial statements for the year as well as tax forms are available at DeathwithDignity.org/About/Financials; hard copies are available at 520 SW 6th Avenue, Suite 1220, Portland, OR 97204.

Consolidated Statements of Activities

| | 2020 | | | 2019 | | |
|--|----------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| | Without donor restrictions | With donor restrictions | Total | Without donor restrictions | With donor restrictions | Total |
| REVENUE & SUPPORT | | | | | | |
| Contributions | \$ 1,511,701 | \$ 30,150 | \$ 1,541,851 | \$ 3,185,668 | \$ 7,075 | \$ 3,192,743 |
| Donated assets & services | \$ 18,420 | - | \$ 18,420 | \$ 18,000 | - | \$ 18,000 |
| Investment income (loss), net | \$ (142,191) | - | \$ (142,191) | \$ 30,877 | - | \$ 30,877 |
| Conference and other income | \$ 26 | \$ 153,760 | \$ 153,786 | \$ 63 | \$ 55,000 | \$ 55,063 |
| Net assets released from restrictions: | | | | | | |
| Satisfaction of purpose restrictions | \$ 128,405 | \$ (128,405) | - | \$ 29,180 | \$ (29,180) | - |
| TOTAL REVENUE & SUPPORT | \$ 1,516,361 | \$ 55,505 | \$ 1,571,866 | \$ 3,263,788 | \$ 32,895 | \$ 3,296,683 |
| EXPENSES | | | | | | |
| Program services | | | | | | |
| Public education | \$ 355,215 | - | \$ 355,215 | \$ 189,271 | - | \$ 189,271 |
| Communication | \$ 151,632 | - | \$ 151,632 | \$ 141,422 | - | \$ 141,422 |
| Dignity50 | \$ 458,220 | - | \$ 458,220 | \$ 461,013 | - | \$ 461,013 |
| Total program services | \$ 965,067 | - | \$ 965,067 | \$ 791,706 | - | \$ 791,706 |
| Management & general | \$ 144,963 | - | \$ 144,963 | \$ 127,507 | - | \$ 127,507 |
| Fundraising | \$ 144,136 | - | \$ 144,136 | \$ 133,694 | - | \$ 133,694 |
| TOTAL EXPENSES | \$ 1,254,166 | - | \$ 1,254,166 | \$ 1,052,907 | - | \$ 1,052,907 |
| Change in net assets | \$ 262,195 | \$ 55,505 | \$ 317,700 | \$ 2,210,881 | \$ 32,895 | \$ 2,243,776 |
| NET ASSETS | | | | | | |
| Beginning of year | \$ 3,042,094 | \$ 37,334 | \$ 3,079,428 | \$ 831,213 | \$ 4,439 | \$ 835,652 |
| End of year | \$ 3,304,289 | \$ 92,839 | \$ 3,397,128 | \$ 3,042,094 | \$ 37,334 | \$ 3,079,428 |

Facts and figures are only half the story. Here's what these numbers mean in context:

- We plan for today and for the future. This short- and long-term vision ensures we're prepared for years-long campaigns and able to quickly allocate resources to fund the final push in critical campaign states.
- Our financial stability allows us to support smaller groups launching new endeavors, such as the inaugural National Clinicians Conference on Medical Aid in Dying (see p. 4).
- In fiscal year 2019-2020, we granted funding to six state-based grassroots organizations, providing them with the resources they need to make lasting change in their states.

How We Won in Maine:

A Case Study of a Successful Campaign

The Maine Death with Dignity Act went into effect in September 2019 following a five-year campaign. Like every state, Maine has unique characteristics we took into consideration when developing a campaign strategy. At the same time, our victory was the product of our time-tested approach to making policy change.

Here are the seven key elements of our winning strategy:

#1 Have a point person. Val Lovelace led the on-the-ground effort for nearly five years and was the person to whom all parties—volunteers, advocates, legislators—could turn for information and



State Leadership Incubator Manager Val Lovelace (right) and Maine State Rep. Patricia Hymanson at a victory party in September 2019.

guidance. This facilitated clear communication, ensured continuity, and built trust over time.

#2 Support local leaders. The effort to enact a law in Maine had to be led by Maine residents. Supporting a local movement of citizens and lawmakers is one of the most powerful ways Death with Dignity can ensure a campaign is viewed as credible and authentic by citizens and lawmakers alike.

#3 Build toward success—one session at a time. Following the defeat of bills in 2015 and 2017, we regrouped to evaluate our grassroots and political strategy. We considered how to build support among citizens; which legislators to connect with, especially if a steadfast supporter was retiring; and whether to pursue a ballot initiative, a legislative strategy, or both.

#4 See and be seen. From farmers' markets to press conferences and everywhere in between, passionate Maine advocates took advantage of every opportunity to connect with citizens and build grassroots support. This



State Leadership Incubator Manager Val Lovelace (left) and the late Eva Thompson in front of the Maine State Capitol in Augusta following a 2017 bill hearing.

included successfully submitting numerous letters to the editor in newspapers across the state.

#5 Nurture relationships with legislators and lobbyists. In every state-based campaign, it is critical for local leaders and stakeholders to develop respectful working relationships with bill sponsors and other lawmakers.

#6 Invest in storytelling. We supported locals in identifying storytellers and promoting their stories in local media and on our website. Some of those storytellers provided written and spoken testimony at legislative hearings—one lawmaker said an advocate's story changed her vote from a "no" to a "yes."

#7 Connect with the medical community. Val developed

relationships with medical providers before and after the law passed. She continues to provide educational workshops and support to help healthcare providers navigate the early stages of implementation.

Visit *Death with Dignity's* online Action Center to explore the many ways you can get involved with advocacy in your state.

DeathwithDignity.org/take-action/



A poster chronicles the campaign that led to the passage of the Maine Death with Dignity Act in June 2019.



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2020 Annual Report

“Death with Dignity has helped immensely by connecting our group with others throughout the states. The State Leadership Incubator allows us to draw from the experiences of others so that we’re not starting from scratch on every effort, and it creates an important sense of community.”

— LISA VIGIL-SCHATTINGER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF OHIO END OF LIFE OPTIONS AND DEATH WITH DIGNITY BOARD MEMBER