Dear friends,

I have always been in awe of rowing—it’s an awe that, I think, is what initially attracts many of us to the sport. It has a beauty that immediately and simultaneously exudes strength and magnificence, while making people curious at the same time. “How do those boats work?” they wonder. “Could I do that?” “Could I be strong and magnificent?”

Once you begin rowing, you quickly learn that the beauty you’re after requires patience, practice and serious teamwork. This sport is demanding in multiple ways. Not only are you required to use over 80% of your muscles with every stroke, you also have to work in sync as a team. A few workouts in, you begin to wonder if you’re ever going to “get it together,” and once you think you’ve got it together, you wonder if your boat will ever “get it together.”

Rowing teaches you that rewards are to be earned and that accomplishing something together can feel ten times better than anything you could have done on your own. It makes you look at things you couldn’t do before and think, “Maybe I can.”

You finished a 2000m race after a round of chemo the week prior. And you didn’t have to do it alone. When you wanted to give up, your teammates pushed you on. And you grew because of it. While you built friendships, you built trust and support in the process.

Survivorship, like rowing, is a journey, not a destination.

While some of the women we serve are still in treatment, some have been in remission for many months or many years. The reality is, it’s still a journey, and it’s one that never really ends. While many have survived treatment and the disease, their bodies will never be the same. But exercise remains a proven, proactive approach in reducing recurrence rates in survivors by up to 50%.

That’s why programs like ROW are so important. When you pair rowing—an amazing tool and sport—with a group of women who need exercise to keep cancer at bay, something incredible happens. The rowing journey and the cancer journey become intertwined. Teammates’ lives intertwine, and none are ever the same. The magic of these two things together has inspired patients and survivors of breast cancer since 2007, when Recovery on Water was born.

Nearly a decade later, ROW has become the largest breast cancer rowing team in the country and our programs are serving more survivors than ever. In 2015 alone, we broke ground on a permanent home, grew the program by 60% and worked to offer more programs in more locations than ever before.

I am incredibly grateful to all who have made our efforts possible. Now I invite you to take a closer look at all you have helped us accomplish in 2015 and ask that you continue to support our programs as we grow into 2016 and beyond. As always, GO ROW!

Jenn Gibbons
Executive Director
Recovery on Water
Recovery On Water (ROW) attracts a unique kind of athlete. Though our team is comprised entirely of women who have fought—or continue to battle—breast cancer, it is not this disease alone that sets them apart. The more striking and defining characteristics of these female athletes are resilience, intelligence and a compelling inclination to persevere, no matter the odds. These are the characteristics that unite them as a team and empower them during and beyond treatment.

ROW coach Sheena Smith perfectly captured the essence of ROW back in 2012 with this:

“Rowing is reserved for the toughest of the tough, people who must train their bodies to exude grace, even when essentially completing a deadlift with every race stroke. The women who join the ROW team seem to be able to sense that about rowing. For many of them, you’d never guess they had cancer unless they told you. From the outside, you’d have no idea what kind of a fight they’d been through to be who they are now—whether they’ve been cancer-free for twenty years, five days or whether they fight the fight every day.

[These women are] problem solvers, they’re active, they’re strong, they’re smart, and they want to come to terms with their feelings in a place with like-minded women, where they can equally keep to themselves and leave frustrations and grief on the erg or in the boat, and simultaneously have an amazingly strong support network.”

Drive. Determination. And a boldness in performance—on the water and off. This is ROW.
Recovery on Water is a rowing team that gives survivors of breast cancer the unique opportunity to interact, become active in their recovery, and gain support from fellow survivors.

Our vision is for every survivor of breast cancer in Chicago to have access to a rowing program.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ROW

Born in 2007 and incorporated in 2008, ROW began as an ambitious collaborative effort between Sue Ann Glaser, a breast cancer survivor, and Jenn Gibbons, a then-high school rowing coach at Ignatius Chicago Crew (ICC). The foundational goal that gave rise to the ROW program was simple: to increase exercise consistency in people diagnosed with breast cancer and to improve their overall quality of life.

Today, that simple core mission remains, and ROW provides exercise programs for survivors six days a week, year-round. Through the spring, summer, and fall months, our teams work in rowing shells on the south branch of the Chicago River and, as winter rolls in, we transition to indoor rowing machines. Our practice facilities and rowing programs have evolved over time to accommodate an ever-growing team, and that evolution is reflected in our expanding focus, too, which now includes greater community outreach and developing a higher level of awareness around rowing and how it benefits those battling breast cancer.

From the Loop to the outlying suburbs, ROW now serves more than 60 area survivors and we’re still growing exponentially. In its first eight years, ROW has developed significantly as a non-profit organization, drawing strength from its members while uniting with local, mutually supportive partnerships, and we are primed to become a greater, stronger resource to all who need us in the coming years.

CURRENT PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

As ROW has continued to evolve and grow, our leaders, members, and volunteers have worked to ensure access to proper facilities, generate ongoing awareness within the community and build and fortify relationships internally and across organizations. These efforts are reflected in a continuously expanding roster of programs, races, special events and milestone accomplishments.

New Program Features in 2015

- Introduced ROW headquarters and indoor rowing facilities at Bridgeport Art Center
- Established three rowing squads, including a novice program
- Created a partnership with Alliance Rowing Club (ARC) in Wilmette, providing more than 100 workouts for survivors in a new, convenient location
- Began “Girl’s Night” with the young women from the Chicago Training Center
- Launched a sculling program to complement sweep rowing technique

Community Events

- Race4ROW
- Bike4ROW
- ROW Charity Race Team
- National Learn to ROW Day
THE IMPACT OF ROW: 2015 SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

To create a vision for the future, we must occasionally look back at historic performance. ROW’s annual Impact Survey provides valuable insight into program satisfaction, member health and general member demographics. The survey tells us who’s rowing, where they’re coming from, how ROW has improved their physical and emotional state, and gives them an opportunity to tell us what’s working and what’s not.

**AVERAGE AGE WHEN DIAGNOSED**: 48

**AVERAGE AGE**: 57

**ROW MEMBERSHIP TENURE**:
- Members for more than one year: 65.71%
- Members for less than one year: 34.29%

**FREQUENCY OF EXERCISE**: On average, survivors who join ROW increase the number of times they exercise by 48%, or roughly 1.5 workouts per week.

- **Number of Workouts**
  - 5-7/week:
    - Before ROW: 20%
    - After ROW: 45.71%
  - 3-4/week:
    - Before ROW: 38.24%
    - After ROW: 44.12%
  - 0-2/week:
    - Before ROW: 40%
    - After ROW: 8.82%

**DURATION OF EXERCISE**: On average, survivors increased the duration of their workouts by 33.68%, increasing from an average of 15-30 minutes per workout to 30-45 minutes.

- **Duration of Workout**
  - 0-30 minutes:
    - Before ROW: 14.28%
    - After ROW: 6.06%
  - 30-45 minutes:
    - Before ROW: 28.13%
    - After ROW: 9.09%
  - 45+ minutes:
    - Before ROW: 42.85%
    - After ROW: 80%

**INTENSITY OF EXERCISE**: Based on a 10-point scale in which 10 is maximum intensity, ROW members increased the intensity of their exercise by 52.94%, moving from a mid-range of 5.44 to a moderate/high intensity of 8.32.

- **Intensity of Workout**
  - Level 0-3
    - Before ROW: 22.85%
    - After ROW: 0%
  - Level 4-7
    - Before ROW: 48.57%
    - After ROW: 25.71%
  - Level 8-10
    - Before ROW: 25.71%
    - After ROW: 71.42%

In conjunction with an increased number of workouts that also included greater duration and intensity, ROW members have reported “better balance, better flexibility, [and] increased endurance.” Not only does the ROW program help those who are currently sedentary begin a safe and effective workout routine, it helps those who were active before joining the team engage in more effective workouts.

But ROW focuses on the whole of every member—our program is not about exercise alone, which is why the Impact Survey also evaluates the effect of ROW membership on sleep habits, personal well-being and emotional stability.

- 91.18% of respondents credit ROW with feeling more supported and less alone
- 87.88% credit ROW with a positive change in their self-esteem
- 55.52% report feeling more self-sufficient after joining the team
- 45.45% report feeling more independent after joining the team
- 81.82% report feeling like part of a community as a result of their membership
MEET THE FACES OF ROW
MEET THE FACES OF ROW
CONVERSATIONS—GETTING TO KNOW THE PEOPLE OF ROW

Without question, ROW is a people-driven organization. Our leaders, coaches, athletes, board members, interns and volunteers are each vital in building our effectiveness and facilitating our continued success, both as an athletic team and a platform for awareness. Here, we are proud to introduce those whose time and expertise contribute daily to efficient operations, competitive performance and a collective sense of fulfillment.

ROW Board Members, Coaches and Leaders
- Fran Tuite (RMB Capital), Board Chair
- Thomas G. Opferman (Dentons US, LLP), Vice Chair
- Nell Shuttleworth (Rowfit Chicago), Secretary
- Dana Brink, Treasurer
- David Stelting (Christian Brothers & Ignatius Chicago Crew), Board Member
- Denise Monahan, MD (Stroger Hospital), Board Member
- Michele Willmott, Board Member
- Samantha Minc, MD (Rush University Medical Center), Board Member
- Sandra Kirmeyer (Partners In Loyalty Marketing), ROW Athlete/Board Member
- Sue Ann Glaser, ROW Co-Founder & Athlete, Board Member
- Ann Kinnealey, MD (Breast Oncologist), Advisory Board Member
- Charley Sullivan, Advisory Board Member
- Jenn Gibbons, Executive Director, Coach
- Devlin Murdock, Operations & Programs Coordinator, Coach
- Sheena Smith, Coach
- Barbara Franco, Coach
- John Albrecht, Coach
- Andrew Haried, Coach

ROW has been a ROW Coach since 2009, and in that time she has guided almost every new member through their initial rowing journey and introduced them to the water for the very first time.

How did you first hear about ROW and what was it that attracted you to the organization?
“...I heard about ROW through a mutual friend of mine and Jenn’s. I originally went to volunteer—carry boats and row as needed—but then I never stopped showing up! The camaraderie was certainly the number one attraction for me; I also like the empowering nature of the sport. Many women who come to ROW have never considered themselves ‘athletes’ before, and I like seeing the mental shift. It’s so powerful.”

As ROW’s longest tenured coach, how have you seen the program progress and develop over time?
“It’s been incredible to watch the program grow into a structured entity. We have our own equipment, and it works! We have a real coaching staff! We have squads, and a real learn-to-row program! We’ve come a long way from simply dropping new members into boats as they show up. Moving forward, I think we can do more to get underserved women out on the water, whether that means transportation or childcare or whatever else it takes to make that happen.”

What inspires you to stay committed to coaching for ROW?
“Coaching novices requires so much patience and love and time and commitment and awareness. I guess I have to say that I do it to see my squads feel like they’re flying when they row all 8 for the very first time. You can see the combined joy, fear, and surprise in each of their faces. It makes me tear up every single time.”

Why do you think the sport of rowing is a great way for patients and survivors to stay active?
“The teamwork. No matter how much external support you have, you have to go through cancer alone. Only you feel the treatment, the changes in your body, the side effects—rowing brings you to a place where you have to mentally and physically be with a boat full of other people. It’s therapeutic to feel something positive together after having been through something awful alone.”

Is there anything else that you think is important for a potential ROW supporter or member to know?
“I personally strive to treat every single woman who hops on the erg or walks through the gate at the rowing site as an athlete. All of our rowers come to the team with a different attitude in regards to health, weight, cardio fitness level, strength level, and ROW makes many of them see themselves as an ‘athlete’ for the first time in their lives. We’re very careful to not treat them like they’re sick or have been sick—they set their own limits (hopefully at a level higher than they thought possible) and all of the coaches then respect that. But ROW is about being an athlete first.

These women radiate inner poise, beauty, and strength that I feel myself absorb at every single practice. I seriously hope that I can even manage to give them back a part of what they have given me over the years.”
How did you discover ROW and what was it that attracted you to the organization?

“I first heard of ROW when our oldest son, Conor, was a freshman rowing for St. Ignatius and Jenn was one of his coaches. Conor and each of his three brothers both rowed for St. Ignatius and served as volunteers for ROW. Over the years, it became clear to me and my wife, Karen, that our sons were developing strong and meaningful relationships with the ‘ROW ladies.’ They became better people by virtue of their volunteer service with ROW, and I believe that is in part because ROW helped them see that human beings can be very resilient as they fight to overcome adversity such as breast cancer.”

How has ROW influenced your life?

“ROW has had such a terrific impact on our family. The ROW ladies routinely say how much our boys have helped them by teaching them this terrific sport, but my wife and I know that it’s our boys who have benefited from working with the members of the team. ROW has done so much for us—I was delighted to join the board so that, in some way, I can support ROW and assist it to help even more women.”

What inspires you to stay committed and continue to be a supporter of ROW?

“Because as ROW grows, we see more and more women whose recovery experience is significantly enhanced as a result of learning and competing in this phenomenal sport. ROW provides a cohesive and mutually supportive team environment for its members, and as I’ve continued to observe the sport, I’ve seen how it benefits the rowers by being both demanding and rewarding while requiring great teamwork and collaboration amongst those in the boat. Plus, the relationships that are formed between women on the team and between the high school volunteers are very powerful to observe year after year.”

What inspired your sons to get involved in ROW?

“To be honest, I think initially the attraction was to satisfy their school’s service hours in connection with a sport they were passionate about: rowing. But I don’t think it took any of our four boys very long to realize that their involvement with ROW was enriching many lives: those of the ROW team members, their own and even those of their Ignatius teammates.”
What were some of the biggest obstacles that you faced after receiving your diagnosis and starting treatment?

"I was worried that having breast cancer surgery and treatment would impinge on my life in a way that would make me feel not myself. I had to weigh all my options for surgery, and I agonized over the possible side effects of radiation and hormone therapy. I tried to gain some control over what was happening to me by managing the treatment timetable; so, even though I was diagnosed in December, with my surgeon’s approval, I was able to wait until February to have the lumpectomy, and then start radiation in March. I kind of control freaked my treatment as much as I could!"

Mary Ridley,
ROW Athlete

How did being diagnosed with breast cancer change you as a person? Has ROW helped shape the person you are today in any way? If so, how?

"Breast cancer was never on my radar. There were some really tough years for me, beginning with my dad’s passing in 2008; that effectively ended my mom’s desire to go on, and she passed in 2009. But the most devastating event in my life was my daughter Elisa’s passing, exactly one year from my dad’s death. She had been diagnosed with brain cancer in 2004 and had just made the 5-year mark in remission. Then last year, breast cancer became yet another huge life challenge for me to overcome. For the first time, I wanted to be able to ask others to help me. I have a wonderful partner, my husband-to-be after 20 years, and he has been a rock, but I needed something else to sustain me. I didn’t know it would be ROW. I didn’t know I would have to come up with even more courage, more stamina and strength, all channeled into something positive and affirming: a team. Now, I am a member on the most special team ever."

Christa Cannon,
ROW Athlete

How do you think your relationship with ROW will continue?

"Because of ROW, I am stronger now physically, mentally and spiritually than ever I was before cancer struck me. I am dedicated to my ROW teammates and am more strong, wise, trustful, and healthier than I am in any way? If so, how?

"Breast cancer I realize is still a physical threat, but much less so if I do not emotionally succumb to it. I know with ROW I have acquired the emotional strength not to succumb; for me, ROW has become the weapon that I can wield against breast cancer. I am able to lift my arm! And it’s made my husband very happy, because he likes to jitterbug and twirl me around, which he couldn’t do for two years, but now I can dance with my husband. And this year I committed to do all seven Susan G. Komen three-day walks; they’re 60 miles each, so a total of 420 miles. I could not have done that without the great encouragement and support from my teammates and coaches at ROW. I am such a better person because of ROW!"

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Utter shock and disbelief! Sometimes I am still in a state of shock, and it can seem surreal. During treatment, which included a lumpectomy and mastectomy, I was bailed for 13 months and really struggled with the emotional trauma that accompanies disfigurement and physical restrictions. What made it worse was that I could not talk about it to anyone—I was ashamed and some people actually shunned me."

In your own words, what does ROW offer breast cancer patients and survivors?

"As breast cancer survivors, we have been devastated, but we are alive. And now, we have an experience called ‘recovery on water’—three magic words that have such an impact. ROW can help us build a greater, broader foundation for an even stronger and better life. It gives us the opportunity to draw energy and inspiration from our victory over breast cancer and to share that experience with others. We can convert our shared survival instinct and experience into a consolidated, mutual effort, not merely to restore our lives, but to magnify our lives, and those lives we touch, many times over."

Describe the impact that ROW has had on your life.

"I am able to lift my arm! And it’s made my husband very happy, because he likes to jitterbug and twirl me around, which he couldn’t do for two years, but now I can dance with my husband. And this year I committed to do all seven Susan G. Komen three-day walks; they’re 60 miles each, so a total of 420 miles. I could not have done that without the great encouragement and support from my teammates and coaches at ROW. I am such a better person because of ROW!"

How has ROW improved your life physically?

"I am able to lift my arm! And it’s made my husband very happy, because he likes to jitterbug and twirl me around, which he couldn’t do for two years, but now I can dance with my husband. And this year I committed to do all seven Susan G. Komen three-day walks; they’re 60 miles each, so a total of 420 miles. I could not have done that without the great encouragement and support from my teammates and coaches at ROW. I am such a better person because of ROW!"

How do you think your relationship with ROW will continue?

"I am able to lift my arm! And it’s made my husband very happy, because he likes to jitterbug and twirl me around, which he couldn’t do for two years, but now I can dance with my husband. And this year I committed to do all seven Susan G. Komen three-day walks; they’re 60 miles each, so a total of 420 miles. I could not have done that without the great encouragement and support from my teammates and coaches at ROW. I am such a better person because of ROW!"
Words From Our Athletes

During our 2015 Impact Survey, we asked current members to tell us the best part of becoming a ROW member. Here’s what they had to say.

"Being a part of an organization that puts its team members first and really cares about each individual."

"Getting to know women from all walks of life who are also taking this particular stand for their ongoing health."

"The best part has been an increased sense of well being."

"I've always been pretty self-sufficient and independent, but ROW has strengthened these feelings. The best part is that I feel a part of a really cool community—HUGE!!!"

"I feel both independent and dependent on others, in a good way. I feel like, 'Wow, I can carry a 60 foot, heavy boat, get it in the water, row down a river and put everything away.' I definitely feel more self-sufficient!"

"Team rowing is a lot more than just going to a gym; it offers opportunities to train with friends, travel to regattas with friends, and share intense moments (frustrations and victories) with friends."

"The camaraderie."

"The best part of ROW's gift to me is teaching me how to row, to put pride and fear aside, to always have the back of my teammate, and to keep trying to send the puddles as far [past me] as possible."

"I'm grateful for the camaraderie of the women, who I know genuinely care for me and will be there when I need them."

"Doing something that I never thought I could do and meeting great women."

"It helps ease my fear and anxiety of having [breast cancer]."
Every ROW coach understands the essential need for a training strategy when preparing our teams for their next race. In the same way, our executive leaders, board members and advisors understand that it is only through strategic planning and targeted efforts that we will continue to thrive as a successful nonprofit organization. Fortunately, our diverse leadership team represents a myriad of experience in rowing, fitness, medicine, business and law, and, together, they have facilitated our every opportunity for growth—both our member base and organization size—contributed to ongoing fulfillment for members, guided successful fundraising efforts, and made ROW an indispensable community member.

This section explores all of ROW’s recent accomplishments and highlights how we are leveraging those accomplishments to further improve opportunities for our members and our community and also ensure our organization’s operational sustainability. Accomplishments and goals have been divided into three main areas—Organization, Program and Community—and demonstrate how we maintain a singular focus within a broad scope of efforts.
ORGANIZATION GOALS

Organizational Goals focus largely on club events and fundraising, to include facilitating relationships with ongoing and one-time donors—success in this area ensures efficient, ongoing operations and promotes strong ties between Chicago’s rowing clubs.

Accomplishment Highlights

In July, ROW received a $100,000 program capacity gift that helped fund the resources needed to move in to a new boathouse and grow as an organization.

Coordinated the move of our rowing site to allow construction of the boathouse; this affected more than 350 athletes and will continue to serve our programs until the boathouse opens in the fall of 2016.

Purchased a used boat named “The Founders” and a team tent, both of which allow us to better serve our growing team.

Employed four summer interns between May and August, giving them the opportunity to learn the business side of the sport and work with ROW members.

Through ongoing relationships and continued community involvement, ROW secured grant funding from:

- Bears Care, a 501(c)3 foundation managed by the Chicago Bears
- Elizabeth Morse Charitable Trust, a private foundation awarding grants to organizations that promote key values, including dignity, self-esteem and vigorous athletic activity
- Boeing Employees Community Fund
- Ernst & Young Foundation

The third annual Race4Row: The Chicago Boat Race—it was our most successful year for this event, a 6,000m dual race between two university crews—DePaul University and University of Illinois—in which all participants raise funds for their teams and ROW. The event raised $45K in 2015, with half of the proceeds going to ROW and the remainder going to the participating universities’ rowing programs (also active 501(c)3 nonprofits).

In partnership with the Chicago Park District, Bike4ROW raised 75 participants and raised $75K, all in support of the new ROW boathouse being built at 28th and Eleanor on the South Branch of the Chicago River. Participants cycled anywhere from 1-15 days and up to 1,000 miles not only to help fundraise, but also to celebrate the lives of breast cancer survivors.

Throughout 2015, 10 volunteer athletes helped raise $10K as members of the ROW Charity Race team—an evolving collective of runners, triathletes, rowers, cyclists and more, who take part in community races and athletic events to support our organization’s financial needs.

ongoing goals

Program goals focus largely on membership and the individual programs that are maintained to benefit members—success in this area ensures consistent participation and provides for program diversity.

Accomplishment Highlights

Surpassed 2015 membership goal of 50 members and are now serving 60 athletes.

Organized ROW into three squads, including a complete novice program that focuses on orienting women to rowing for the first time. Providing individual squads that aim for varying levels of intensity and competitiveness allows individual members to progress through the sport at their own pace and work with fellow athletes whose goals align with their own.

Attended seven regattas, including: the Chicago Indoor Rowing Championships, the Chicago Sprinits, the Milwaukee River Challenge, the Tal of the Fox, Head of the Rock, ROWWaterfest and Race4ROW.

Created a Programs Committee, comprised of representatives from the team, to continuously improve practices and program offerings; these representatives met monthly throughout 2015.

Hosted two coaching retreats for our staff and provided certification through the Cancer & Exercise Institute. ROW also hosted a rowing clinic during which new and aspiring coxswains worked to develop their skills.

Reached more than 500 survivors through hospital-hosted events.

Launched a sculling program with Alliance Rowing Club, allowing our members to further challenge themselves and try a different type of rowing (ROW utilizes sweep rowing). The program is offered one day a week at the Dammrich Rowing Center during the outdoor season.

Hosted special team events, including a 2015 indoor rowing race at ROW HQ in February and “Movie night Mondays,” a weekly event in which athletes can watch projected movies as they erg.

Launched “Girl’s Night” with the young women of the Chicago Training Center (CTC). These underserved youth, who range from 7th grade to 12th, join ROW members for a night of exercise, leadership training and mentorship, giving our athletes—women who have triumphed over so much in life—an opportunity to be role models to the young women of CTC. In addition, by encouraging younger women to be physically active, we’re helping them reduce the potential for breast cancer; girls and young women who exercise regularly between the ages of 12 and 35 have a substantially lower risk of breast cancer before menopause compared to those who are less active, new research shows. Girl’s Night is currently held once a month.

Ongoing Program Goals

With the boathouse on schedule for completion in October 2016, ROW will continue offering a weekly rowing class for members of the Bridgeport community. Participants will begin indoor erg practices at the Bridgeport Art Center, and then have the option of rowing on the water at the new boathouse site.

Aiming to increase membership to 70 active athletes.

Strategizing how to integrate meditation into our programs.

Working to provide childcare services during row practice and race events. Childcare, along with transportation, is one of the greatest obstacles our members face when trying to prioritize practice.

Will provide additional awareness and education classes to the community—while the ROW program is not for everyone, we still regard as part of our mission the education of others on how physical activity can improve their overall health and wellness.
COMMUNITY GOALS

Community Goals focus on the incredibly important relationship between ROW and the whole of the Chicago community, emphasizing community awareness events and community involvement with various ROW fundraisers.

Accomplishment Highlights

• National Learn to ROW Day offered 25 participants an opportunity to row in an eight-person shell and invited them to work with one of the city’s many rowing clubs.

• Learn to ROW with Imerman Angels—because part of our mission is to align with partner organizations and establish mutually supportive relationships, we want to help potential partners understand who we are and what we do. The dedicated Learn to Row event with Imerman Angels let us show this organization, focused on one-on-one cancer support, how we’re contributing to the same effort.

• Learn to ROW for Metastatic Survivors of Breast Cancer with Lincoln Park Boat Club—this one-day event reached survivors requiring a unique form of support after their cancer metastasized to other areas of their body.

• Built partnerships with Rehab Institute of Chicago (RIC), Northwestern, Stroger Hospital, the American Cancer Society and the Silver Lining Foundation.

• In 2014, ROW partnered with the University of Chicago Law School’s Abrams Environmental Law Clinic in an ongoing effort to improve water quality in Bubbly Creek. Because of the region’s aged and inadequate sewage system, heavy rains cause sewage and other wastes to be discharged into the waterway, but under the direction of supervising attorneys Mark Templeton and Sean Helle, UI of C. students have investigated the legal and technical issues at play, briefed ROW and urged the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) to implement additional water-quality protections. In addition, the clinic has worked with ROW members to prepare individual testimony for the IEPA regarding the unacceptable conditions on Bubbly Creek.

• To broaden awareness and extend opportunities for partnership, ROW hosted several local and national groups, including:
  o US Rowing—provided level two coaching certification at ROW HQ in June
  o Parks Advisory Council (PAC)—hosted two fall meetings that focused on Chicago’s South Branch parks
  o US Coast Guard—hosted a safety training event in April for Chicago area rowing coaches

Ongoing Community Goals

• in the coming years, ROW will focus heavily on hosting public programs at the Eleanor boathouse, which is being built as a shared home for multiple rowing clubs and community members interested in our sport. Initial emphasis will be on public programs for the Bridgeport community, with select events welcoming a broader Chicago audience. To begin engaging the community, ROW now offers two weekly indoor rowing classes year-round at Bridgeport Art Center; this free Tuesday night class is open to the public and presents an opportunity to learn about rowing, our mission and how to be active in the community.

• Aiming to build partnerships with Access Community Health, Esperanza Community Health Centers and Mercy Hospital.

STAYING AFLOAT: RAISING & IMPLEMENTING FUNDS

To ensure the organization has a reliable annual income for all operations and staff, ROW counts on a diverse revenue stream that includes private donors, grants, program fees and fundraisers. In 2015, a single anonymous donor gave ROW a gift of $100,000, which has provided much needed support as we move into development of the Eleanor Boathouse and ensures we are able to build the fleet and program in the first quarter of 2016.

Below is a snapshot of ROW’s basic operational expenses and key sources of revenue.

EXPENSE DATA
• Total Expenses: $204,325
  o Programs: $126,500
  o Operations: $60,356
  o Fundraising: $17,469

REVENUE DATA
• Total Revenue: $317,588
  o Individual Giving: $160,088
  o Private Grants: $25,500
  o Program Income: $30,000
  o Fundraising Events: $102,000
$0-$250

Carol Vonderhaar
Carolyn Brecklin
Carolyn Sheridan
Carolyn Watson
Catherine Klinger
Cecily Strong
Charlie Jacobson
Cheryl Kobelsky
Chris Malit
Chris Willett
Crista Cannon
Christian Talbot
Christine Maneri
Christine Scherb
Cline Senece
Claudine Kooistra
Constellation Brands US Operations
Colette Foley
Curtis Beaudet
Cyntia Wadhame
Dana Brink
Dari McCarthy
Daniel Paige
Danielle Groh
David Currie
David Emerman Foundation
Beth Sickinger
Beth Volle
Bethany Fenton
Betsy Hunt
Bill McNally
Bob Lange
Brian Rusling
Brad Snyder
Briant Spencer
Brian Oliveira
Brian Stapleton
Bruce Augustine
Bruce Rosensweig
Camille Tuale
Elizabeth Davis
Eric Haben
Eric Holubow
Erika Stevens
Ernestine Hill
Frank Tui
Galio Title Imports Inc.
Gary Cooper
George Macaron
Georgiana Gleason
Gilda Palmer
Glenda Anslow
Guillermina Lopez
Heather Cunningham
Heather Entelkin
Heather Kurtz
Heidi Goodhart
Helga Woodford
Henry Mcqourle
Jackie Aquilara
James McDaniel
Jamie Williams
Jamie Buffington
Jane Snider
Jason David
Jason Smith
Jeffrey Gordon
Jeffrey Huang
Jefrey Johnson
Jennifer Brunk
Jennifer McNich
Jennifer Morgan
Jerry Chen
Jim Murphy
Joan Birkow
Joan Esposito
Joan Neal
Joan Shaprio
Joe Linhoff
Johanna Havlock
John Chase
John Crowley
John Curnighe
John Neill Construction Co. Inc.
Joe Byrd
Joseph Dietrich
Joseph Gaynor
Josh Morgan
Judith Mombier
Julia Oshana
Julie Chenoff
Julie Presseller
Julie Winn
Kaisa Smith
Karen Kenda
Karyn Hernand
Kathleen Szymanski
Kathleen O’Malley
Kathy Leitner
Kathy Ruckman
Kathy Varga
Katie Kanda
Katie Rich
Katly Klaasm
Kellie Deans
Kelsay Devries
Kim Carlos
Kimberley Rosler
Knack Factory
Kristin Brink
Kristine Skurnier
Laura Park
Laura Senece
Leo Tsi
Leyshi Leutas
Lisa Dimarco
Lisa Oren
Liz Starosta
Lou Miller
Louise Scanlon
Luc Dowling
Michelle Holden
Margaret Menzius
Maria Macaron
Mary Knolls
Mark Bolton
Martin Talbot
Mary Ribble
Maryann Pechous
Matt Lemuje
Mattheew Yokar
Meg Cockrell
Melissa Pecoraro
Michael Miller
Michael Stevens
Michael Varga
Michela Sackhuilm
Michelle Buchner
Michelle Lester
Michelle Victoria
Mickey Brown
Mike Haberman
Mia Teleawi
Mimi Sullivan
Monica Joet
Montana Butch
Nadine Moore
Nancy Soloman
Nardi’s Pizza
Nate Urbanke
Nathan Tucker
Nicholas Kuscuclu
Nino Digiulio
Nolan Paggett
Paige Carney
Pamela Hausman
Patlimma Chaudhary
Patrick Dunn
Paul Forde
Paul Forde
Paula Meyer
Paula Patrick
Peter Foreman
Peter Schutz
R. Mcummier
Rachel Brenner
Raymond Coronado
Regina Filippin
Richard Bowers
Richard Roca
Robert Forbes
Robert Gottschalk
Robert McMurtry
Robert Skummer
Robin Dafton
Robin Jessen
Robyn Hartig
Rod Scharba
Ronald Bouse
Rory Gibbons
Sandra Gabel
Sandra Lang
Sandra Ryan
Sara Smith
Sarah Betadam
Sarah Bowers
Sarah Browning
Sarah Crum
Sarah Diamond
Sarah Walczewski
Sary Dekker
Scott Arnd
Scott Ray
Sharon O’Brien
Sheila Brown
Sherry Chodak
Shander Foundation
Stephanie Stanley
Steven Esposito
Stuart Herst
Susan Breitling
Susan Joench
Susan Kock
Susan McCarthy
Susan Noyes
Susan Raterz
Syed Bukhari
Ted Fire
Tenemce Conway
Theresa Longoria Hall
Theresa Tabot
Thomas Flint
Timothy Joyce
Timothy Meyer
Tina Cummings
Tina Komihth
Tom Henryen
Tony Creed

$251-$500

David Rainis
Deborah Thorne
Debra Mysicki
Diana Almazon
Eduardo Nino
Elizabeth Forbes
Elizabeth Starosta
Evan Bernett
Evan Selman
Eric Shunon
Gagar Selman
Jenish Busch
Jil O’Donovan

$501-$1,000

Fermin Carrasco
Jane Millson
Jenifer DeCosta
Jessica Friedrich

$1,001-$5,000

James Forbes
Karen Deihman
Michale Moore
Michele Wilmott
Northern Trust Charitable Giving Program at the Chicago Community Foundation

$50,000

Philip & Martha Dow

$100,000

Anonymous
Where do you go to recruit new members?
ROW recruits members throughout the City of Chicago and the Chicagoland area, with a large majority of our current member base residing in the suburbs, including Evanston, Oak Park, Wilmette and Downer’s Grove.

Is prior rowing experience required to join the team?
Absolutely not! Most of our current members had no experience with rowing before joining the team, plenty of them had never even heard of the sport. In fact, we can probably count on one hand the number of times a new member has come to us with prior rowing experience.

Do you plan to serve survivors of other cancer types?
The research behind exercise and breast cancer survivors shows a strong relationship between physical activity and reduced recurrence rates. While we would love to open ROW’s doors to all cancer survivors because we know exercise is great for everyone! we currently do not have the resources to take that leap.

How are you funded?
ROW is funded by grants, individual gifts, fundraising events and our board of directors. We work to keep our revenue stream diverse so we are never dependent on a single individual, group, event or grant funder; this helps ensure ROW’s sustainability. Every year, our board evaluates the budget—planned versus actual—and adapts the coming year’s goals and expectations based on past performance, anticipated funding cycles and program needs.

How many people are on your board and how long can they serve?
Our Board of Directors includes 12 board members, each of whom serves a three-year term. Our officers (board chair, vice chair, secretary and treasurer) serve one-year terms but can be re-elected for multiple consecutive terms.

Is your coaching staff paid?
Yes, our coaches are paid as independent contractors to run practices, but many of them go above and beyond that; they are extremely valuable to our organization and dedicated to our survivors and their success. Coaches receive a stipend because it is one way to show them how much we appreciate all they give to ROW (and we hope it occasionally fills their gas tanks to and from practices).

How many volunteers do you have annually?
More than 100 volunteers work with ROW on an annual basis. Some are high school students from St. Ignatius College Prep, others are interns from universities all over the country, and still others are simply community members who want to give back.

Do survivors pay to participate?
All ROW members are asked to contribute something that demonstrates their ownership as part of the team. Contributions may be $10/year or $100/month—whatever they can give. We take pride in knowing the survivors we serve come from diverse backgrounds; it makes for wonderful friendships and bonds with people who may have never met otherwise. Our board works hard to ensure that every survivor who wants to join the team can, and that financial burden is never the obstacle that keeps them from joining ROW.

Do you have any local or international partners?
We partner with several rowing teams and independent businesses in Chicago; doing so keeps our programs sustainable by providing additional practice and event spaces, assisting us with fundraising efforts, and generally making ROW more accessible to any patient or survivor of breast cancer.

When will the boathouse be completed?
October 2016! We broke ground in August 2015 and remain on-schedule for an October open. Updates will be posted regularly to our website and Facebook page.

What happens to practice in the winter when it’s too cold to row on the water?
Our headquarters site, located within the Bridgeport Art Center, houses 20 rowing machines—what we lovingly refer to as ‘ergs’—that become the focal point of our winter workouts. Erg workouts match the motion and intensity of rowing on water and help our athletes stay in shape for the regular season. In addition to the ergs, ROW partners with The Chicago Park District to give our team access to indoor rowing tanks, which perfectly mirror what it’s like to be in a shell on the water.

How do people enlist in the program?
People learn about the program through various avenues, but word-of-mouth from physicians or current team members is by far the most common means of recruitment. Other opportunities to learn about the program include community fundraisers and public events, where attendees are able to speak with current coaches and athletes. After attending three trial practices, survivors are invited to officially join the team.

What are your most measurable outcomes?
Every year, we send an impact survey to our current member athletes. This survey allows us to track frequency, duration and intensity of workouts before and after a member joins ROW, which is by far our most definitively measurable outcome. The same survey aims to gauge what kind of mental and emotional impact our program is having, though responses are naturally more subjective and not as easily quantifiable.

How sustainable is your operation?
ROW works to become more sustainable year after year because we want our program to be around for years to come. This means applying for new grants with funders who are willing to support us on an ongoing basis while building relationships with donors who understand and value our mission. Philanthropy is always changing, and ROW is keen to follow the trends that will keep our organization well funded and positioned to change lives.