



2023 ANNUAL REPORT



“The GRIP program and those who participate in it show us that healing and respect for everyone can be found in the very places we’ve turned away from.”

– Jack Kornfield, American Buddhist teacher

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



It is hard not to feel despair from the suffering and violence in the world. Yet transformation is possible. Many of you have been working with us for years to bring opportunities for healing to currently and formerly incarcerated people, their families, and survivors of violence. Thank you.

***Hatred does not cease by hatred.
By non-harm alone will it cease.
This is the eternal law.***

– The Dhammapada

This perspective is at the foundation of the intensive Guiding Rage Into Power curriculum. It requires deep, vulnerable, and long-term work by every GRIP student to heal their internal wounds, navigate the circumstances and suffering of the world skillfully, be accountable for their actions, and proactively contribute to authentic, non-harming relationships. **GRIP students and facilitators show us the way with unrelenting commitment to accountability, compassion and forgiveness.**

***This is the path of the Peacemaker,
and it is a possibility for all of us.***

GRIP graduates not only transform themselves but also contribute to transforming the prison institutions and communities to which they return. They become facilitators and leaders of GRIP and other programs inside the prisons, mentor youth, and do outreach to unhoused folks in communities across California. They share with their children and spouses what they've learned about responding skillfully rather than blindly reacting to painful emotions and difficult circumstances.

They become Peacemakers.

More than 100 GRIP graduates earned their freedom in 2023, and came home to their families. We expanded to two new prisons, including the first women's prison. We now have 9 GRIP graduates on staff, and began hosting a monthly support call with survivors who also benefit from the healing community of GRIP.

We could not have done any of this without you. We hope you are heartened and take pride in this report. Thank you for your support and generosity in promoting healing and restorative justice with GRIP.

**With love,
Kim Grose Moore
Executive Director**

OUR MISSION

The GRIP Training Institute is a community-based nonprofit serving incarcerated people in California. Our mission is to create the personal and systemic change to turn violence and suffering into opportunities for learning and healing.

GRIP stands for Guiding Rage into Power™, the flagship program of our organization. The title of our curriculum coursebook is *Leaving Prison Before You Get Out*. We believe that if one of us is in prison, to that extent we are all incarcerated. The same holds true, for if one of us is victimized, to that extent we are all victimized. Most incarcerated people have also experienced extraordinary abuse, violence, and trauma in their own early lives.

The year-long program helps participants to comprehend the origins of their violence and develop the skills to track and manage strong impulses before they are acted out in destructive ways. GRIP Training Institute also offers an introductory self-discovery course called A Breath of Freedom, and after-care support for GRIP graduates coming home.

A GRIP STUDENT LEARNS TO

1

Stop their violence & do no harm

2

Cultivate mindfulness

3

Develop emotional intelligence

4

Understand victim/survivor impact

Since 2012

1,512 GRIP graduates

GRIP graduates released from prison 750

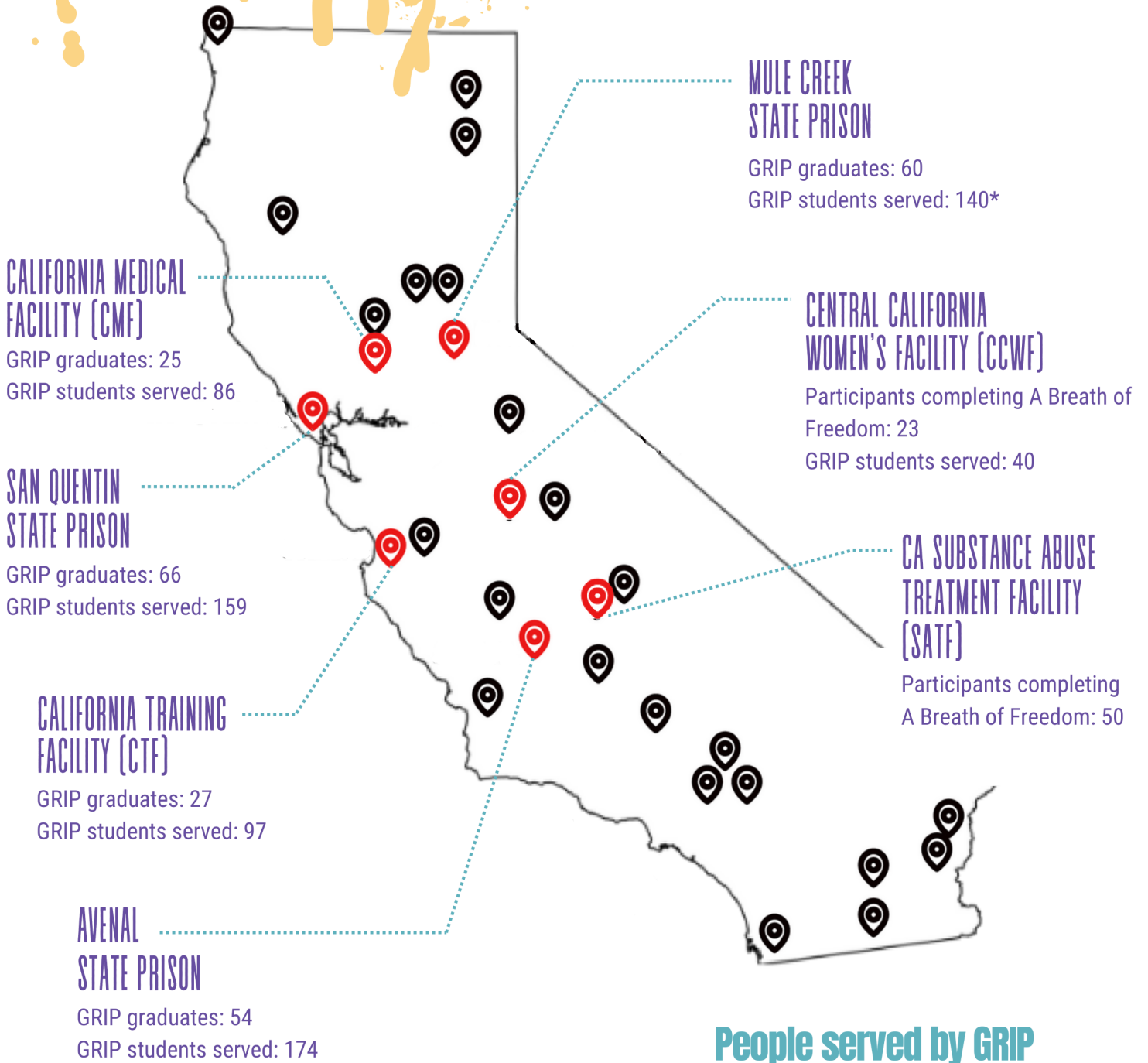




“Here were inmates that felt safe enough to shed tears as they signed their pledges to be Peacemakers. Here were men who had an opportunity to be free inside.”

– Sheri C., mother of GRIP graduate

2023 IMPACT



People served by GRIP
or A Breath of Freedom

769

*GRIP students served includes 2023 graduates and those who are expected to graduate in 2024



HIGHLIGHTS



First GRIP graduation at California Medical Facility (CMF)



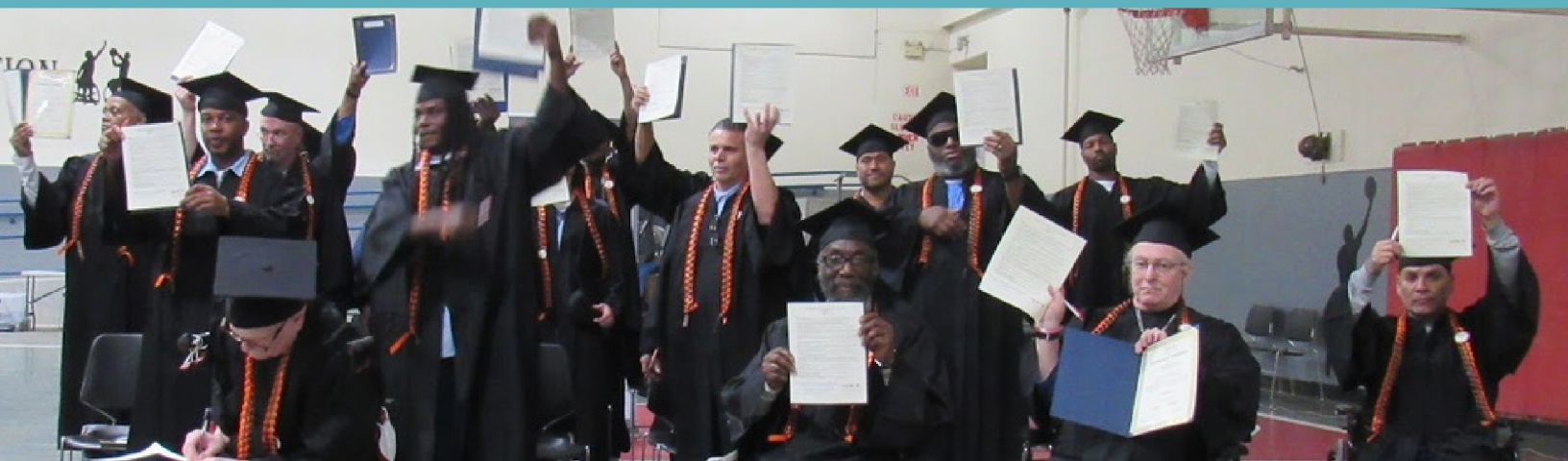
First train-the-trainer, peer-led model implemented at a prison, Substance Abuse Treatment Facility (SATF)



First GRIP tribe launched at a women's prison, Central California Women's Facility (CCWF)



Spanish language GRIP program re-launched at Avenal after COVID





COMMUNITY Outreach

Healing is an ongoing journey, and we are committed to supporting GRIP alumni and survivors of violence through outreach and connection.

GRIP hosted impactful gatherings where survivors of violence and GRIP alumni recently released from prison connected with each other. These events offered mutual support and extended ongoing healing. Alumni and survivors felt deeply supported by the community, engaging in mindfulness-focused activities that promoted self-care and reflection.

We continued the monthly Circle of Love virtual meetings for GRIP graduates who are no longer incarcerated. We also established similar virtual support circles for survivors. These sessions foster ongoing engagement and connection with each other.

110

Graduates in alumni network

20

Survivors in mutual support network

15

Healing dialogues held in 5 prisons

6

Alumni & survivor community gatherings

WOMEN'S Initiative



In 2023, GRIP reached incarcerated women at the Central California Women's Facility (CCWF), recognizing the lack of comprehensive healing programs available to them.

Despite participating in various programs, women expressed a hunger for deeper work and were particularly drawn to GRIP's intensive trauma-healing approach.

The Women's Initiative witnessed significant milestones, with 22 women completing A Breath of Freedom 4-month introductory program, and 37 women are now completing the GRIP curriculum.

“Rehabilitative programs like GRIP are very important for all of us. There’s no way you’re coming to prison because nothing is wrong. For the ones who are willing, it’s therapy. It’s healing.”

– Carmona, GRIP student at CCWF

Sessions highlighted the unique experiences of women, particularly in discussions about family and the impact of incarceration on their children.

The Inmate Advisory Council at CCWF who completed A Breath of Freedom played a pivotal role in advocating for the expansion of GRIP. Notably, the introduction of peer-facilitation fostered a sense of shared leadership, ensuring that each voice was heard and valued.

Completed A Breath of Freedom **22**

Currently in GRIP program

37

FACILITATOR Training

The facilitator training program equips individuals with the tools and skills necessary to guide incarcerated individuals through the transformative GRIP curriculum.

Open to both GRIP graduates and those who have not been incarcerated, the program takes trainee facilitators through a rigorous vetting process and comprehensive training.

The program focuses on emotional literacy and accountability, fostering empathy and compassion, effective communication, and the basics of restorative justice. Trainees learn to navigate the complexities of group dynamics, trauma, and personal growth. Hands-on experience within a facilitation team allows trainees to gain practical experience with delivering the GRIP program.

In 2023, the program underwent significant development. The structured training process involves the demonstration of essential skills and knowledge before certification. Lead facilitators provide coaching and mentoring inside prison for GRIP graduates selected to train as inside facilitators, so they can become certified.



On the outside, trainee facilitators are now all paid roles, marking a major shift from being volunteers. We also selected the first training cohort of outside facilitators made up entirely of GRIP graduates. These six trainees will go back inside prisons in 2024 to deliver the program.

ADVOCACY



GRIP works to create a transformed criminal justice system and healthier communities throughout California. support legislation that invests in community-led rehabilitation programming for incarcerated people and humanistic approaches to repairing harm and promoting healing and wellbeing.


We approach this work with an understanding that communities of color have been disproportionately impacted by harm, crime, and the criminal legal system. GRIP determines which legislative initiative to support based on whether it helps to end systemic violence and to promote healing, particularly for incarcerated people.

In 2023, GRIP supported eleven bills in the California legislature. Four were successful, including ones that:

- Streamline gate clearance for community-based program providers
- Reduce commissary costs
- Enhance victim notification about restorative justice
- Emphasize rehabilitation in prison

For the first time, GRIP co-sponsored a bill that is now law. The Providing Access to Healing (PATH) Act, championed by Assemblymember Wendy Carrillo, was also co-sponsored by the Transformative in-Prison Workgroup (TPW) and Initiate Justice. The new law streamlines security clearances and ensures equitable access to vital rehabilitation programs. By dismantling barriers for program providers to obtain necessary security clearance to deliver programs inside prisons, the law is already transforming the landscape of rehabilitation access in California.

In 2023, we also offered opportunities for public officials to learn firsthand about restorative justice and the impact of prison rehabilitation programs. For example, in November, 20 government officials visited Mule Creek State Prison to meet with GRIP graduates and survivors and experience the power of healing dialogues.



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OUR 10TH anniversary

In 2023 we marked a significant milestone, celebrating a decade of providing healing and transformation programming within prisons. The "Coming Home and Celebrating Freedom" event held in May was a heartwarming testament to this journey, honoring GRIP graduates, restorative justice champion Assemblymember Mia Bonta, and GRIP founder Jacques Verduin.

It was a night filled with messages of hope, unity, and empowerment. As we reflect on the past ten years, we express profound gratitude to our supporters, whose unwavering dedication has made this transformative work possible. Together, we look forward to continuing the journey of healing and restoration for years to come.



GRIP Founder JACQUES VERDUIN RETIRES

After more than 25 years of pioneering service in San Quentin and across the state, GRIP founder Jacques Verduin retired, leaving behind a legacy of healing and transformation. Under his visionary leadership, GRIP has impacted countless lives, promoting healing and accountability both inside and outside prison walls.

Jacques' commitment to compassion and healing has shaped GRIP's mission, empowering individuals to break the cycle of violence and incarceration. As he embarks on a new chapter, the GRIP community expresses heartfelt gratitude for his profound contributions and pledges to continue his legacy of creating a more just and compassionate world.



“GRIP provided me with a unique and rare opportunity to share my story. There is a lot of stigma about being someone who is a victim of violence. After I shared my story with the GRIP participants, I felt more peaceful than I had ever felt in my life. GRIP is transformative.”

– Lindsay V.

LOOKING Ahead

Our mission is to transform violence and suffering into opportunities for learning and healing.

As we look ahead, we plan to expand and deepen our impact by:

- Growing to serve 750 - 1,000 students annually
- Completing a year-long tribe in the women's prison
- Hiring additional GRIP graduates onto staff
- Offering healing practices of GRIP to survivors of violence in our growing network
- Creating alumni groups meeting regularly inside prison to sustain the impact

RECIDIVISM
2012-2023

1.71 %*

While the recidivism rate cannot provide the full story of GRIP's impact, our central focus is the prevention of violence and revictimization. GRIP stands firm in our belief that people are redeemable, that transformation is possible, even in the face of the hugely challenging life experiences that graduates face when re-entering society.

** We calculate our recidivism rate as the percent of all GRIP graduates released from prison who are reincarcerated.*

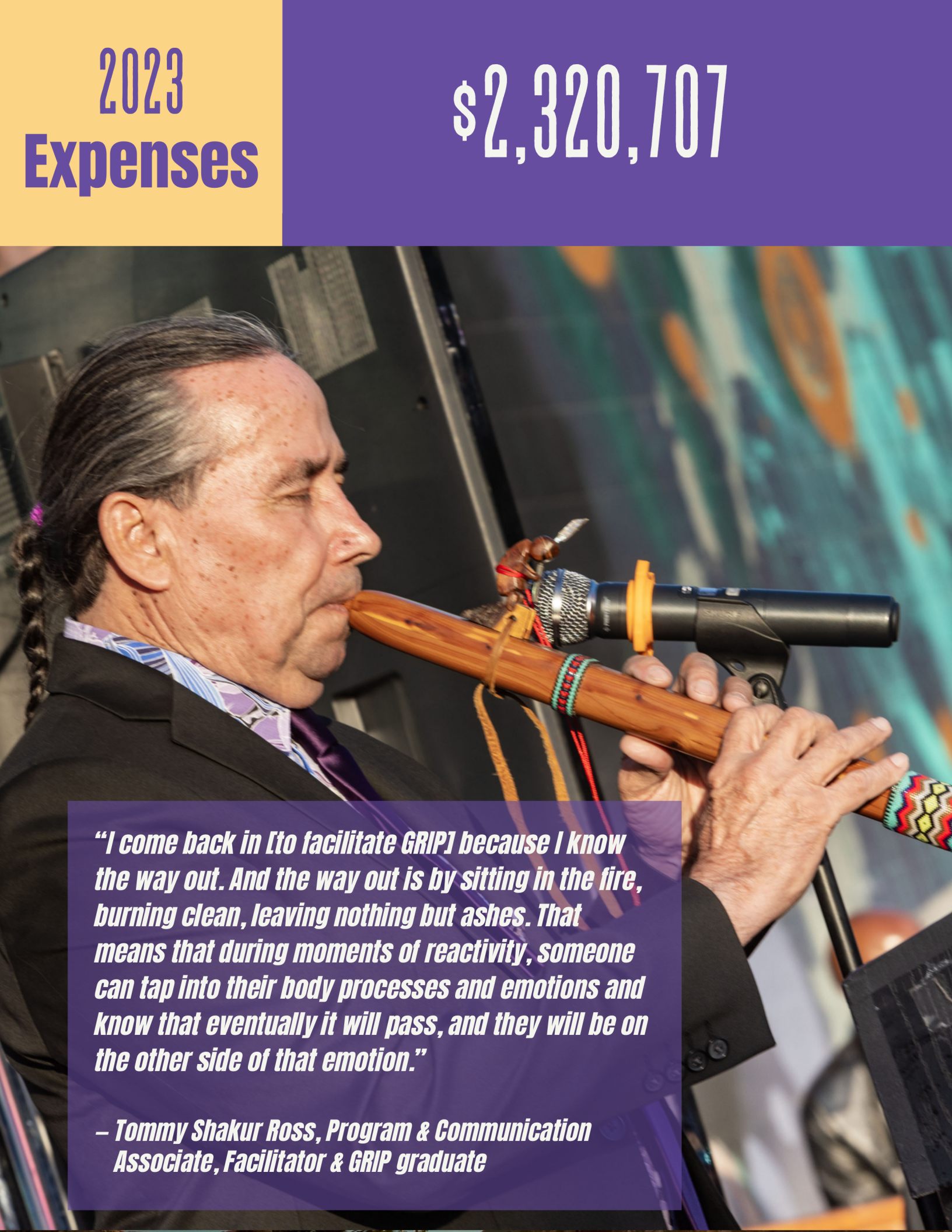
**2023
Income**

\$2,831,414*

** Income and expense numbers are preliminary and are subject to change upon audit. The final audited numbers will be available in fall 2024.
Income total includes a large state grant that will be used over a multi-year period.*

2023 Expenses

\$2,320,707

A photograph of Tommy Shakur Ross, a man with long dark hair in a braid, wearing a black suit jacket, a purple patterned shirt, and a purple tie. He is playing a wooden flute with a microphone attached to it. The background is a blurred colorful mural.

“I come back in [to facilitate GRIP] because I know the way out. And the way out is by sitting in the fire, burning clean, leaving nothing but ashes. That means that during moments of reactivity, someone can tap into their body processes and emotions and know that eventually it will pass, and they will be on the other side of that emotion.”

– Tommy Shakur Ross, Program & Communication Associate, Facilitator & GRIP graduate

WE APPRECIATE YOU

Your unwavering support propels the GRIP Training Institute's vital work of healing and transformation within prison communities. With each contribution, you advocate for the empowerment and rehabilitation of those affected by incarceration. Your commitment fuels our mission to guide individuals towards a path of redemption, healing, and peace.

Thank you for standing with us as we strive to create a brighter future for all impacted by the justice system.



**Support GRIP's 2024 healing and transformation work
with a contribution today.**



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