

2019/2020



IMPACT REPORT





WHATS INSIDE

3

LETTER FROM OUR CEO/
FOUNDER

4

OUR APPROACH

6

2019/20 PROJECTS

8

IMPACT HIGHLIGHT

13

CREATING A COMMUNITY
OF ADVOCATES

14

DRESSEMBER CANADA

16

FASHION FOR GOOD

18

YOU CAN DO ANYTHING
IN A DRESS OR TIE 5K

21

FINANCIALS

22

BOARD & TEAM

2019/20

Thousands
advocated

Millions
raised

Letter from our Founder/CEO

Over the past seven years, the Dressember movement has grown from a whim to a community of thousands of people across six continents who have collectively raised over \$10 million to resource anti-trafficking programs across the world. The Dressember community of advocates and supporters have shown the power of both individual and collective action in creating impact.

In 2019, we continued to fight for a world that is more free, where no one is robbed of their inherent right to live a dignified, autonomous life. This year was momentous for us-- we were able to give our Canadian supporters something they'd wanted for years (tax deductible donations) by launching the official Dressember Canada campaign. We also launched a partnership with Lyft and BEST (Businesses Ending Slavery and Trafficking) to train drivers in Miami and Las Vegas on how to identify trafficking victims leading up to the Super Bowl. Our dress and tie collection was our biggest collection ever, and because of that, we were able to support more survivors than ever through providing dignified work at fair wages.

In early 2020, the onset of a pandemic forced us to think differently about the months that are historically our "off-season" (when our staff is focused internally on budgeting, operations, and hiring). We recognized almost immediately that COVID-19 would affect the communities we exist to serve to a heightened degree. Our team reached out to our partners around the world to find out how they were affected, and what we learned prompted us to launch a campaign to provide COVID-19 crisis funding to survivors of trafficking in New York City and the Philippines. Our community rallied, and together we raised over \$50,000 in critical funding.

In the following pages, we've done our best to show the impact you have been part of. The pictures, the words, and the graphics tell the stories of real lives changed by your role as a Dressember advocate and supporter. As you scan these pages, I hope you feel encouraged by the impact we're making together, and I hope that you feel renewed energy to continue fighting for freedom with us. We couldn't have done any of this without you, and now more than ever, we're grateful to be in this fight with you.

Thank you for using your voice to advocate!

Blythe Hill
CEO & Founder



OUR APPROACH + ITS IMPACT

"We step into a dangerous trap when we tell ourselves not to attempt to make an impact unless it can be big. We forget that big impact usually begins as small impact." - *Blythe Hill, CEO + Founder, Dressembur*

Our mission is to equip a community of people to advocate for the dignity of all people, leading to the protection and freedom of *millions*.

Human trafficking is one of the most heinous crimes that exists in our world today; it strips millions of people of their freedom and dignity every day through physical and emotional abuse, deception, manipulation, and/or sexual exploitation. Estimates suggest that internationally, less than 1% of people

who enter trafficking survive to escape from it, and those who do face a mountain of trauma, poverty, or other obstacles to overcome that continue to make them vulnerable. In the last seven years, Dressembur's impact has grown exponentially. Tens of thousands of people have been served

through our prevention, intervention, and aftercare efforts. While we think it's important to pause and celebrate the impact our community of advocates and supporters has been able to make, we know there is still so much work to be done to ensure that millions are protected.



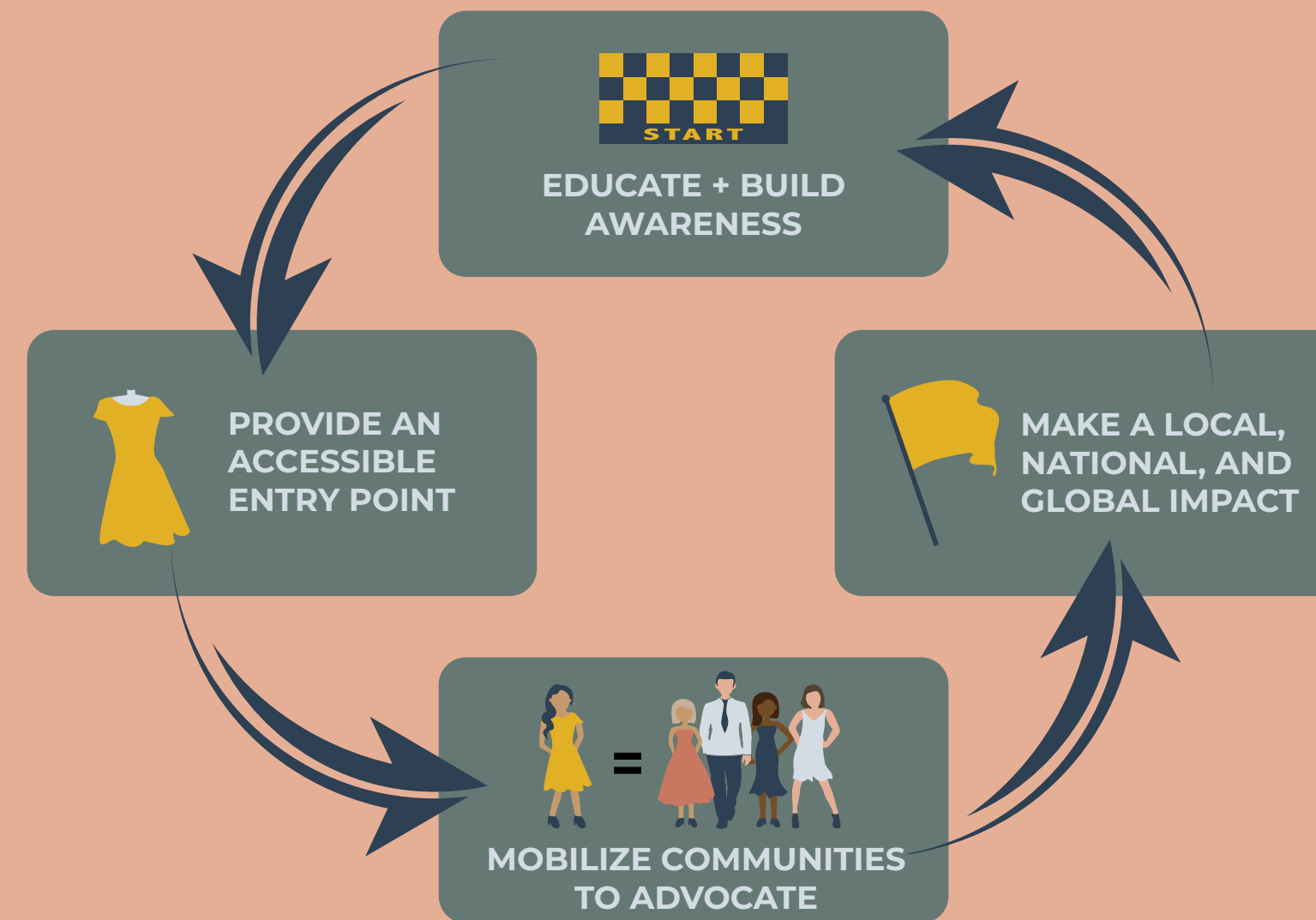
Human trafficking affects **every country in the world**. Each country can be considered a country of origin, transit, or destination - or even a combination of all.¹



In the US, **60% of all child sex trafficking victims** have histories in the child welfare system.²



Globally, **24.9 million people experience forced labor**. Fashion manufacturing of textiles, garments and footwear, is the second leading industry contributor.³



1. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2. National Youth Foster Youth Institute, 3. Global Slavery Index and Bureau of International Affairs

Together, we impacted **13,000+** people affected by trafficking internationally and spread awareness to **300,000+** through Dressemer's channels in 2019 alone.

Education

- Dressemer's blog, website, and social media platform provided resources on trafficking and trends, circulated petitions and news, and built awareness about the numerous forms of human trafficking around the world including exploitation in the fashion industry.

Prevention

- Brought curriculum to vulnerable youth including those in foster care, the juvenile court system, and youth experiencing homelessness to prevent them from entering into trafficking.
- Provided training for hospitality staff, law enforcement, casinos, and bus companies' staff on how to identify trafficking and what action steps to take.
- Identified and decreased the likelihood of exploitation occurring in supply chains in accordance with the UK Modern Slavery Act.
- Mentored and educated high-risk students in Northern Thailand.
- Trained ride-share drivers to identify human trafficking and safely partner with law enforcement to be part of the solution.



Intervention

- Supported investigations to locate cyber child sex trafficking victims and bring perpetrators to justice.
- Trained police, prosecutors, judges, social workers, partner organizations, and community members to recognize and respond to trafficking.
- Relieved victims of sex trafficking with a focus on discovering, infiltrating, and disrupting private trafficking networks.
- Supported collaboration efforts with local law enforcement to restrain traffickers and pimps.

Protection

- Built a Freedom Center in the capital of Bulgaria (a source, destination, and transit country for trafficking) to provide holistic aftercare, counseling, and legal assistance services to survivors.
- Supported survivors in New York and Los Angeles on their journey to recovery by providing English classes, case management, legal counsel, vocational training, and job placement.
- Provided wraparound critical care and safe housing for children at risk of exploitation in the Philippines.
- Provided cash assistance to survivors in crisis during COVID-19.

2019/20 PROJECTS *Made possible because of supporters like you.*

Programmatic Partners



BREAKING NEWS

IMPACT HIGHLIGHT

LYFT X DRESSEMBER X BEST

Many victims of human trafficking do not have their own car and rely on public transportation or ridesharing services. Rideshare drivers are in a unique position to witness human trafficking; however, like so many civilians, they often lack the ability to identify victims or the knowledge of steps to take if they suspect human trafficking.

Out of an increased interest in speeding up intervention timelines for victims, DresseMBER spearheaded a project with our partner, BEST (Businesses Ending Slavery and Trafficking) to develop human trafficking training for rideshare drivers. Because ending human trafficking is a value for Lyft, one of the largest ridesharing companies in the industry, they were receptive to a partnership to educate their drivers leading up to the Superbowl, which is historically a time of increased sex trafficking.

To date, nine sessions have been conducted through DresseMBER and BEST's partnership with Lyft. These trainings have educated drivers on how to identify victims of trafficking and partner with law enforcement for safe intervention.

Julie* shared the following story at BEST's Miami training. Julie* picked up a young woman in her 20's who was living and working at a family member's house. She spoke with the driver about her living situation, which sounded like domestic servitude. The passenger told the driver that she had come to the U.S. to work in her uncle's home. She was working incredibly long hours cleaning the house, cooking for her uncle's family, and taking care of his young

son. But after several months of working hard for her uncle, the young woman was still not receiving any pay. Her uncle was also charging her \$400 each month for rent, and since the young woman was not receiving any pay, she was having money sent to her from her family back in her home country in order to cover the expense of rent. The rideshare driver also noticed that the young woman had an ankle bracelet that was monitoring her movement. The driver could not confirm if the bracelet was government-issued or not. Had this driver taken BEST's training before this incident occurred, she would have known how to offer this young woman help with her situation.

*Julie is a pseudonym.



"I love coming to the Freedom Center, because I feel safe, loved, and accepted."

FREEDOM CENTER LAUNCH

IMPACT HIGHLIGHT



Margarita* is a 30-year-old woman who grew up in a poor family in a small town in Bulgaria. Education was never a priority to the family, and Margarita left school soon after entering high school. She worked various jobs to provide for her family and struggled to make ends meet.

One day, Margarita met a man who was handsome, charming, and kind. They started meeting regularly. He promised to take care of her, and Margarita fell in love, believing she had met her Prince Charming.

Shortly after their relationship began, Margarita's boyfriend suggested that they move to Sofia, the capital of Bulgaria, where there would be more job opportunities. Excited about the prospect of a better life, she gladly agreed. Shortly after moving, Margarita's excitement quickly vanished when she was locked in their apartment, drugged, and had her phone taken away. Day after day different men started coming to the apartment, and she was forced to provide sexual services.

After many months, Margarita was finally able to escape. She managed to reach the police station where she was connected with Dressemer's international partner, A21.

The team of caseworkers assisted Margarita with emergency needs, providing safe accommodation, and developing a care plan that would outline steps to help her achieve restoration.

In 2019, Dressemer partnered with A21 to build a new Freedom Center in Bulgaria, a replicated model of their already successful Centers in other countries. Since its inception, A21 Bulgaria has had a steady inflow of clients at the Freedom Center and is investing in their progress towards independence as survivors take their future back into their own hands.

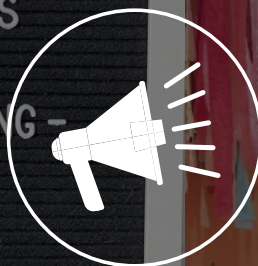
Today Margarita lives independently in Sofia and receives case management support from A21's Bulgaria Freedom Center. She is seeing a counselor, has graduated from vocational training, and has obtained stable employment. Margarita regularly comes to the Freedom Center where she enjoys participating in programs that help her to build self-confidence, dream again, and move forward in her life of freedom.

*Margarita is a pseudonym.

Dressember exists to empower all people to use their voices + style choices to fight for freedom

CREATING A COMMUNITY OF ADVOCATES

I WANT TO BE A PART OF THE GENERATION THAT ENDS HUMAN TRAFFICKING - DO YOU?



6,753

52

35,723

*Advocates**

Countries

*Supporters**

Real MEN BUY FLOWERS NOT WOMEN

*Includes number for Dressember World and Canada

Beth Carroll

Beth has been advocating with Dressember since 2014 and has raised over \$40,000. The 2019/2020 campaign was especially noteworthy for Beth; she raised over \$21,000!

"I read recently that 'to love is to recognize yourself in another.' I guess in some ways, that is what motivates me the most to try to do something, anything, to relieve some of the pain in the world. I see myself in the people who have had their freedom stripped from them; after all, it is only the cosmic lottery that has put me in white, middle-class America. Nothing I have done has allowed me to be free.

belong to each other there is an unspoken mandate to care for one another and it's messy, to care for people, particularly in our highly polarized societies. But love is a higher calling and it requires action.

Dressember gives me one way to take action, and I'm grateful to be able to take part."

- Beth Carroll

I believe in the interconnectedness of humanity, that we belong to each other. It's easy for this to be an inconvenient truth: if we

MEET OUR 2019 ADVOCATES

MadeleineRuth Norman

MadeleineRuth has been a top advocate for two consecutive years and has raised over \$40,000 since 2017 with Dressember. She joined Dressember's advocate trip to Bulgaria in July 2019. We asked what inspired her for the 2019 campaign:

"The Bulgaria trip was an especially powerful experience because we were able to visit the birthplace of my youngest sister, see where she came from, and hear the stories of her birth country. Then we traveled to Greece where we saw the impact of legalized prostitution on human trafficking. The great connection between legalized prostitution and human trafficking was one I had never fully considered. It was heartbreaking to see the reach of human trafficking in a place I would have otherwise

only seen through tourist's eyes. And yet, in the midst of such painful reality, we witnessed the hope provided through the A21 Freedom Centers, built in partnership with Dressember. We saw the intention and love behind every single item placed in the centers, color choices, activities presented, and opportunities given. It showed me the importance of aftercare programs. The fight against human trafficking is so much more than rescuing someone out of a terrible situation. It is about the journey to

restoration and healing that requires immense work and support. It is the daily, consistent actions of coming alongside survivors that truly change lives. Through Dressember, we equip amazing warriors on the battlefields to love deeply and show up consistently, to bring an end to modern-day slavery."

- MadeleineRuth Norman





DRESSEMBER CANADA

Since DresseMBER's inception, Canada has made up our largest community of advocates outside of the United States. In 2019, we launched a country-specific campaign, DresseMBER Canada, by linking arms with our existing global partner, International Justice Mission (IJM). IJM's Canada office was the beneficiary of DresseMBER Canada fundraising, which was used to further their work to rescue, protect, and provide justice around the world for trafficking victims and survivors. DresseMBER Canada increased our international impact and made it possible to further support our Canadian community by offering targeted communications, support, and fully tax-deductible donations.

490

*DresseMBER Canada
Advocates*

\$250K^{CAD}

Raised

"Being a part of the DresseMBER community has always inspired me. This year was even more special because of DresseMBER Canada. My major takeaway from the 2019 campaign was the power of a team. We can accomplish so much when we work together. Canadian advocates wore dresses in -40C weather, and Canadians supported them to reach and surpass the fundraising goal! I loved being able to tell my donors that

they were supporting the International Justice Mission of Canada, and I felt so encouraged by my community. I have been an advocate since 2013, and this was the best and most rewarding year yet! When the campaign ended, I was not only inspired but also filled with pride because Team Canada showed up for freedom, dignity, and justice."

- Sidni Brock, Saskatchewan, Canada

816 DRESSEMBER TEAMS

Formed in 2019

What year did you start leading a DresseMBER team? I led a team in 2015, but I really didn't know what I was doing! I learned a lot by talking to my teammates that year, and then in 2016, I felt like I made a lot of progress in supporting my team.

What does leading a DresseMBER team entail for you? I focus on providing resources and support, answering questions, and cheering everyone on toward their goals! We have a large, dispersed team with a lot of veterans, so I lean heavily on those experienced advocates to help share their experiences and tips. I use a weekly newsletter, an online resources library, and a Facebook group to keep everyone connected.



What role has your employer, Chatham Financial, played in supporting your DresseMBER journey? My workplace, Chatham Financial, has been hugely supportive of DresseMBER. One of our company's purposes is to impact our communities and the world. Over the past 3 campaigns, they have matched employee donations totaling \$37,000! One of the most

Meet **RuthAnn Deveney** and the **115 To Thrive Team**

gratifying moments for me has been overhearing other Chatham employees share information about DresseMBER and human trafficking as a result of our ongoing advocacy. It's really become a company cause.

How many of your coworkers advocated with you? In the 2019 campaign, we had over 40 colleagues participate as advocates! We have colleagues from our Pennsylvania, Colorado, and Krakow, Poland, offices who join as advocates, and each office is so creative in their fundraising efforts. In Krakow, trivia night has become a DresseMBER tradition! In Denver, the team made breakfast burritos for donations, and in Kennett Square, we had a really successful raffle. It's so fun and energizing to connect across distances for a common goal.

How did you involve local businesses in your fundraising? For the past 2 years, we have had the privilege of having a shopping night at Clean Slate Goods to benefit our team! Owner Kari Matthews is also a DresseMBER advocate, and she generously donates a portion of her proceeds from those nights to our team. Clean Slate Goods is a wonderful small business that offers ethically made goods, so it's a great match. We have also worked with April Heather Davulcu, a lovely local artist! She came to our team kick-off party in 2019 and donated live sketching of our teammates, which was so special.





FASHION FOR *Good*

As a campaign well known for our December style-challenge, one of our primary goals is to raise awareness and create change in the fashion industry, particularly fast-fashion, which is a significant contributor to labor trafficking and exploitation. In 2019, we created several resources to share the true cost of fast fashion and bring awareness to the exploitation of primarily women and children in the production process. While there is exploitation in fashion, there is also the potential for dignifying, empowering work.

In July 2019, Dresember launched an online Ethical Fashion Directory with over 400 brands, searchable by category and price point. The Directory is a resource for consumers to find

In 2019, we launched our largest Dress Collection. Dresember's survivor-made Dress Collection featured 9 styles with 25 variations.

products from brands with supply chains that at a minimum meet the International Labor Standards Four Core Principles and labor rights in the workplace.

One of our objectives is to equip the Dresember community to use their consumer dollars consciously and become aware of the power they hold. Our work in ethical fashion highlights the positive impact of ethical brands that empower artisans around the world.



After many requests, we successfully launched our first Tie Collection. Dresember Ties are handmade out of hemp, an environmentally friendly and 100% biodegradable crop.



Dresember Collections are ethically and sustainably made in Nepal, maintaining the highest standards in quality, integrity, and transparency. The ties and dresses give meaningful work to artisans that are paid a fair wage above industry standards and are treated with dignity and respect.

London, UK



Dressember's 5K, an opportunity for advocacy in the spring, has provided over \$61,000 for empowerment and legal programs for survivors which includes emergency response, case management, and legal services.

YOU CAN DO *anything* IN A DRESS (OR TIE)

Dressember's 2018 & 2019 5K Event

 \$61K

raised

 338

survivors
supported

Los Angeles, CA

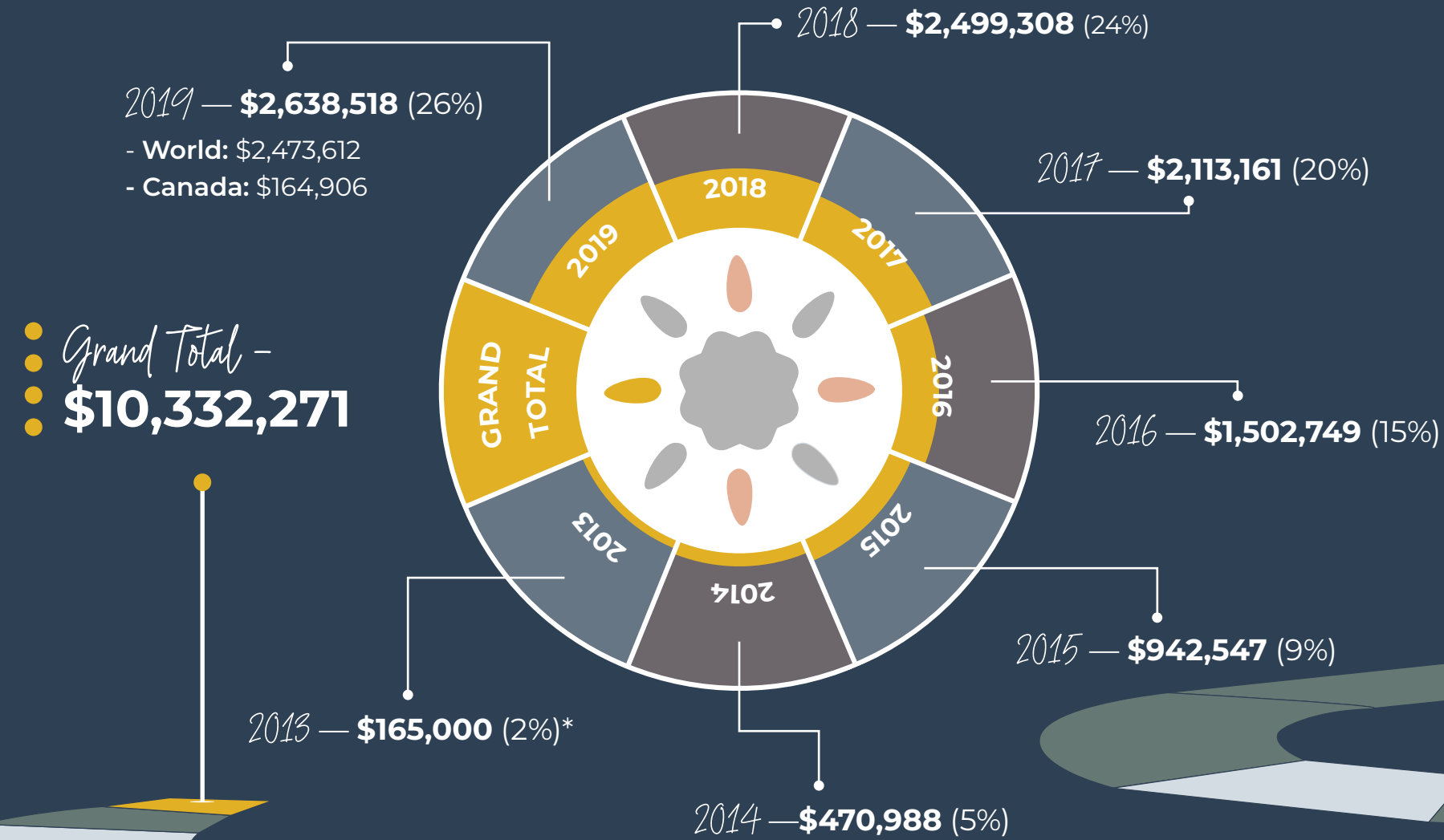


Baltimore, MD

In April 2019, Dressember hosted our 2nd annual You Can Do Anything in a Dress (or Tie) 5K in Los Angeles' Griffith Park. Dressember's 2018 and 2019 5Ks brought hundreds of individuals together in Los Angeles, along with dozens of advocate-organized runs were also held in cities across the world, to raise awareness and funds for anti-trafficking programs.

THE ROAD TO \$10 MILLION

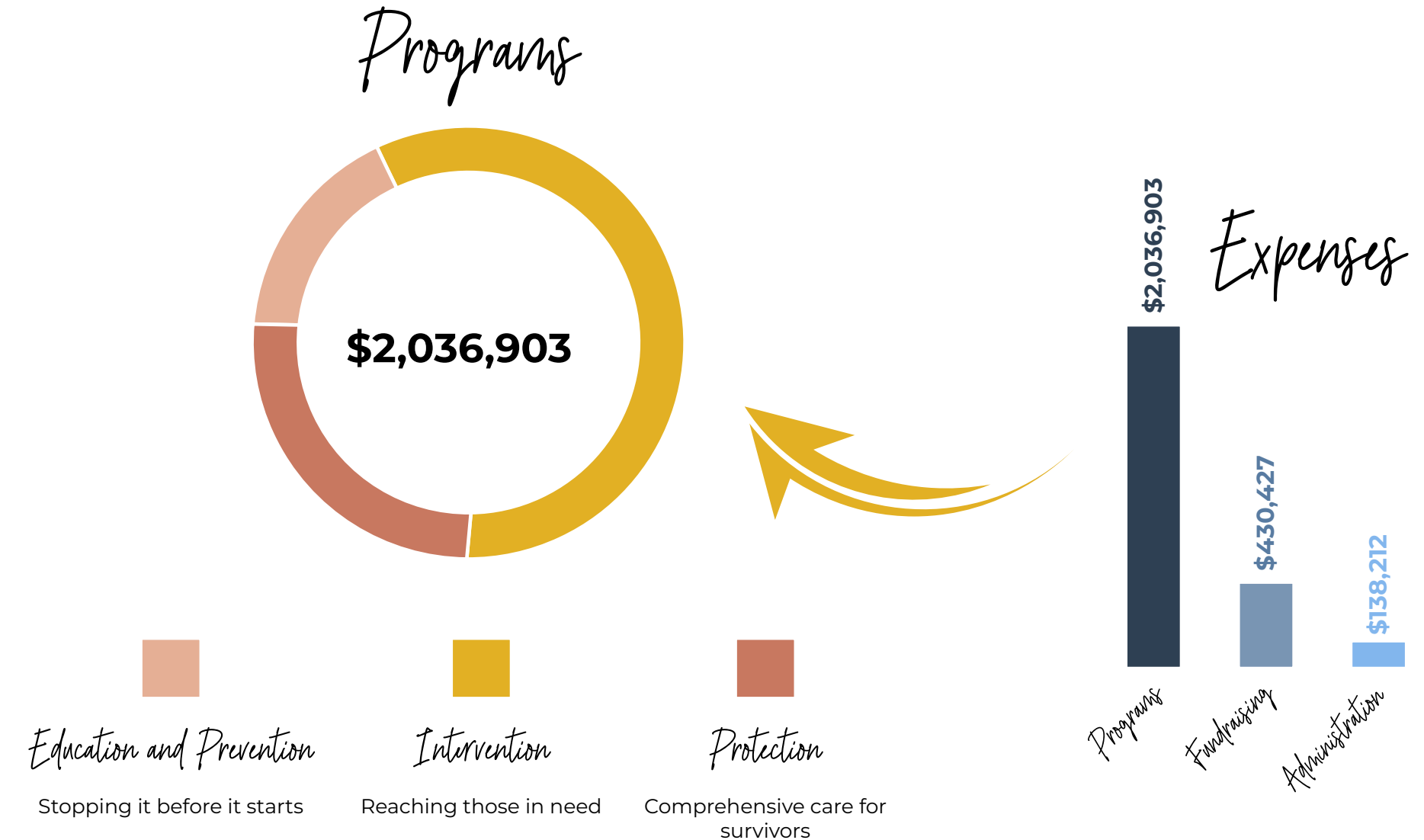
2019 was a **groundbreaking** year for Dressemer. In the midst of our seventh campaign, we surpassed **\$10 million in contributions since 2013**.



*Prior to the formation of Dressemer Foundation

2019/20 FINANCIALS

Dressemer is a 501c(3) registered charity committed to maximizing every dollar to ensure the most sustainable impact.



Form 990 and Audited Financial Statements available: www.dressemer.org/financials

Dressembler Team

Blythe Hill - CEO + Founder

Marissa Peden - Director of Strategic Partnerships

Madeline Kronenberg followed by **Tori Schaulis** - Communications Manager

Jillian Rae Saldana - Admin & Operations followed by **Michelle Chavez** - Director of Operations

Dressembler Board

Talitha Baker - Board Chair; Director, Community Experience - Children's Miracle Network Hospitals

Dahn Elle Dior Ballard - Actor/Writer; Founder, The Yummy Factor by Dior

Arianna Harrison - Board Secretary; Virtual Administrator - Belay Solutions

Blythe Hill - CEO/Founder, Dressembler Foundation

Lisa LaMattina - Producer, No Sudden Movements

Eric Lattin - Treasurer; Director of Finance & Operations - TimeZoneOne, Inc

Rachel Repko- Founder and Grant Consultant, Repko Grant

Johanna Tropiano and Michelle Hart, previous board members as reported on Dressembler's 990.

TEAM & BOARD

2020+ VISION

With the first half of 2020 feeling like a decade all on its own, we turn to the rest of the year in expectation. With the world's attention turned to the election, managing a pandemic, and navigating an increasingly tense racial climate, will you make space to

advocate for the lives of people you will never meet? We hope so. COVID-19 has made those living in marginalized communities exceptionally vulnerable. It has created more obstacles for law enforcement and investigators trying to find and help women and girls being

trafficked. It's aggravated existing cycles of abuse and exploitation and compounded trauma. The need for intervention has never been greater, and as such, the need for advocates willing to raise their voices has also never been greater.

GET INVOLVED

Make a commitment to end human trafficking and exploitation around the world. When you give to Dressembler, you ensure that we can continue our work speeding up intervention time, restoring survivors, protecting vulnerable communities, and training local leaders. **Traffickers are betting on our inaction. Your support sends a message that you're in this fight for the long haul.**

**ADVOCATE +
SPREAD THE WORD**

dressembler.org/fundraise

GIVE

dressembler.org/donate

**JOIN THE
COLLECTIVE**

a group of monthly supporters:
dressembler.org/collective

FOLLOW US



CONTACT US

hello@dressembler.org | (213) 290-6177



2019/20 Top Dressember Advocates

ElizabethCarroll
MadeleineRuth Norman
RuthAnnDeveney
KearciMoir
IcaRemo
Zander W
Peter Yee
Stephanie Bronfein
Hannah Au
Ruth Bethany
Jill Ross
Amanda and Lyla Vohs
Carolyn Heck
Megan Montoya
Sabrina Perez
Tamara Miner
Elizabeth Hafner

Linnea Spicer
Erikah Weir
TJ Teems
Terra Brimberry
Vera Leung
Heather Leith
Nicole Molnar
Jennifer Muir
Lynne Dowell
Madeline Kronenberg
Luke Nelson
Lauren Pressley
Arianna Harrison
Anna Stephens
Sarah Chin
Annie Varberg
Peyton Manning

Katrina Wong with Scott Jung
Sarah Silk
Kendall Zeile
Stephanie McClure
Shae Millhollin
Shannon Leith
Rachel Ramirez
Rachel Markley
Katie Bhadra
Kelly Sjol
Vlasta Booth
Ann Deveney
Jessica Tjong
Amanda Estrada
Angela Watts
Lucy & Eddie Kaufholz
Katie Beard