



GREEN BURIAL COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT
2024



Photo credit: The Preserve at All Saints, Waterford,
MI, Courtesy of Mike Scott

2024 At A Glance

CREATING A GREENER DEATHCARE INDUSTRY FROM THE INSIDE OUT

As we reflect on the milestones of 2024, it is clear this was a transformative year for the Green Burial Council; marked by intentional growth, renewed energy, and meaningful progress. With focus and momentum, we made significant strides toward becoming a more streamlined, responsive, and impactful organization.

In alignment with our values, we made key internal advancements. We were fortunate to welcome new staff members whose passion and expertise enhanced our operations and communications. Their contributions strengthened our ability to support providers, engage volunteers, and connect more deeply with the public. The launch of our online membership platform marked a critical step in modernizing our certification process—making it fully paperless, more efficient, and environmentally aligned. In tandem, we initiated a full website redesign to improve accessibility and user experience for all.

We also took deliberate steps toward building greater consistency in how we show up in the funeral industry. Our participation in trade shows became more strategic and reliable, helping us foster stronger relationships with providers and professionals across the country. At the same time, we sharpened our marketing and advertising efforts to more effectively communicate the value of green burial practices to both industry stakeholders and the broader public.

This year also marked a period of strategic reflection and forward planning. Our Board of Directors began a thoughtful process to explore the potential unifying our nonprofit entities in hopes of creating a more cohesive, agile, and mission-driven organization.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to leading with purpose and growing with intention. Through education, advocacy, and collaboration, we are building a more sustainable, compassionate, and informed approach to end-of-life care. Together, we are shaping a future where green burial is not only an accessible option but a standard one.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership as we move boldly into the next chapter of our shared mission. We know that the work we have done in 2024 is setting us up for a greener deathcare industry in 2025.



Darren Crouch, President
Green Burial Council, Inc.



Sam Perry, President
Green Burial Council Intl.



Streamlined, Sustainable & Strong

A NEW CHAPTER IN OPERATIONS

In 2024, the GBC made significant strides toward becoming a more streamlined organization. We **hired a full-time Business Administrator** to improve daily operations and support our valued public, providers, and volunteers. We also expanded our team with a **part-time Social Media & Marketing Manager**, who has greatly elevated our digital presence. This has brought new energy to our newsletters, social media outreach, and popular free monthly webinars.

Continuing this commitment to efficiency, we **adopted Join-It, a user-friendly online billing and membership system**. By spring, the majority of GBC Providers transitioned to the platform, making certification management more efficient and **entirely paperless** (an important step for an environmental organization).

Our Board also began **exploring a strategic merger** between our 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(6) arms. This process will include weighing the benefits and drawbacks of consolidating into a single board and procuring a hypothetical fiscal sponsor while honoring the GBC's distinct goals. The board will continue this consideration toward a decision into 2025.

To further serve both providers and the public, we **initiated website updates** in late 2024. We've partnered with a web design firm to improve user experience and hone our site as a hub for resources. This isn't simply an aesthetic update; we want to ensure our community can **easily navigate our resources** and connect with the expertise they need. This is set to be completed by the second quarter of 2025.

To support these growth-oriented initiatives and strengthen alignment across our diverse provider base, we **updated our membership dues** for the first time in eight years. Beginning July 2024, annual dues for all providers have been set at \$445, part of a broader effort to unify our membership structure. This update reflects our continued commitment to building a more sustainable, future-focused GBC. We're grateful to our members for their ongoing support in sustaining a leading organization dedicated to environmentally conscious death care.



Sam Bar, Board Director
Green Burial Council Inc.



Ariel Leath, Board Director
Green Burial Council Inc.

Photo credit: Heritage Acres, Cincinnati OH



Rooted in Research

SCIENCE-SHAPED STANDARDS IN SERVICE OF THE EARTH

The **Science and Research Advisory Panel (SRAP)** continues to play a key role in grounding GBC's standards in **evidence-based research**. Composed of scholars, scientists, and experienced death workers, SRAP responds to inquiries submitted by our Standards Committee, providing **independent memos that guide our work with scientific integrity**.

In 2024, SRAP delivered **three key research memos**. The first examined the **ecological implications of planting trees directly above graves**, helping us refine burial practices that support long-term land stewardship. The second offered accurate, **comparative carbon emissions data for cremation and natural burial**, contributing to a clearer understanding of the environmental impacts of end-of-life choices.

The third provided an **external review of emerging formaldehyde-free embalming products**. This memo was a pivotal step toward our board's **exploration and development of a Body Care Product Standard for 2025**.

Memos like this allow the GBC to go beyond surface-level claims by creating standards rooted in verifiable research; helping us ensure that providers truly uphold sustainable and ethical practices.

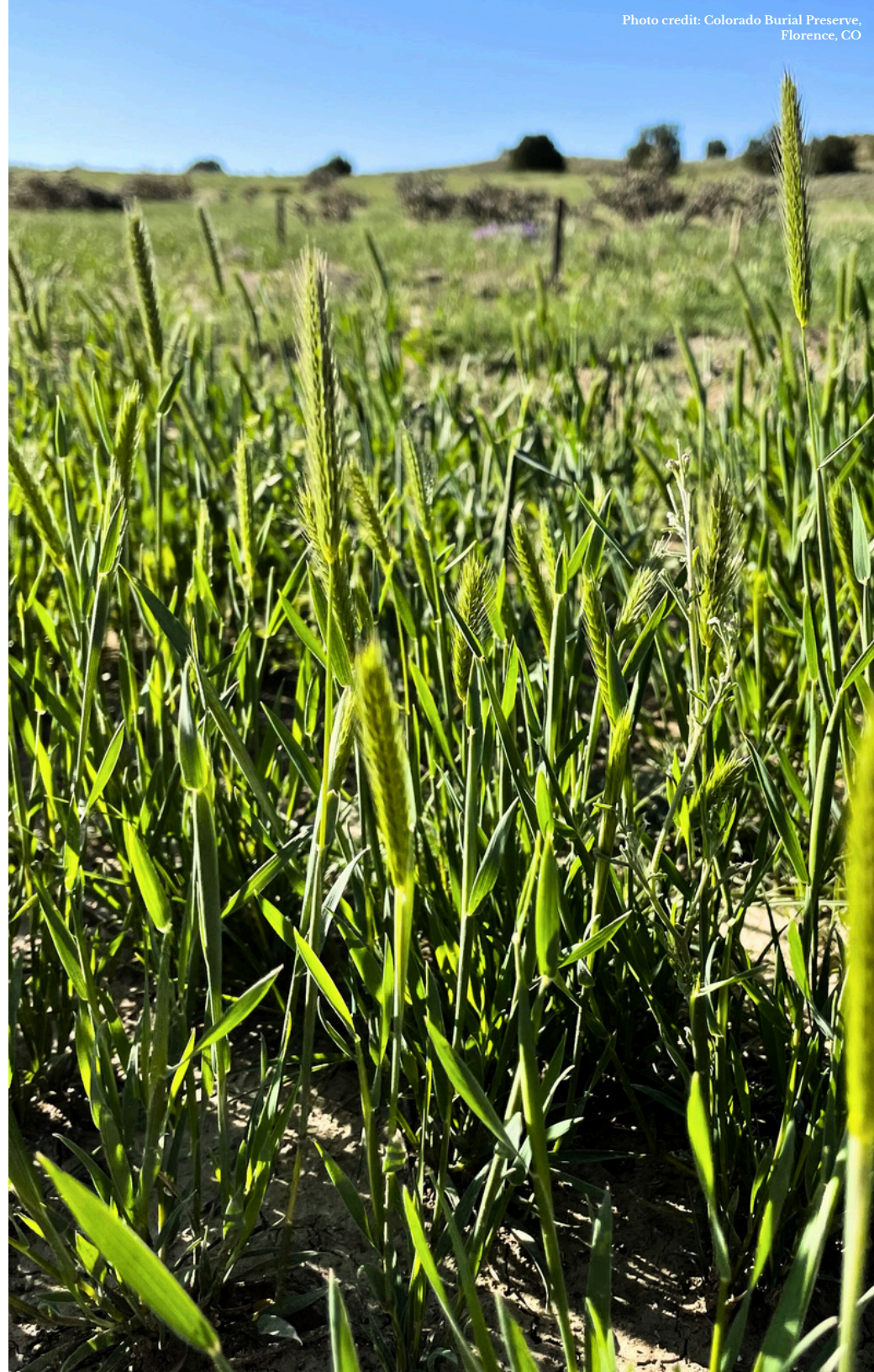
SRAP's work is essential as we continue to refine our standards and **educate the public and industry with scientifically backed information**. We look forward to deepening our collaboration with SRAP in 2025



Baxley Andresen, Vice President
Green Burial Council Inc.



Emily B. Miller, Secretary
Green Burial Council Inc.



Natural Burial, National Impact

GROWING THE MOVEMENT ONE STAGE AT A TIME

This year, the Green Burial Council sustained the momentum built in 2023, solidifying our role as a trusted voice in sustainable deathcare. Our board and staff were invited to **headline major industry events, academic forums, and national conferences**; reflecting the growing demand for leadership in natural burial practices.

Board Secretary Emily Miller led **several high-profile presentations**, including “Adding Natural Burial to Your Funeral or Cemetery Business” at the International Cemetery, Cremation and Funeral Association (ICCFA) Convention in April, “Greening the Funeral Business: How Do We Serve the Eco-Conscious Family?” at the California Funeral Directors Association in July, and “Are You Afraid to Die Alone? Why We Need Community Deathcare” at South by Southwest (SXSW) in March. These events offered **powerful platforms to connect with funeral professionals and the broader public**.

Emily Miller and Board President Sam Perry presented “Green Burial for Funeral Directors: What You Need to Know” as a continuing education unit through Continuing Vision. They presented to several mortuary colleges, including Wayne State University, Mercer County Community College, and Arapahoe County Community College. These sessions help shape the next generation of funeral service professionals,

emphasizing the practical and ethical importance of green burial options. Our visibility at the National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA) continued with Social Media and Marketing Manager Maura Bobbitt attending their 2024 Expo in New Orleans, **strengthening relationships and awareness among funeral service professionals**.

In addition to these larger-scale events, GBC continued **engaging professionals across sectors and scales**. Board Director Sam Bar spoke and tabled at the New England Cemetery Association. Board Director Jeff Hodes presented GBC at the New England Turfgrass Association, about how natural burial aligns with land stewardship. Board Secretary Stephanie Dresen represented the Council at Fresenius Medical Care’s Lunch and Learn and in a webinar for ReUsefull, bringing our message to new, health and environmentally conscious audiences.

From national stages to local conversations, 2024 was a year of **strategic outreach and growing influence**, reaffirming our mission to prepare industries to make green burial a viable choice for all.



Stephanie Dresen, Secretary
Green Burial Council Intl.



Jeff Hodes, Director
Green Burial Council Intl.



Cultivating Connection

EXPANDING OUR ECOSYSTEM

Broadening our reach and deepening our engagement with the public was a noted success of 2024. Much of this growth can be attributed to the **addition of our Social Media and Marketing Manager, Maura Bobbitt**, whose expertise brought new energy, strategy, and consistency to our communications.

Additionally, **our public webinar series remained popular**, drawing a total of **1,406 attendees from across the globe**. These sessions remain a cornerstone of our educational mission, helping both green burial advocates and industry professionals connect, learn, and grow. This year's webinars included:

- *Green Burial Defined: Clarifying Definitions in an Evolving Landscape*
- *Arranging a Green Burial at Any Funeral Home*
- *Providing Green Options: Operations for Existing Funeral Homes & Cemeteries*

Our newsletters continued to see exceptional engagement. With an average open rate of nearly 40%, **nearly double the industry average of 20–25%**, it's clear our audience is eager to stay informed. Among our certified providers, **open rates soar to around 60%**, highlighting a vibrant and connected network of practitioners committed to natural burial.

Social media also saw strong consistent engagement, with a total following of **20,000+ across platforms; 8,000+ on Instagram, 10,000+ on Facebook, and nearly 2,000 on LinkedIn**. Our website continues to be a primary hub for green burial information, **averaging 19,500 monthly visits, including 10,500 unique visitors**.

This year's outreach wasn't just about numbers—it reflected **the rising visibility and credibility of the GBC as an authority of sustainable deathcare**. With a renewed communications strategy and growing global interest, we are more connected than ever to the individuals and institutions shaping the future of green burial.

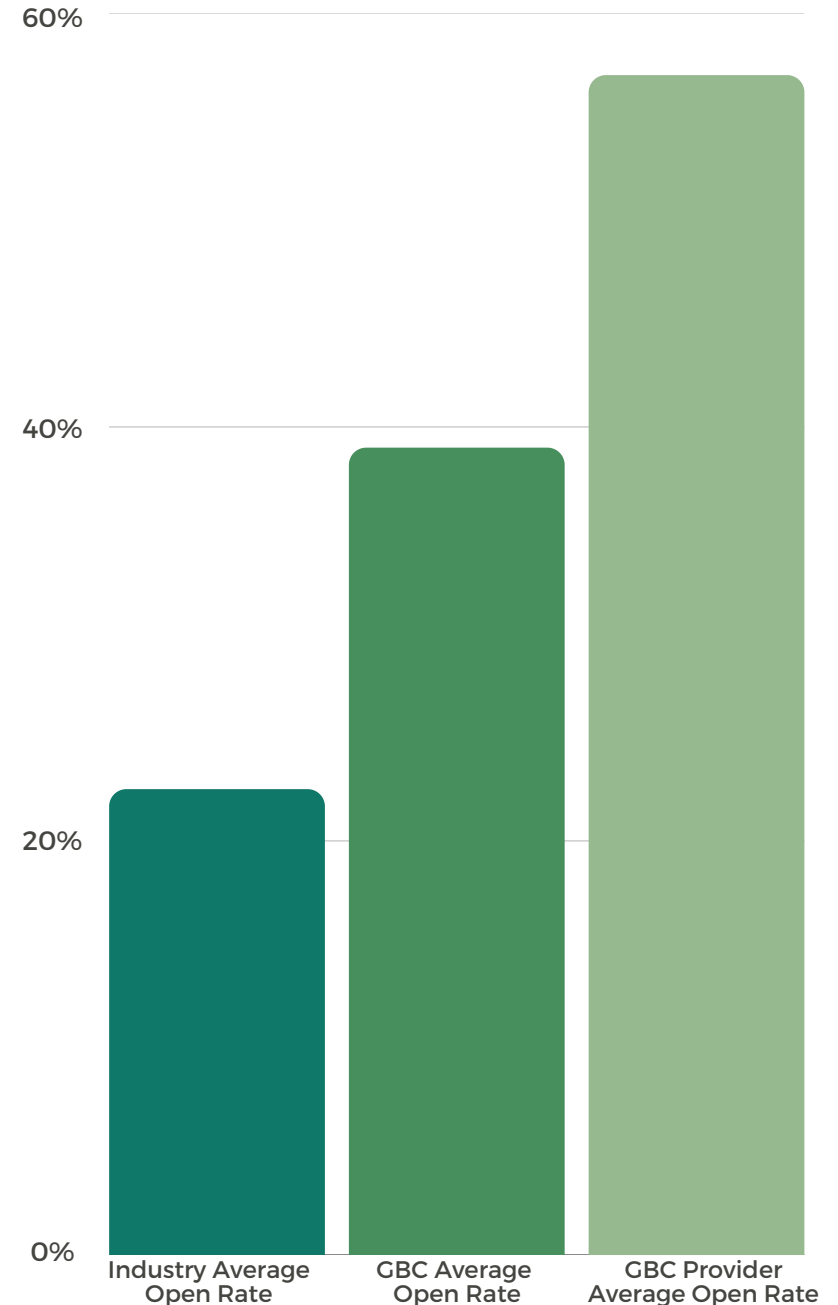


Maura Bobbitt, Social Media Marketer
Green Burial Council



Dawn Harth, Vice President
Green Burial Council Intl.

2024 GBC NEWSLETTER OPEN RATES

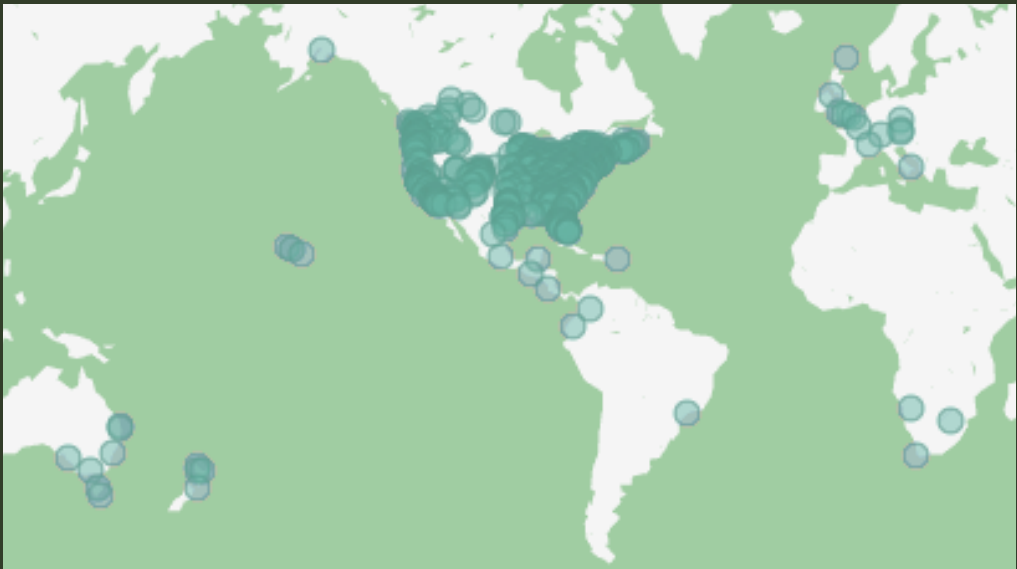




Our Vibrant Network

THE PROVIDERS AND COMMUNITY WHO
POWER OUR SHARED VISION

2024 Webinar Attendees from Around the World

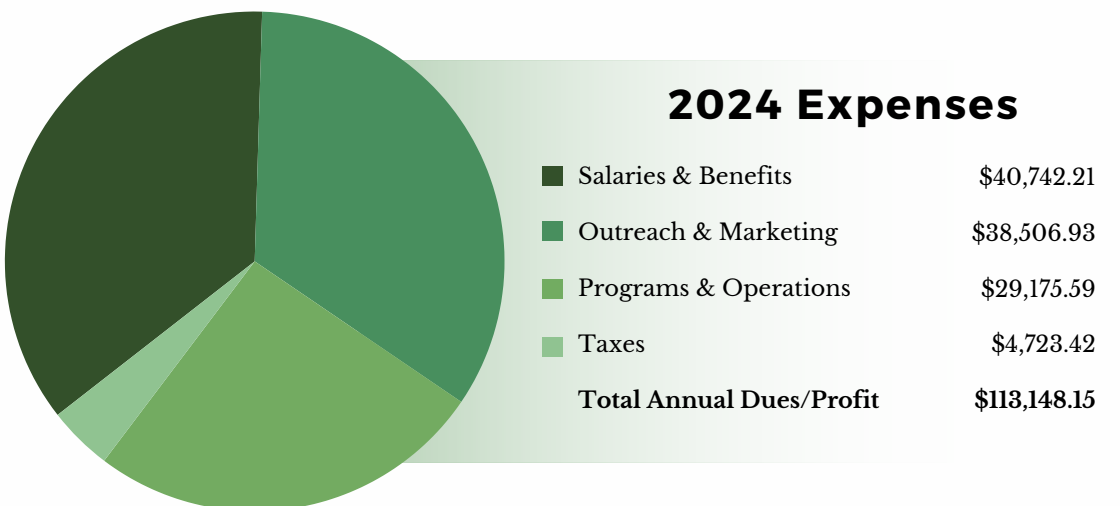
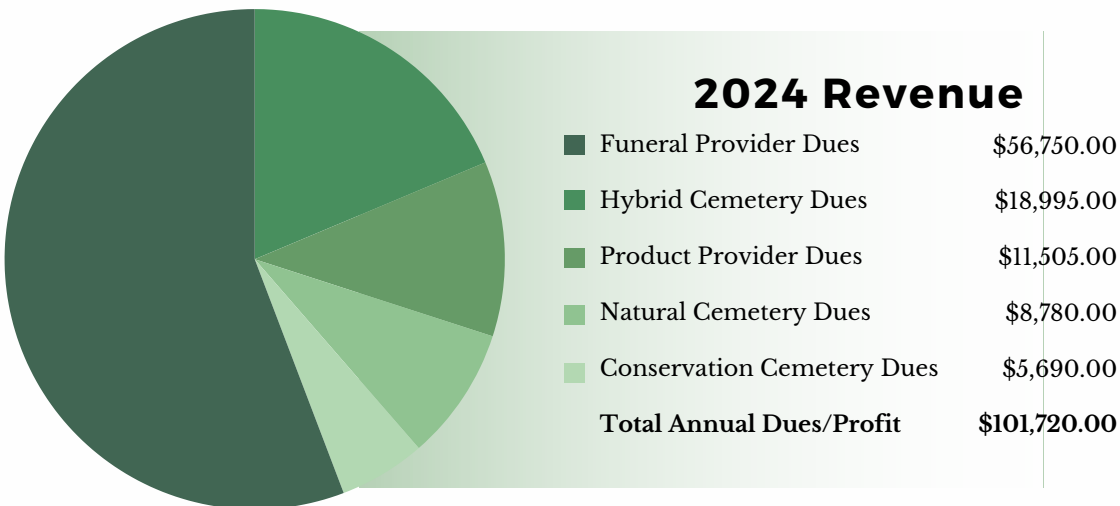


2024 Green Burial Council Certified Providers

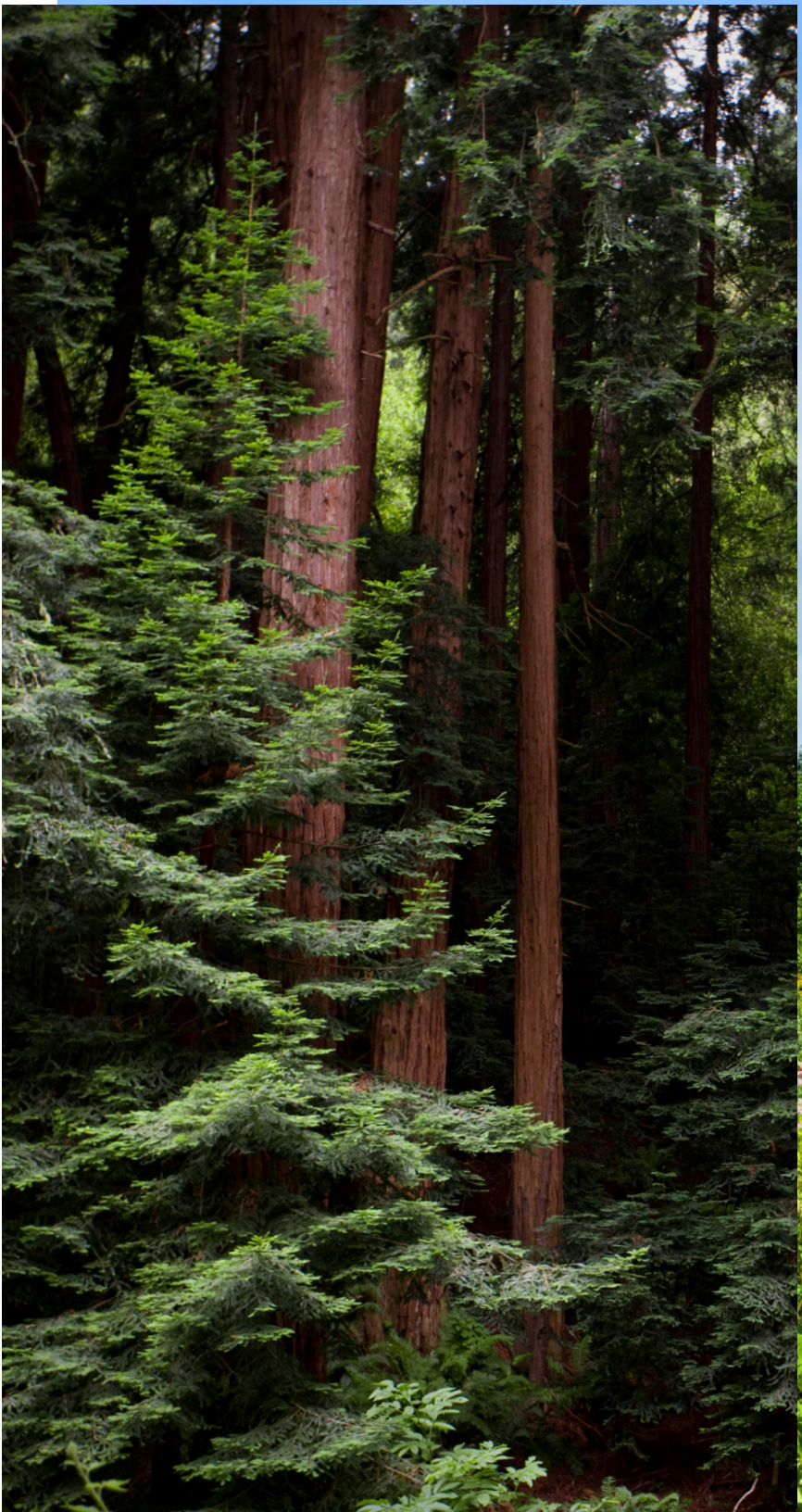
Funeral Homes	157
Hybrid Cemeteries	41
Natural Cemeteries	22
Conservation Cemeteries	13
Burial Products	48
Body Care Products	1
Total active members.....	290

501(c)(6) Financial Summary

A GLANCE AT OUR CERTIFICATIONS PERFORMANCE



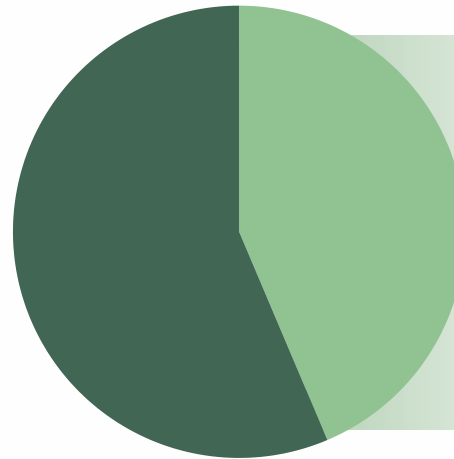
Rachel Essig, Treasurer
Green Burial Council Inc.





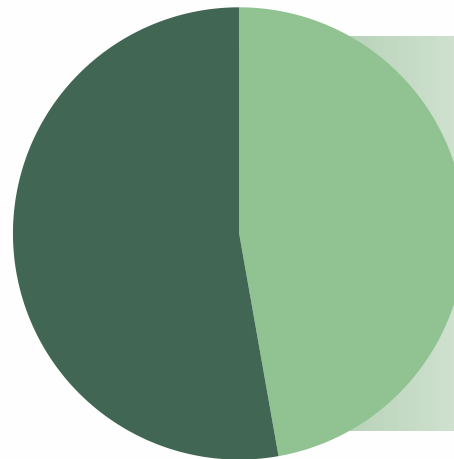
501(c)(3) Financial Summary

FUNDING WORK THAT CONNECTS AND EDUCATES



2024 Revenue

■ Contributions & Grants	\$2,354.09
■ Earned Revenue	\$1,821.54
Total Revenue	\$4,175.63



2024 Expenses

■ Administrative & Operational	\$1,294.26
■ Digital Tools & Subscriptions	\$1,157.48
Total Revenue	\$2,452.74



Michael Jenkins, Treasurer
Green Burial Council Intl.

Our Board, Staff & Volunteers

THOSE WHO SUSTAIN OUR MISSION

Board of Directors GBC, Inc. 501(c)(6)

Officers

Darren Crouch, President
Baxley Andresen, Vice President
Emily B. Miller, Secretary
Rachel Essig, Treasurer

Directors

Sam Bar
Ariel Leath

Volunteer Certification Specialists

Funeral Homes

Tricia Brady
Salome Farya
Austin Timpson
Emily Miller

Products

Gillian Fitzhugh
Ileana Wynn

Cemeteries

Jaclyn Curtis

Board of Directors GBC, Intl. 501(c)(3)

Officers

Sam Perry, President
Dawn Harth, Vice President
Stephanie Dresen, Secretary
Michael Jenkins, Treasurer

Directors

Jeff Hodes

Past Board Members (Service Ended in 2024)

Kyla Harrison
Joshua Moon

GBC Staff

Maura Bobbitt
Christa R.

Other Volunteers

Jane Hsu
Kenny Johnson
Mia Nickleson

