



IIRAH Annual Report

July 2022- June 2023

Idaho Interfaith Roundtable Against Hunger





IIRAH Advocates for Policy Changes

The Idaho Interfaith Roundtable Against Hunger (IIRAH) is a forum of people representing faith groups, organizations, and individuals who share a common goal of food security for all.

We work for just and equitable systems in which all people can have food security with dignity. IIRAH studies system failures that are root causes of hunger and focuses on spurring impactful and needed changes.





Vision

To ensure sufficient, healthy food for all Idahoans.

Mission

Educate the public, inform policy makers, and advocate for needed change.



Educate the Public

Spring 2023 Forum: Strengthening Local Food Systems

David Anderson, Idaho Program Manager for the American Farmland Trust, shared the need to ensure Idaho farmland is preserved.

Farmland is essential for community resiliency and equitable access to healthy food, clean air and water, and safe shelter. "Local producers require affordable land and water access, farm labor support, and easy access to markets in partnership with the communities they are feeding," explained Anderson.

He encouraged everyone to help by:

1. Telling elected US senators and representatives the we need their support of agricultural protection programs and strengthening local food systems.
2. Letting Idaho legislators know that you support the protection of agricultural lands.
3. Participating in community surveys and public hearings calling for building better cities including proactively planning for local food systems.

Fall 2023: Idaho Hunger Relief Task Force Summit

Advancing the National Strategy for Hunger, Nutrition and Health in Idaho" was the theme of the Fall 2023 Hunger Summit. IIRAH conveners served on planning committees and solicited funds for Summit Scholarships to encourage individuals from communities outside the Treasure Valley to attend.



Inform Policy Makers

Ensuring a living wage, affordable housing and childcare, and food access were IIRAH priorities during the past year. Conveners networked with lead organizations and attending advocacy meetings held by the Idaho Asset Building Network, Idaho Voices for Children, and Food Research & Action Center.

The following letters were sent to decision-makers in hopes of promoting needed policy changes:

- **November 2022: Living Wage.** Advocated for a refundable Idaho earned income tax credit (EITC) which would help Idaho avoid taxing people of modest means into poverty.
- **December 2022: Affordable Housing.** Signed on to National Low Income Housing Coalition's letter that encouraged expansion of extremely low income (ELI) calculations Expand the ELI basis boost to 50%. Designate tribal and rural communities as Difficult to Develop Areas.
- **April 2023: Food Access.** Support proposed improved nutrition standards for the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs.
- **August 2, 2023: Food Access.** Letter to Governor Brad Little, Superintendent of Public Instruction Debbie Critchfield, and Director of Idaho Health and Welfare Dave Jeppesen expressing disappointment and frustration with the state of Idaho's decision to forgo federal funding to support food assistance and summer Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer (P-EBT) program.



Advocate for Change

IIRAH leveraged social media channels and the organizational mailing list to promote advocacy activities during the past year. Updates of key issues, such as federal poverty levels, housing, and the ID grocery tax credited were posted on Facebook. Plus, action alerts rallied conveners, endorsers, and other supporters to write legislators. Highlights include:

- **November 2022: Child Nutrition Act.** Encourage reauthorization of the Child Nutrition Act, which requires reauthorization every five years. This bill, which has been historically bipartisan, funds school breakfast and lunch, summer nutrition, WIC, Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) programs.
- **January 2023: Rent Eats First.** Join IIRAH for Housing Advocacy Day at the Idaho State Capitol and support IIRAH President Gayle Woods when she testifies about the negative impact of high housing costs on food security.
- **March 2023: March for Meals.** Join the annual march that spotlights senior hunger and food insecurity, and how Meals on Wheels provides a proven solution.
- **April 2023: SNAP.** Tell the 118th Congress to protect the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which provides food assistance to individuals and families with low and no incomes.
- **May 2023: Affordable Housing.** Tell Congress to expand federal spending in affordable housing.
- **June 2023: Farm Bill.** Encourage Congress to pass this bill, which requires reauthorization every five years and funds the SNAP.



Conveners

Chair: Gayle Woods, OR-ID Conference of the United Methodist

Vice Chair: Denise Dixon, Idaho Hunger Relief Task Force

Secretary/Treasurer: Michelle Ward, Oregon-Idaho Conference United Methodist

Gwynne Barlow, Holy Apostles Catholic Church

Barbara Gordon, Idaho Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

Ken Miller, Hillview United Methodist Church

Jenifer Reader, ID Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

Carl Van Slyke, Wright Community Congregational United Church of Christ

Sr. Carol Ann Wassmuth, Monastery of St. Gertrude

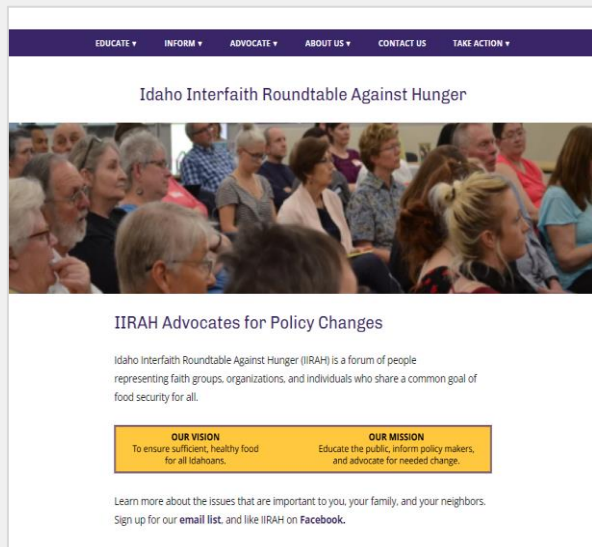
Endorsers

All Saints Episcopal Church
Boise Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
Catholic Charities of Idaho
Community Action Partnership Assn. of ID
Community Food Basket – ID Falls/IID Falls Soup Kitchen
Congregation Ahavath Beth Israel
Emmett Valley Friendship Coalition
Episcopal Diocese of IS
First Congregational United Church of Christ
First United Methodist Church – Amity and Downtown Campuses
Giraffe Laugh
Hillview United Methodist Church
Holy Trinity Episcopal Church (Grangeville)
Idaho Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
Idaho Foodbank
Idaho Hunger Relief Task Force

Islamic Center of Boise
King of Glory Lutheran Church
Kuna United Methodist Church
Monastery of St. Gertrude
Monastery of the Ascension
Nampa Seventh Day Adventist Community Service Center
Oasis Worship and Food Center
Oregon – Idaho United Methodist Conference
Roman Catholic Diocese of Boise
Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church
St. Mary's Food Bank
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
St. Vincent de Paul North Idaho
Trinity Lutheran Church (Nampa)
Whitney United Methodist Church
Wright Community Congregational Church



Operations & Fundraising



During the past fiscal year, IIRAH upgraded the website hosting platform to an option that restricts advertising. In addition, a subcommittee revamped the website giving it a facelift and making it easier to navigate. Though the hosting cost increased, the website revisions were done by a volunteer for no charge.

Volunteers checked both the U.S. Postal Service mailbox and the email box.

Fundraising efforts included encouraging individual convener donations and soliciting funds from endorsing organizations. In addition, an application for grant funding was submitted to help cover the costs of Hunger Summit scholarships.



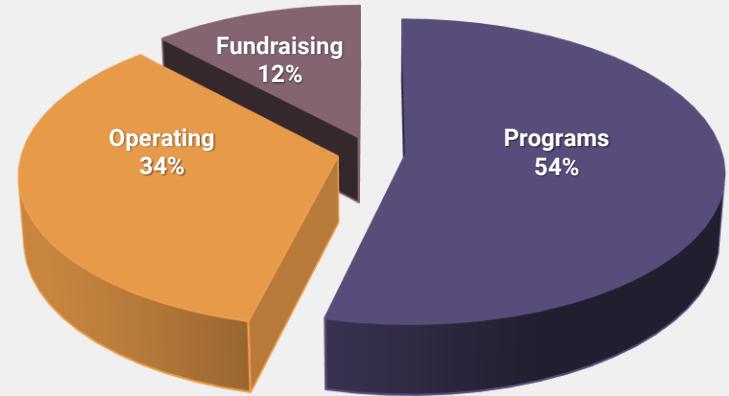
Finances

IIRAH has no paid staff. Volunteers dedicate their time to fulfill the mission.

Revenues rely on individual gifts. In the past fiscal year, endorsing organizations donated \$200 and conveners \$1,335. Idaho Gives donations were \$55 and in-kind contributions \$13. Total revenues were \$1,335.

Over half of the funds (54%) were used for mission-dedicated programmatic activities (\$516). Operating expenses include rent for the US Post Office mailbox (\$166), and the website domain and hosting (\$163). Total expenses were \$957.

Funds carried into Fiscal Year 2024 were earmarked for the Fall 2023 Hunger Summit and future IIRAH programs.





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