SHLB
SCHOOLS, HEALTH & LIBRARIES
BROADBAND COALITION

2022
Annual Report

April 2023

A Word From Our Leadership

Dear SHLB Community:

We have never been more hopeful. Over the past two years, Congress has appropriated unprecedented funding for broadband deployment and adoption. Delivering on the promise to bring broadband to every nook and cranny of the country is daunting and invigorating. NTIA, the Treasury Department and state broadband offices are staffing up, and every single state and territory has asked to participate in the disbursement of funds.

At SHLB, we are enthusiastic about the many positive developments. Community anchor institutions are increasingly recognized as key leaders in solving the digital divide, by "anchoring" network builds and participating in digital literacy training programs at the local level. Anchor institutions are also exploring the benefits of extending wireless service to the surrounding community, using CBRS, mesh WiFi or TV white spaces technologies, as we explored in a SHLB-sponsored research report by Dr. Raul Katz last year.
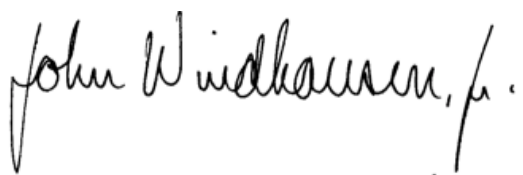
SHLB itself is growing to meet this broadband bonanza. While two SHLB staff members moved on to new adventures last year, SHLB has hired three new staff in the past year and plans to hire a fourth soon. Our membership continues to grow – now to 330 members – and attendance at our "AnchorNets" Conference in 2022 exceeded our expectations by about 25%.

Not everything is roses, however. The FCC has proposed changes to the E-rate competitive bidding process that could discourage schools and libraries from participating in the program, the National Broadband Map suffers from significant flaws (including treating most anchors as not broadband serviceable locations), the Emergency Connectivity Fund and Affordable Connectivity Program will run out of funding soon, pole attachment problems continue to impede broadband deployment, the Universal Service Fund is being challenged in court, and (as of this writing) we still do not have a fifth FCC Commissioner.

Nonetheless, the prospects for solving the digital divide are brighter than ever. We have the resources and the resolve to help these programs achieve their goals. SHLB is pleased to see that policy makers increasingly talk about the role of anchor institutions in expanding broadband connectivity for their communities. We hope you will collaborate with us to share lessons learned, promote ideas and experiences to sustain long-term networks beyond the initial build-out, and embrace the technology changes that can bring affordable broadband services to all.

The policy challenges and initiatives described above only hint at the full scope of SHLB's work. In the pages that follow, we share the highlights of our year in deeper detail. Whether you're a SHLB member, a donor, or part of our community, your patronage is what makes our work impactful. Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

John Windhausen Jr.
Executive Director
SHLB Coalition

Cindy Aden
Chairwoman of the Board of Directors (2023)
SHLB Coalition

WHO WE ARE

In the 21st Century, affordable, high-quality broadband access is a non-negotiable necessity. And yet, millions of people cannot use the internet due to a lack of infrastructure, unaffordable prices, and other barriers. That's where we come in.

The Schools, Health & Libraries Broadband (SHLB) Coalition is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) public interest organization founded in 2009. We believe that by supporting and leveraging the resources, expertise, and local knowledge of community anchor institutions, our nation can end the so-called digital divide once and for all. From our home base in Washington, D.C., we work closely with policymakers and fellow public interest groups to turn our vision of a connected America into a reality. Our hundreds of members include a wide range of anchor institutions and organizations who support our mission and help us develop practical and effective policy recommendations.

OUR MISSION

For every anchor institution in the country to have high-quality, affordable broadband that is open and accessible to the surrounding community.

Community Anchor Institution (n.):
A nonprofit community organization such as a school, library, hospital, health clinic, community center, higher education institution, public housing buuilding, house of worship etc. CAIs often need high-capacity broadband and facilitate greater use of broadband by vulnerable populations, including low-income residents, the unemployed, and the aged.

OUR STAFF

John Windhausen Jr.
Executive Director
Joined 2009

Kristen Corra
Policy Counsel
Joined 2022

Eric Fredell
Membership Director
Joined 2020

Saskya Cabral
Marketing and Public Relations Director
Joined 2023

Lauren Rachuba
Operations Manager
Joined 2023

2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Law Office of Rachelle Chong

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Officer, OCHIN

Erik Heinrich
Senior Director
CommScope

Karen Goff
Executive Secretary
West Virginia Library Commission

Our Membership

Strength in numbers, and diversity.

There is no "SHLB" without our Coalition of members: Hundreds of organizations that span across the U.S. Coming in every shape and size, our members represent a wide variety of sectors, from healthcare to education to public interest to communications service providers and beyond. They share one thing in common: **Support for the SHLB Coalition mission.**

This diversity of perspectives allows us to develop policy recommendations that are realistic, effective, and commercially-viable.
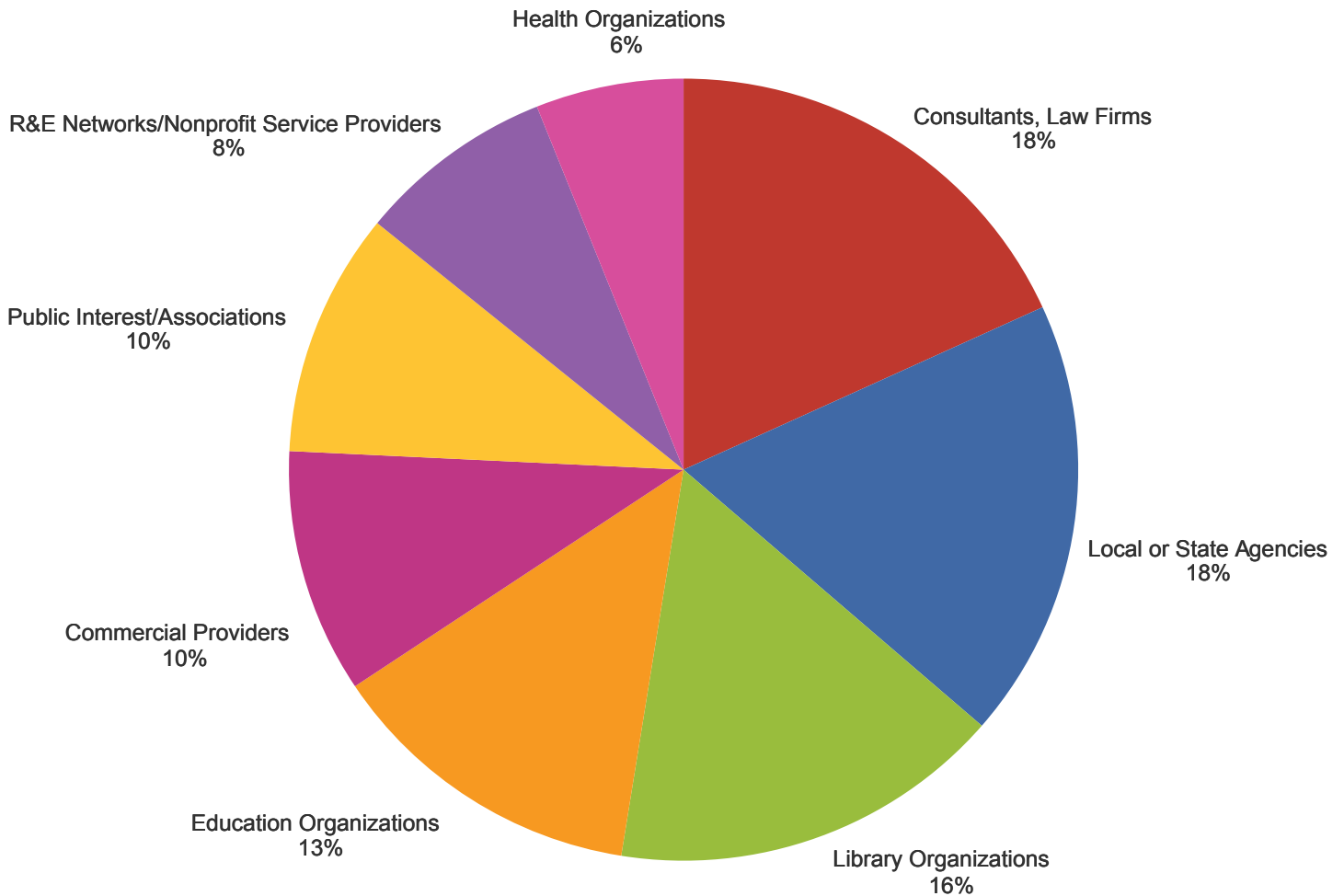
SHLB added 54 new Members in 2022

The 2022 Coalition is based in almost all US states, except North Dakota and Vermont.
Cheers to our new mebers!

Alliance for Community Media
Amazon
Aruba, an HP Enterprise Company
Capital Area District Libraries
Chiefs for Change
City of South Bend
CJ Speaks
CNMI Broadband
Common Sense Media
Community Tech NY (CTNY)
ConnectEd Consulting Services LLC
Council Bluffs Community School District
Department of Housing and Community Development (VA)
Digital Equity Matters LLC
East Cleveland Public Library
Educational Service Unit 10
Finley Engineering, Inc.
Google Fiber
Granite Communications
GWI
Harris County Office of Broadband (TX)
Hawaii Broadband & Digital Equity Office
IBSA, Inc.
INCOMPAS
Insure the Uninsured Project (ITUP)
JSI
Kansas Health-e Broadband
Los Angeles County Internal Services Division

Los Angeles County Library
Metropolitan New York Library Council (METRO)
Mid-Michigan Library League
National Collaborative for Digital Equity
Nebraska Library Commission
New York City Department of Education
New York Public Library
North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources
Northern Michigan University
Northwest Arctic Borough School District
Northwest Regional ESD
Ohio Public Library Information Network (OPLIN)
Oregon Department of Education
PEM Filings
Positron Access Solutions Corp
Pullman Public Schools
RHC Consulting
Rural LISC
Saint Paul Public Schools (SPSS)
Solutions4Change, LLC
Somerset County Library
South Carolina State Library
The Broadband Group
Trilogy NextGen
Val Verde Unified School District
Whatcom PUD
WiscNet

APPLY TO BECOME A MEMBER TODAY

OUR MEMBERSHIP

MEMBERSHIP BREAKDOWN

Health Organizations
6%

R&E Networks/Nonprofit Service Providers
8%

Consultants, Law Firms
18%

Public Interest/Associations
10%

Local or State Agencies
18%

Commercial Providers
10%

Library Organizations
16%

Education Organizations
13%

OVERHEARD FROM MEMBERS

"We thank SHLB'S support for anchor institutions, and recognize your efforts in eliminating digital inequity."

"I love that SHLB keeps us informed on several key topics while giving opportunities to provide input in areas related to my business and clients."

"We appreciate SHLB's creativity in steering the community ship in this time of boundless opportunities."

"A SHLB membership is extremely useful in navigating the many changes currently happening with funding and policies."

OUR POLICY GROUPS

Given the broad range of topics impacting community anchor institution broadband, SHLB members have the opportunity to participate in our seven monthly policy groups. In 2023, each group offers members a chance to grow their expertise and contribute to SHLB's advocacy on a deeper level.

E-Rate

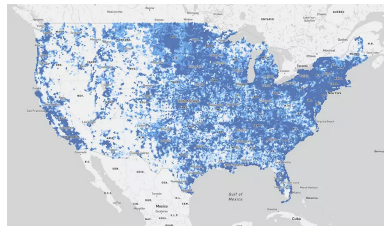
Congressional Legislation

Infrastructure

Rural Healthcare

Higher Education

Broadband Mapping

Wireless

We thank the 2022 Chairs of each policy group for volunteering to make these groups possible, as well as every member who joined the discussions.

Chip Byers, MOREnet
Shawn Chang, Wiley Rein LLP
Mark Colwell, Voqal
Aimee Edwards, Western Governors University
Stephanie Jane Edwards, North Carolina Research and Education Network
Ashley Hitt, Connected Nation
Roy Hoover, Hoover Technology Consulting
Rob Jenkins, Colorado Hospital Association

MacGregor Obergfell, Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU)
Marc Paul, Charter Communications
Tom Reid, Southern Ohio Health Care Network
Beverly Sutherland, EdTechnologyFunds
Anne Turner, ENA
Ovidiu Viorica, New Mexico Public School Facilities Authority
Joan Wodiska, Pioneer Management Consulting

LEARN MORE ABOUT SHLB'S POLICY GROUPS HERE

AnchorNets 2022

The SHLB Coalition wanted to go big for our 10th Annual Conference, and we did. With nearly 400 attendees from across the country, this year's Conference attracted speakers and participants from dozens of anchor institutions and all levels of government.

Thank you to everyone who helped make the event a success.

Cathy Cruzan

Mignon Clyburn & Gigi Sohn

SHLB Board & Staff

Keynote with Crosby Kemper
& John Windhausen

FCC Staff Priscilla Argeris and Justin Faulb
with Deb Kriete and John Windhausen

Key Topics

- E-rate
- Broadband Mapping
- Anchor-Enabled Wireless Networks
- Rural Health Care
- Pole Attachments
- R&E Networks and Middle Mile

- Higher Education
- Digital Equity
- Cybersecurity
- Federal Broadband Funding Programs
- Universal Service Fund Reform

...As Told By The attendees

"The SHLB Conference was excellent! It assembled a terrific lineup of government officials and key industry personnel. Instructive even for long time industry vets."

"Great content, networking, and conversations. I learned so much."

"The diversity! So many incredible professionals representing so many sectors. I wish I could've sat in on every single session."

9 out of 10 attendees said they were highly likely to tell a friend or colleague about AnchorNets.

OUR ADVOCACY

The "To and Through" Model

The SHLB Coalition works on a variety of different policy areas impacting broadband for anchors and the communities they serve, often with the goal of promoting our core model: High-quality broadband should be deployed TO and THROUGH anchor instiutions to reach surrounding residents. Why anchors? These institutions can be "jumping off" points to extend additional broadband deployment to surrounding residents who might not otherwise be able to afford or access it.

As trusted local leaders, community anchor institutions are well positioned to close the digital divide for the millions who cannot connect at home, whether by facilitating access to internet service, devices, or digital literacy training.

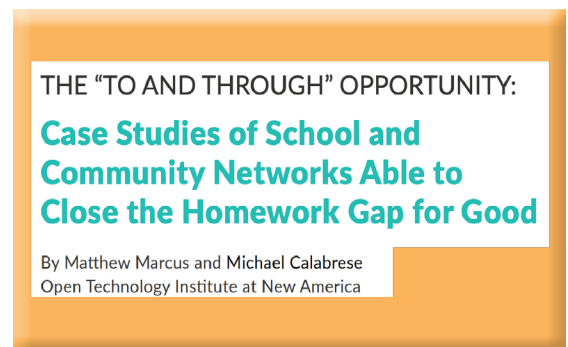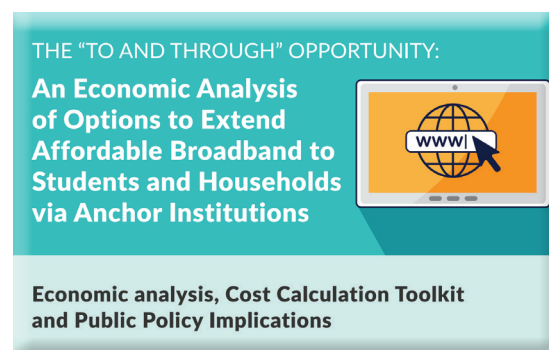## Anchor Connected Communities Discussion

In July 2022, SHLB spoke with John Stile, chief technology officer, Council Bluffs Community School District, to learn about the genesis and deployment of this network, including design considerations, technologies, costs, and partnerships.

Video Recording

Economic analysis, Cost Calculation Toolkit

In 2022, SHLB and the Open Technology Institute worked together to develop a study that comprises two parts: an economic study by Dr. Raul Katz of Telecom Advisory Services and a series of case studies examining communities around the country that exemplify the To-and-Through approach. Click below to learn more.

THE "TO AND THROUGH" OPPORTUNITY:

An Economic Analysis of Options to Extend Affordable Broadband to Students and Households via Anchor Institutions

Economic analysis, Cost Calculation Toolkit and Public Policy Implications

THE "TO AND THROUGH" OPPORTUNITY:

Case Studies of School and Community Networks Able to Close the Homework Gap for Good

By Matthew Marcus and Michael Calabrese
Open Technology Institute at New America

OUR ADVOCACY

SHLB focused its advocacy in 2022 on implementing the wide variety of federal broadband funding programs created by Congress over the last two years. In so doing, we also expanded our advocacy to engage more state broadband officials than ever before. Here are some of the critical meetings and messages we delivered in 2022:

SECURING SCHOOL & LIBRARY NETWORKS

In 2021, SHLB joined several organizations in petitioning the FCC to make cybersecurity solutions eligible for E-rate support. We stepped up our advocacy on this issue in 2022 after several schools and libraries suffered devastating ransomware attacks. At the end of the year, we succeeded in convincing the FCC to open the door to take public comment on our petition.

HELPING RURAL HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

SHLB continued to work closely with the FCC, USAC and our members to foster improvements to the FCC's Rural Health Care program. As we requested, the FCC opened up a new rulemaking proceeding and SHLB filed several comments. We also hosted several FCC and USAC staff members in a comprehensive RHC Workshop at our October AnchorNets conference.

ECF FUNDING

SHLB convinced the FCC to open a third filing window for ECF funding in the spring of 2022, and the FCC granted SHLB's request to extend the funding deadline to June 30, 2023 so that applicants could use the full amount of their awards to bring broadband access to students and library patrons.

POLE PROBLEMS

SHLB filed comments and continued to ask the FCC to adopt reasonable and equitable guidelines governing pole replacements, but the FCC has not yet acted. Fortunately, NTIA adopted our suggestion that states should develop working groups to expedite resolution of pole attachment problems.

INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT AND JOBS ACT

In November 2021, President Biden signed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) into law, making an historic $65 billion in funding available for broadband access. This one Act provided funding for broadband deployment, digital equity, Middle Mile and Tribal broadband, all of which will benefit anchor institutions. SHLB had several meetings with NTIA staff to ensure that anchors have an opportunity to obtain funding for broadband upgrades and for digital literacy work.

Our Advocacy

E-rate Competitive Bidding Portal

Unfortunately, the FCC released a proposal to centralize the E-rate program's competitive bidding process into a federal portal. This change could unnecessarily undermine local decision-making and place additional burdens on E-rate applicants. SHLB strongly opposed this idea in several filings and meetings. As of this writing, SHLB has succeeded in keeping this proposal from seeing the light of day, but we remain watchful.

Protecting USF

A libertarian group called Citizen's Research filed three lawsuits challenging the constitutionality of the Universal Service funding regime, which is critical for anchor institutions. SHLB filed intervenor briefs in each of these courts in support of the FCC and to protect the USF. Decisions are expected in 2023, and SHLB plans to respond to preserve the flow of funding for the E-rate and RHC programs, as well as for the entire USF.

Creating A Sustainable USF

In 2021, SHLB joined INCOMPAS and NTCA - The Rural Broadband Association in issuing an economic study to support broadening the base of USF revenues to include broadband internet access service. In August of 2022, however, the FCC issued a Report to Congress on USF reform that did not recommend moving forward with our proposal. We remain concerned about the stability of the USF funding mechanism and will continue to advocate for this reform.

Broadband Mapping

The FCC released a pilot version of the National Broadband Map in October 2022 that, unfortunately, effectively excludes anchor institutions. As a result, broadband providers are not obligated to provide information about broadband availability to these locations, and anchors may not receive the broadband upgrades they deserve. SHLB met with the FCC Broadband Data Task Force several times and initiated a broad sign-on letter to support anchors, but the FCC is locked in on its current approach. SHLB is turning to state broadband officials to encourage them to include anchors on their state maps.

Coalition Building

SHLB continued to work closely with our allies on several proceedings. We continued our leadership of the USForward Coalition (to support long-term funding for the Universal Service Fund), we continued to participate in the Airwaves for Equity Coalition (to use auction revenues to promote digital equity) and the Public Interest Spectrum Coalition (to promote access to licensed, shared and unlicensed spectrum).

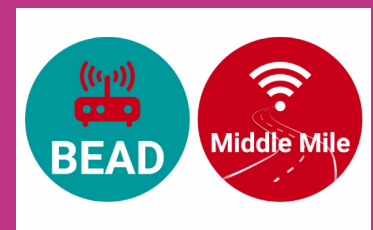**Click Here to View our 2023 policy roadmap**

Educating our Community

In addition to public interest advocacy, the SHLB Coalition strives to be a reliable information source for all things related to anchor institution broadband. We keep our members up to speed via biweekly calls and an exclusive listerve. In 2022, we held a total of seven webinars to explore every broadband policy issue ranging from pole attachments to network security to the Universal Service Fund mechanism and beyond. On average, over 200 attendees tuned in for each discussion. Here are a few highlights:

Webinar Highlights

BEAD and Middle Mile - Post-NOFO Updates for Anchor Institutions

This webinar explored questions like: Will states include anchor institutions in their broadband plans? What do we make of the vague definitions of "remote," "unserved," and "underserved"? Will "Build America, Buy America" requirements delay these critical infrastructure projects? Will Middle Mile applications to NTIA have to reference the broadband maps of unserved/underserved areas? And we reviewed the NOFOs as they relate to schools, libraries, and other anchor institutions.
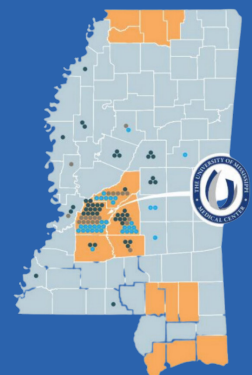
Applying for E-rate is Hard...Could it Get Harder?

This webinar explored why the FCC is pursuing a nationalized competitive bidding process, and what alternative measures would be more cost-effective. SHLB and many E-rate applicants have come out staunchly against this proposal, fearing that it would be so burdensome that some schools and libraries won't apply for E-rate at all. While commenters have suggested that the FCC should look at improving its data analytics, a group of telephone companies have signaled support for the competitive bidding proposal. We also heard from a representative of the telephone companies about their perspective on the issue.

Telehealth is Changing - Can Broadband Networks Keep Up?

This webinar explored how broadband programs can better support the new realities of the telehealth marketplace. Since COVID-19, the healthcare marketplace changed: Healthcare providers are shifting their operations to accommodate high telehealth demand, and navigating pay discrepancies between in-person and virtual visits, for starters. And of course, the increase in demand means that healthcare institutions need additional bandwidth. Programs like the Connected Care Pilot, the COVID-19 Telehealth Program, and the Rural Health Care Program are supposed to address this need, but are they doing so effectively?

Click Here to View more SHLB webinars

THANK YOU!

SHLB can't reach a lofty goal like "internet for all" without some incredible supporters (like those of you who have read all the way to the final pages of this report!). While we lack the space to thank everyone who helped us pursue our mission in 2022, please know that we appreciate and value every SHLB member, every sponsor, and every donor.

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Champion Sponsors

PLATINUM DONORS

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Tom & Heather Chiller

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Broadband Legal Strategies
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Fatbeam
Maura Colleton Corbett
NTCA - The Rural Broadband Association

Martin Skiby
Russel Neal
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JJ McGrath
Kellogg & Sovereign
Rodabough Education Group
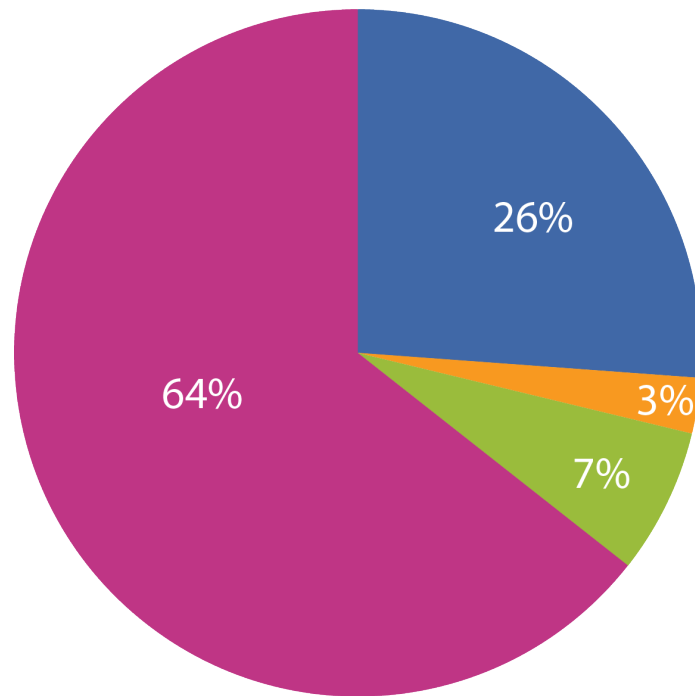Janice Meyers Educational Consulting
Jim Kohlenberger

Michael Flood
Larry Irving
Beverly Sutherland
Paula Boyd
William England
Cynthia Schultz

Our Financials

Behind every effective nonprofit, there is funding of some sort. The SHLB Coalition receives financial support primarily from membership dues and events, as well as donors and sponsors. *N.B. While SHLB does accept funding from commercial organizations, we function with independence and always act in the best interest of our mission.*
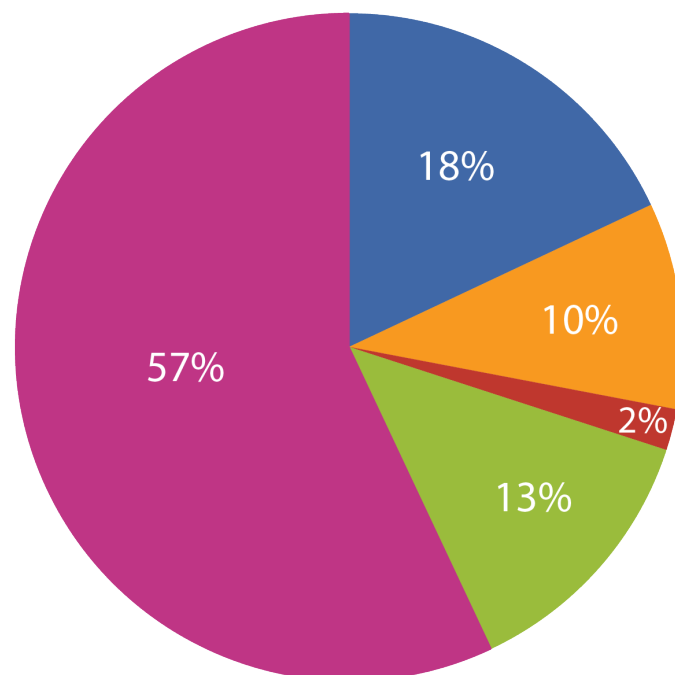
2022 Revenue

- Membership
  $729,619
- Events
  $299,924
- Other
  $77,262
- Advocacy
  $30,000

26%
3%
7%
64%

2022 Expenses

- Events
  $196,661
- Staff
  $613,458
- Other
  $141,950
- Advocacy
  $105,148
- Membership
  $18,412

18%
10%
2%
13%
57%

WE APPRECIATE YOU!

We are thankful for broadband for bringing us together, and can't wait for an even better 2023!

Thanks for reading. If you appreciate SHLB's work, let us know with a donation!

DONATE NOW!