

# HEALING HAPPENS HERE



PHOENIX SOCIETY  
FOR BURN SURVIVORS



Phoenix Society for Burn Survivors  
2024 Annual Report

# Thank You for Making Healing Possible

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As we reflect on 2024, we are inspired by the strength of the survivor community, the support of families and caregivers, and the generosity of donors, volunteers, and professionals who make the journey forward possible. **Each of you plays a vital role in creating a world where healing is possible**—and no one has to heal alone.

This past year, Phoenix Society for Burn Survivors continued to grow in powerful ways. We launched new initiatives like the Journey Forward Program that connects hundreds of survivors and caregivers with vital support early in their recovery. We expanded our digital library, welcomed new Phoenix SOAR (Survivors Offering Assistance in Recovery) hospitals, and trained a record number of peer supporters—all while championing the survivor voice in research and advocacy.

As we look to 2025 and beyond, **our commitment is stronger than ever**—to deepen our impact, widen our reach, and ensure every survivor and supporter finds connection, information and hope. With Phoenix World Burn Congress on the horizon and exciting new programs in the works, the year ahead promises to be transformational.

Together, we're not just imagining a brighter future—we are building it. **Every donation, every hour volunteered, and every story shared builds a stronger, more connected burn survivor community.** Thank you for supporting Phoenix Society, and thank you for making healing possible.

With gratitude,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeff Gallinat".

Jeff Gallinat  
*Board President  
Burn Survivor*



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Amy Acton".

Amy Acton  
*CEO  
Burn Survivor*

See our list of 2024 partners and donors by visiting: [phoenix-society.org/annual-report-24](https://phoenix-society.org/annual-report-24).



## Watch Now: **Stronger with Support**

On December 17, 2016, Mary's life was forever changed when a reaction to a prescribed medication left her with second and third-degree burns over 45% of her body. She was airlifted to the North Carolina Jaycee Burn Center, where she began a long and difficult recovery.

An invitation to an adult burn survivor retreat introduced her to Phoenix Society for Burn Survivors and our supportive community that understood her experience. Through our programs and resources, Mary found strength, connection, and healing.

"Because of you," Mary shares, "I was able to have a very nice transition back into the community and to be around those who understand my experience."

Thanks to supporters, volunteers, burn care teams, and donors, Mary's story is one of resilience and renewed hope.



*Mary's journey reminds us that healing happens together. Scan the QR code or [click here](#) to watch her inspiring message of hope and thanks.*

At-A-Glance

## Your Impact in 2024

Thanks to the continued generosity of donors like you, we brought hope and healing to thousands of survivors, caregivers, burn care professionals, and community allies in 2024.



**502**

### Journey Forward Participants

In 2024, we launched the Journey Forward Program, connecting survivors and caregivers with tailored support and resources at the very start of their recovery. Thanks to you, hundreds are beginning their healing journey with earlier, stronger access to lifelong support.

**2,166**

### Survivors & Caregivers Connected to Phoenix Society Staff for Personal Support



Every day, survivors and their loved ones turn to us for connection, guidance, and hope. Thanks to your generosity, more people are finding the support they need sooner and more easily on their healing journey.

**4,361**

### Support Sessions Held



Last year, your support made it possible to host thousands of virtual and in-person support groups and peer visits. These sessions continue to offer safe, welcoming spaces where survivors and caregivers can share, connect, and heal.



**1,699**

### Trained Peer Support Volunteers

Thanks to your support, we trained 108 new Phoenix SOAR Peer Supporters and 80 Coordinators in 2024. These dedicated volunteers offer understanding, hope, and connection—meeting survivors and caregivers with compassion when it matters most.

*In 2024, we proudly trained a record number of new Phoenix SOAR volunteers and reached our highest-annual total of peer support visits!*

**86**

### Phoenix SOAR Hospitals



Supporting survivors from the very start is key to long-term healing. Last year, we strengthened our Phoenix SOAR network and welcomed three new organizations, expanding access to peer support and resources during the critical early stages of recovery.

**438,712**

### Online Resources Accessed



Access to the right information at the right time can make all the difference. In 2024, we continued to grow our digital resource library—making it easier than ever for survivors, caregivers, and professionals to find trusted survivor informed support when they need it most.

*In 2024, we expanded our digital library with 66 new resources—including articles, podcasts, videos, and more!*

# Kim's Journey to Finding Belonging

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For nearly 40 years, Kim Desjarlais carried the weight of her burn experience in silence—unsure if her story mattered and unsure if she belonged. Today, she stands as a powerful voice in our community, showing us what's possible when survivors are met with connection, support, and understanding.

Kim's journey reminds us why early access to care and community through programs like Journey Forward is not just helpful; it's transformative. Because every survivor deserves to feel seen, supported, and empowered to own their story.

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*"Major burns should be considered a chronic condition with lifelong consequences—physical, emotional, and psychological. As someone who has lived nearly 40 years as a burn survivor, I can tell you: this experience shapes you in ways few can fully understand.*

*For many of those years, I tried to hide my scars. I struggled to accept them, to accept myself. I saw them as something to cover up, to minimize, to pretend away. I told myself it wasn't 'bad enough' to count. I didn't feel like I belonged in any survivor group, and I certainly didn't see myself as someone whose story mattered.*



*But I've learned that denying your pain doesn't erase it—it just buries it deeper.*

*It's only in recent years that I've come to embrace the beauty in my scars—the strength they represent, the stories they tell, and the connection they can create with others. I've stopped pretending. I'm no longer downplaying my experience or pretending it didn't shape me. Because it did. And still does.*

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*I'm deeply grateful for Phoenix Society for Burn Survivors. Their work—through information, support groups, shared stories, and unwavering encouragement—has been life-changing for so many, including me. **For the first time, I feel like I belong. I feel seen.** I've come to accept myself as a survivor, not just someone who 'got through' something.*

*I won't pretend I'm 100% okay. Healing isn't linear. But today, I'm embracing my story, honoring my journey, and finding beauty in the pain that left behind these scars."*

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## Finding Strength & Community Through Early Connection

In May 2024, Annie Lorenzini's life changed in an instant. Annie (*fifth from the left above*) had overcome a history of panic disorder and alcohol use and was in recovery—committed to a healthier, more grounded life. But one evening, after battling hot and cold flashes, she slipped into a bath and lost consciousness. Her husband later found her collapsed on the bathroom floor. Annie spent six weeks in the burn unit, endured kidney failure, and underwent eight skin graft surgeries.

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Like so many survivors, Annie faced a flood of challenges in early recovery: nightmares, a lack of routine, and isolation.

***"I didn't have other burn survivors to talk to. That made it really hard."***



That changed when Jill Sproul, Phoenix Society's Senior Director of Programs & Services, came to Annie's bedside and introduced her to the **Journey Forward Program**. Through it, Annie gained early access to Phoenix Society's Virtual Support Group and survivor resources—all designed to meet people exactly where they are in their healing process.

*(Left - Annie and Cindy Rutter)*

***"I've participated in the online support groups. They helped me see that I'm not alone."***

Annie's story illustrates why **early connection matters**. With timely support, survivors like Annie don't have to wait to find belonging, understanding, and the tools to move forward. Her advice to others in recovery is honest and real:

***"It gets better. And then it doesn't. And then it gets better again. There are setbacks. PTSD is real. Anxiety is real. And you need to seek help for all of it."***

Because of the Journey Forward Program, Annie didn't have to face it alone—and thanks to your support, many more survivors will find that same hope and healing.





## Advancing Research & Advocacy Through the Power of Community

In 2024, Phoenix Society for Burn Survivors continued to elevate the survivor voice in research and advocacy—ensuring the lived experiences of survivors shape the future of burn care, prevention, representation and recovery. Here are just a few of the powerful ways our community made an impact in 2024:

We proudly served on the steering committee for the **“Top Ten Research Priorities in Global Burns Care,”** an international effort to identify the most urgent needs for burn research. We also partnered on the development of the **LIBRE Go! app**, a new tool designed to help survivors track and improve their quality of life post-injury. Both of these initiatives are set to launch in 2025.

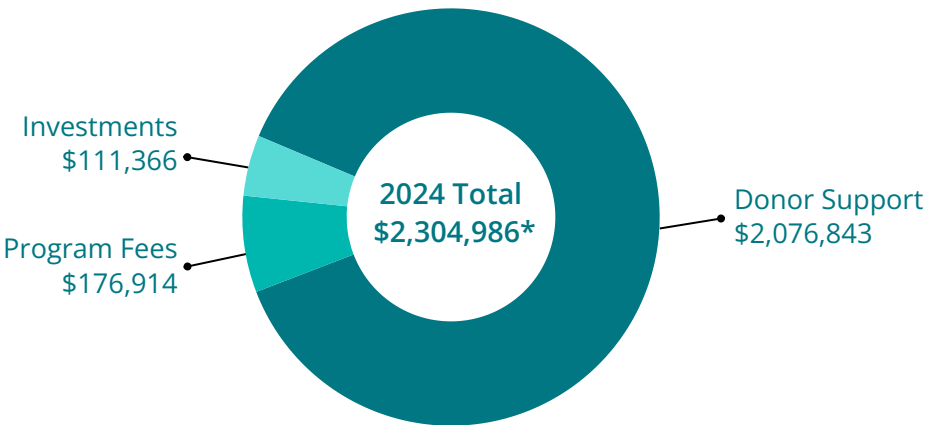
Phoenix Society also supported the launch of the **Burn Survivor Heat Tracker**, a tool providing real-time insights on heat-related risks while performing physical activity and estimating the chance of overheating. With the release of the **State of the Survivor Report**, we gave voice to the evolving challenges and opportunities facing our community. Additionally, Phoenix Society served as a steering committee member representing burn survivors in the global effort to launch **World Burns Week**, amplifying survivor voices on an international stage.

At the core of each of these efforts is **community engagement**. Survivor insight and participation are essential in shaping research, informing care, and driving advocacy that truly reflects the needs of those impacted by burn injury.

# Financial Report

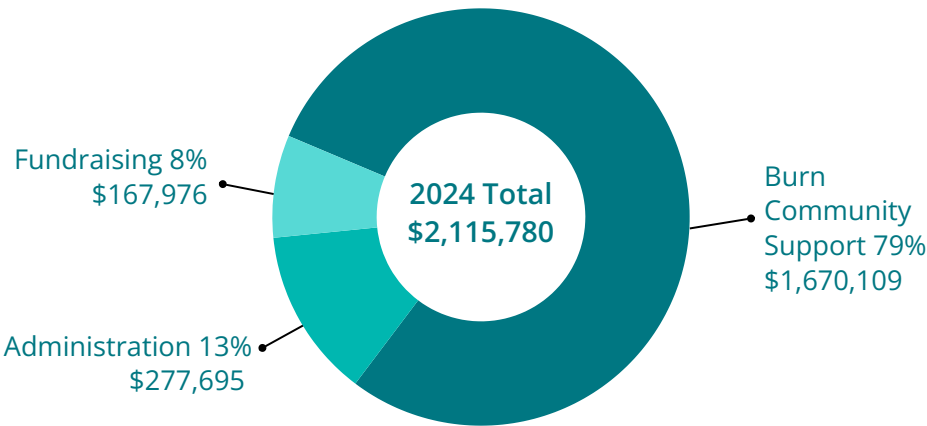
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## Revenue & Support



*\*Include loss on lease termination: \$(60,137)*

## Expenses



**December 31, 2024 Net Assets \$1,454,262**

# 2025: Together Toward Healing

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I'm energized by the momentum we've built and inspired by what lies ahead in 2025. As we reflect on the past year and look toward what's next, we remain focused on supporting survivors with connection, compassion, and resources that last a lifetime.

Throughout 2025, we're continuing to **expand the Journey Forward Program** into additional hospitals, strengthening that critical bridge from hospital to home. We've also just **launched a new library of Nursing Contact Hours**, offering continuing education opportunities for burn care professionals grounded in trauma-informed care and the lived experiences of survivors.

Our team is also focused on **deepening our engagement with our Phoenix SOAR partners**, supporting them in enhancing their peer support programs and increasing survivor reach. We're also working to **expand programming for Spanish-speaking survivors and families**, ensuring that language is never a barrier to community connection.

A major highlight of 2025 will be the much-anticipated **Phoenix World Burn Congress**. We're hard at work planning the event and are already visiting locations for Phoenix WBC 2027, ensuring our community has a space to gather, grow, and heal for years to come. Finally, we're excited to pilot **Community Circles**—new affinity-based groups designed to create intentional spaces for connection, identity, and shared experiences within our survivor community.

Each of these initiatives reflects our commitment to evolving with the needs of the community. Thank you for being part of this journey and for helping us build a future where no survivor heals alone!



With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jill Sproul MS, RN". The script is fluid and cursive.

Jill Sproul, MS, RN  
Senior Director of Programs & Services

# 2024 Major Partners & Supporters

*We are thankful for the generous support of our donors and partners who make our mission possible.*



**Bert W. Martin Foundation**



**The Fifth  
Commandment Fund**



**Oliver S. and Jennie R.  
Donaldson Charitable Trust**



**kerecis**



**Do Right Foundation**



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