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WVE Business Partners are committed to promoting healthy working environments for their employees, healthy products and services for customers, and to increasing awareness of the links between women's health and toxic chemicals.

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Interested in becoming a business partner?  
Email Robyn Windham at [robynw@womensvoices.org](mailto:robynw@womensvoices.org)

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# THE VOICE

## RIISING ON CHANGING TIDES

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Your contributions make a meaningful difference in the success and reach of our work. We would like to thank the following donors for their support during Jan. 1, 2017 - June 30, 2018.

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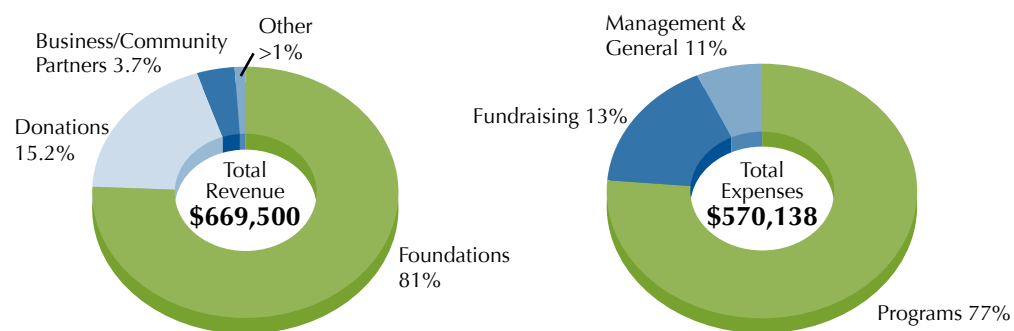
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## Fiscal Year 2017 Financials

(Jan 1, 2017 - Dec 31, 2017)



## Our Reach - 2017

**WEBSITE**  
526,980 total views  
Average 44,000+ views/month  
Blog reach over 3600 views/month

**Facebook**  
35,540 fans  
Average monthly post reach 65,000+

**Twitter**  
8534 followers  
Average monthly reach 65,000+

**MOST POPULAR POST:**

Target Asks Suppliers to List Ingredients in Sweeping Overhaul

468 Likes   111 Shares   21,000 Reach

**Who's talking about Women's Voices?**

Number of times Women's Voices was expert or research was featured in a national, or international, print, online, radio or TV outlet = **220**

Major outlets include *New York Times*, *Teen Vogue*, *The Washington Post*, *The Hill*, *USA Today* and more.

## STAFF

**Ash Chan**  
Campaigns & Outreach Coordinator

**Beth Conway**  
Communications Director

**Jean Claire Duncan**  
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Dear Friends,

This year will mark a big change for our organization, as we wish a farewell to our long-time Executive Director, who is stepping down after 13 years at WVE. With any change comes trepidation of the unknown, but also excitement for the possibilities ahead. As we search for our new Executive Director, we are seeking a candidate that can navigate the choppy waters of these times with graceful power. At their disposal will be the power of you all, a strong community that stands up and demands what is right time and time again.

For those of us who care about health, the environment, and justice, 2018 has been tough. We have seen the rollback of critical environmental protections, continued attacks on scientists, failure to implement hard-won chemical policy reforms, and continued oppression against people of color in this country. It can be overwhelming.

*Despite all of this, we are united together strong, and we are making progress.*

We are voicing our opposition to policies that protect the chemical industry at the expense of people's health; we are pushing industry to take a stand on transparency and make safer products; we are building more and more power each day. And we have made major gains, even in these times:

- We passed a bill in CA to require ingredient disclosure for cleaning products;
- We passed another one in CA to require disclosure for salon products;
- We saw bills introduced federally and in New York to require disclosure for menstrual products;
- We created the Health First Roadmap, a guide for cleaning product companies to make safer products; and
- We exposed the weaknesses of a self-regulating cosmetics industry.

*Even while Congress has grinded to a halt, we have made gains for the health of our families and communities.*

As we look to the future, we know that we can continue to win on the issues we care about. We can do this because of you. Thank you for your commitment to this work, and for being alongside us. Together, we will keep rising on these changing tides.

With gratitude,



Betsy Hands  
BOARD CHAIR



Erin Switalski  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## Shaking Up Summer's Eve

On August 7, women from around the country descended on Prestige Brands' (makers of Summer's Eve) headquarters in Tarrytown, New York to protest in the sweltering summer heat. They sent a clear message, holding signs like 'I Love My Self-Cleaning Vagina' and 'Quit Being a Douche,' and chanting, 'When our bodies are under attack, what do we do? Stand up, fight back!' Many of you joined in from home, by picking up the phone and calling Summer's Eve, and signing a petition. We all took action because this iconic brand uses toxic chemicals, keeps harmful fragrance secrets, and relies on body-shaming messaging to sell products.

An all-star lineup spoke at the rally, and reporters from local television stations came with their camera crews. Assembly Member Linda B. Rosenthal of New York kicked things off with "if your vagina was meant to smell like a field of wild flowers, it would've come that way." She has championed menstrual equity measures like requiring free period products

in schools, and disclosure of ingredients in tampons and pads. Representatives from organizations like COLOR, Black Women for Wellness and Turning Green followed, dropping truth about body image, racism, greenwashing and the perpetuation of harmful stigmas about our bodies.

Brands like Summer's Eve push products that make us feel like our bodies are dirty, and they use silence and shame to do so. They silenced us when we tried to enter the building to deliver over 15,000 petition signatures, calling security and threatening to call the police if we went any further. We know you're not okay with having your voice silenced. Keep pushing! Summer's Eve is taking notice of our demands. Visit our website for ways to stay involved.

[womensvoices.org/SummersDeceive](http://womensvoices.org/SummersDeceive)



## The Health First Roadmap Aims to Define 'Safe'

When it comes to cleaning products, every company has their own definition of what is 'safe' and what is 'toxic.' This inconsistency is hurting companies, and it's hurting our health. That's why, over the last year, we developed and released the Health First Roadmap, to offer a common language, and lay out a path for companies to improve how they evaluate and select the chemicals that end up on store shelves, in our homes, and in our bodies.

All companies claim that their products are safe. With this Roadmap, and the pressure of advocates like you across the country, we aim to move companies to back up those claims. We want companies to do more than the bare minimum to comply with laws. Responsible companies set concrete goals for ingredient safety, measure their chemical footprint, are careful about using unresearched chemicals, and they listen to the public's concerns.

[womensvoices.org/healthfirst](http://womensvoices.org/healthfirst)

### ADVOCATES URGE CLOROX TO 'QUIT THE QUATS!'

To demonstrate the need for companies to improve their chemical screening, we've taken aim at the use of quaternary ammonium compounds. 'Quats' are a powerful and dangerous class of disinfectant chemicals found in cleaning wipes and sprays, and they are especially hazardous to children. Yet, kids encounter them every single day. Products containing them are widely found in schools, daycares, and in homes--- even used to clean high chairs, the very surfaces that children eat from. Exposure can result in immediate reactions like rashes and trouble breathing, to longer term health effects like asthma, hormone disruption, and reproductive problems. Manufacturers mislead people to believe that disinfectants will 'kill germs' and keep us healthy, when in reality, their ability to reduce illness has never been proven, and they are putting children at risk. Manufacturers can and should stop their use of disinfectant chemicals entirely, and immediately.

That's why, this year, we launched the 'Quit the Quats' campaign, to raise awareness of the dangers of disinfectants, and move companies to remove them from their products. We published a fact sheet detailing health risks and debunking misleading information circulated by companies to sell disinfectant products, and moved hundreds to sign a petition urging Clorox and other companies to 'Quit the Quats' and adopt the Health First Roadmap. With your help, we'll continue to raise awareness, meet with companies to discuss public concerns, and move thousands more advocates to raise their voices to solve this important environmental health issue. [womensvoices.org/quitquats](http://womensvoices.org/quitquats)

We're meeting with companies to guide them along the Roadmap, and we're already seeing a positive response. SC Johnson has announced that it will unveil its 'Greenlist,' their chemical screening criteria, and our business partner Meliora Cleaning Products has proudly and publicly adopted Health First. We'll continue to work with companies and raise voices (like yours!) in support of smart and honest chemical management. Next year, we'll release a follow-up to the report rating companies on their policies, a strategy which has proved successful in the past, as companies work to compete for a better score.



### TAKE ACTION!

We invite you to help us stand up for children's health, by ridding the industry of these dangerous chemicals. Children across the country are exposed to 'quats' on a daily basis---at daycare, at school, and at home. If we don't act now, they'll continue to suffer the health impacts, today and down the road. Visit our website to sign the 'Quit the Quats' petition concerns.

[womensvoices.org/quitquats](http://womensvoices.org/quitquats)

## Calling for Cosmetics Safety

Earlier this year, Women's Voices for the Earth released an investigative report, 'Cosmetic Ingredient Review (CIR): Failing the Public. Failing Manufacturers.' The report details how the CIR is failing to protect our health from harmful ingredients in cosmetics and personal care products like deodorant, lotions, makeup, shampoos, and feminine wipes, washes and sprays.

The CIR is an industry-funded panel whose role is to assess the safety of ingredients used in personal care products. Contrary to popular belief, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) does not approve personal care products or their ingredients before they can be sold, instead relying on manufacturers to assure their safety. Essentially, the CIR reviews science on behalf of manufacturers and publishes their findings declaring whether or not an ingredient is safe. Not surprisingly, in their history, the CIR has declared the vast majority of cosmetic ingredients to be perfectly safe. Examples of some their most damaging decisions include declaring the safety of talc, parabens, and formaldehyde-releasing

preservatives in cosmetics despite growing evidence of the dangers of all three.

While we have been disappointed with the actions of the CIR for years, there has been recent Congressional activity that made releasing this expose report highly relevant now. The Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions committee (HELP) is considering legislation to address the problem of cosmetics safety. The cosmetics industry wants to be able to officially rely on the safety determinations of the CIR and is pushing to have the CIR specifically included in legislation. But, reliance on the CIR assessments to determine safety could lead manufacturers to use cosmetic ingredients which are in fact unsafe for human health.

Our CIR report is now being used widely to support strong cosmetics safety legislation, as well as to persuade manufacturers that relying on the CIR's decisions could put their company at risk of harming their customers.

[womensvoices.org/CIR](http://womensvoices.org/CIR)

## VICTORY! SALON PRODUCT LOOPHOLE CLOSED

California has become the first state in the nation to give salon workers the right to full ingredient information on the products they use daily in their profession. Thanks to salon workers across the state raising their voices, AB 2775 sailed through both houses of the California legislature with bipartisan support, and was signed into law by Governor Brown. Previously, federal cosmetics labeling requirements only applied to retail cosmetics, excluding professional salon products like hair dyes, straighteners and gel nails. This meant that workers were subject to handling products without basic knowledge of what was in them. This bill closes that loophole, requiring the manufacturers of salon products to include all ingredient information on the product label. Because of the size of California's economy, this will have a national impact.

This summer, more than 40 advocates, hair stylists, and nail technicians gathered in Sacramento to share their stories of how their health has been impacted by chemicals in the workplace, and explain how full ingredient information will help them avoid harmful exposure. One of those salon workers was Roya, a salon owner from Southern California and a long-time WVE advocate. Roya has been in the business for over 20 years and runs a salon with her mother and sister. When the products they were using started to impact their health, Roya took steps to create one of the first green certified salons in Los Angeles---Nori's Eco Salon. Roya bravely and proudly lobbied for her right to know. Thank you to Roya and everyone who helped to pass this precedent-setting legislation that will improve the health of salon workers in California and beyond.



## DONOR SPOTLIGHT



Dr. Sarah Lane has spent her life helping people through writing and naturopathy, raising awareness of the body's ability to heal itself. She has lived on both coasts, and started her first naturopathy practice in small town Montana. Today, she lives in Missoula where she continues to practice, and works with organizations aspiring to better the community and our world. We sat down with Sarah to talk about her involvement with WVE.

### HOW DID YOU FIRST GET INVOLVED IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH MOVEMENT?

After naturopathic school in Seattle, I attended a conference where we talked about the effects of toxics in the environment---from the danger of that 'new car smell' and chemicals in carpet, to cleaning products causing asthma. Later, I enrolled in a post-graduate environmental medicine program, which was packed with naturopaths, but also people on the frontlines of toxic exposure. We were all there to understand how chronic diseases are connected with toxics in our bodies and environment.

### HOW DID YOU FIRST ENCOUNTER WVE, AND WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST IMPRESSION?

I first encountered WVE in the 90s, when its founders were battling a local mill that was responsible for dioxin pollution, a cause of breast cancer. My first impression was that these women were powerful go-getters who wanted to take on big companies who were putting out toxic chemicals and harming people. I also understood the importance of coordinated work. I was a doctor treating people with illness, some attributed to accumulated toxins, and WVE is helping to reduce chemicals in our environment.

### WHAT DO YOU WISH EVERYONE KNEW ABOUT THIS CAUSE?

I wish everyone knew that the things we use and apply can hurt plant, animal and human life. Reducing chemicals will

improve health, and isn't that what everyone wants---good health? The thing is, you can exercise and eat a good diet and still be full of toxins, if not from your own home and lifestyle, then from your neighbors' home, airports, even the bus stop. These chemicals build up in people's bodies and cause autoimmune disease, cancer, chronic fatigue. This is why we need to work to change the system.

### WHY DO YOU GIVE TO OUR ORGANIZATION, AND WHAT WOULD YOU TELL SOMEONE WHO IS THINKING OF GIVING?

Women's Voices for the Earth has always been so incredibly savvy and innovative in allocating resources, and when I give to them I know that every dollar makes a difference in tackling these major environmental health issues. Their campaigns are successful---they're an organization that really knows how to take on big corporations, institutions that seem untouchable.

They don't back down and they persevere until they see change. They're also very accessible and they're great at collaborating and building relationships, something I see larger organizations struggle to do.

### HOW IS THIS CAUSE PERSONAL TO YOU?

I've had friends and patients who were diagnosed with breast cancer at a young age---30s, 40s, even their 20s. When I was studying cancer and co-treating, I saw that we need more information and trustworthy treatments to address the cause of cancer and other illnesses. Disease is an endpoint---it starts somewhere. The body can't heal itself when it is full of things that are harming it---if we can help the body get rid of toxics, and provide needed nutrients and treatments, it has a chance to heal. You have to choose your battles, but when people are getting sick, it's past time to address the cause.

### IF YOU COULD MAKE ONE SWEEPING CHANGE TO IMPROVE WOMEN'S LIVES TODAY, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

I would make it so that all women would listen to and trust their intuition. There's another toxic element called TMI---too much information. We are bombarded with info from the media, government, doctors, and we have trusted these authorities to have our best interest at heart, but this is not always the case. A lot can go awry when we don't listen to our own intuition about our health, our relationships, everything. Trust yourself and act on what you know.

*Donors like you make our work happen. Thank you for your support! Give today at:*

[www.womensvoices.org/give](http://www.womensvoices.org/give)