

REPORT OF THE GENERAL SYNOD COUNCIL ON ADVANCEMENT

The Advancement team's purpose and vision statement reads:

Our purpose is to develop relationships that make the mission of the RCA known, inspiring financial partnerships that make the ministry of the RCA possible.

Imagine... Strong relationships with prospects, donors, and churches; where we know the answer is "yes" before we ask.

Imagine... Finances are no longer an obstacle for ministry.

Imagine... Every RCA staff member inspiring financial partnerships.

This statement defines our goals on behalf of the RCA.

The Advancement team's responsibility is to encourage churches and individuals to generously give of the financial resources God has entrusted to them to support the ministry and witness of the Reformed Church in America. We coordinate all GSC fundraising efforts, including, but not limited to, support for RCA Global Mission, Transformed & Transforming, and the Church Growth Fund. We strive to develop and strengthen relationships with donors, potential donors, church leaders, and others to inspire financial partnerships, but also to promote the mission and vision of the RCA overall.

Advancement team members raise financial support through outright gifts, bequests, life income plans, and grants. Gifts may be designated for a specific ministry area or left undesignated for the greatest need. Undesignated gifts are typically assigned to the RCA Ministry Fund, a fund that supports the operational budget and the work of Transformed & Transforming. The Advancement team also assists with raising resources through Church Growth Fund savings certificates, Partnership-in-Mission (PIM) shares, estate planning, and special project funding or capital campaigns. Gifts to the RCA enable and empower ministry throughout the church, transforming lives both at home and around the world.

The mission and ministry of the RCA is largely possible because of the generosity of God's people. In fiscal year 2019, 49 percent of the RCA's total income came from voluntary support. Only 33 percent was derived from assessments. Other income, such as investment earnings and fees paid for services rendered, account for the remaining 18 percent of the RCA's income in 2019.

The funding structure of the RCA relies heavily on gifts received from individual donors and from churches that give above and beyond assessments. And we are truly grateful for those who have chosen to invest in the ministry of the RCA. A copy of the 2019 Ministry Impact Report is available on the RCA website (www.rca.org/give).

Admittedly, during the past year, it has been particularly challenging to raise the funds necessary to do the work of the GSC. Gifts to support both Transformed & Transforming and Global Mission have been affected by churches and individual donors who are withholding giving in light of current General Synod conversations. It should be noted that even while the RCA as a denomination engages in difficult conversations about its future, mission and ministry are continuing to happen across the church and around the world. There is tremendous momentum in Church Multiplication, Global Mission, Next Generation Engagement,

Discipleship, and Disability Concerns, to name a few areas. God is at work both in and through the RCA. Withholding gifts only stands to slow the positive momentum and negatively affect the proclamation of the gospel in word and deed.

If you, or your church, are withholding resources because of a concern for the future of the Reformed Church in America, you are respectfully asked to reconsider your position. Please join with others across our denomination who are investing in the life-changing ministry the RCA has been called to. People, churches, and communities are being changed because of the work of this denomination and your church. Sharing God's resources will allow ministry opportunities to continue growing and prospering.

The Advancement team represents the GSC throughout the RCA, but individual staff members work primarily in these regions:

Alex DeWaal (adewaal@rca.org): California, Canada, Colorado, Idaho, Michigan, Nebraska, Ohio, Oklahoma, and Washington

Larryl Humme (lhumme@rca.org): Arizona, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, and Wisconsin

The RCA continues to partner with Barnabas Foundation for resources around estate planning, planned giving, and planned gift resource management. The easiest gift you can make is a gift through your estate plan. Consider tithing your estate to the ongoing work of the RCA. For information about how you can include the RCA in your estate plans, or how you can derive lifetime income from a planned gift that will benefit you during life and benefit the RCA after death, please contact Larryl Humme at lhumme@rca.org.

The mission and ministry of the RCA can only happen with the generous support of people throughout the church. As was noted previously, only 33 percent of the RCA's work is resourced through assessments. Please consider including a gift to the RCA in your regular giving. To give an outright gift in support of the RCA's ministry and mission, please visit the RCA website at www.rca.org/give, or contact an Advancement team member directly.