



Olean Meditation Center 2024 Annual Report



A Welcome Place for All!

The Olean Meditation Center's mission is to provide a welcoming and inclusive space and offer programs to promote personal well-being, spiritual living, and the mindful well-being of the community.

Affiliated Spiritual Groups

Hindu Society of Olean & Allegany



Southern Tier Sangha



Yoga teacher affiliates

Betsy Afton
(YogaBetsy)



Kimberly
LaMendola



Friends of OMC



Olean
Interfaith
Community



A Message from the President

As the incoming President of the Board of OMC, let me start by saying how honored I am to serve this organization. To me, it is a sanctuary amidst the chaos of these times. It's a place for contemplation and inner development in whatever way is meaningful for those who come. And it's unique in the area – there's no other place that combines nature, meditation, healing, yoga, and community in quite this way.



After 10 years of successful operation and growth, 2024 has been a year of many changes for OMC. Rich Reilly, founder and President, is stepping back from the lead role, although he is still very much involved in OMC operations. When Rich first approached me about taking a leadership role, I initially agreed to step into his shoes and eventually “take over” the operations. But it soon became obvious to me that his shoes were simply too big for any one person to completely fill. In response, the Board of Directors engaged in a reorganization process this year to create a decentralized management system of working committees. The committee members are drawn from both the Board and the community. Each committee is chaired by a Board member who reports to the Board of Directors. As President, I am the Chair of the Program & Promotion Committee that is responsible for planning, overseeing, fundraising for and promoting OMC events and activities. As Vice-Chair of the Board, Rich Reilly chairs the Operations Committee that is responsible for the management of our building and grounds, including any maintenance and upgrades. And finally, a Finance Committee oversees the budgets and financial sustainability of OMC. In addition, we voted to expand the Board of Directors and are excited to welcome Stephen Cocca, a member of the Southern Tier Sangha, as a Director. A list of the members of the Board of Directors and the working committees can be found on page 6.

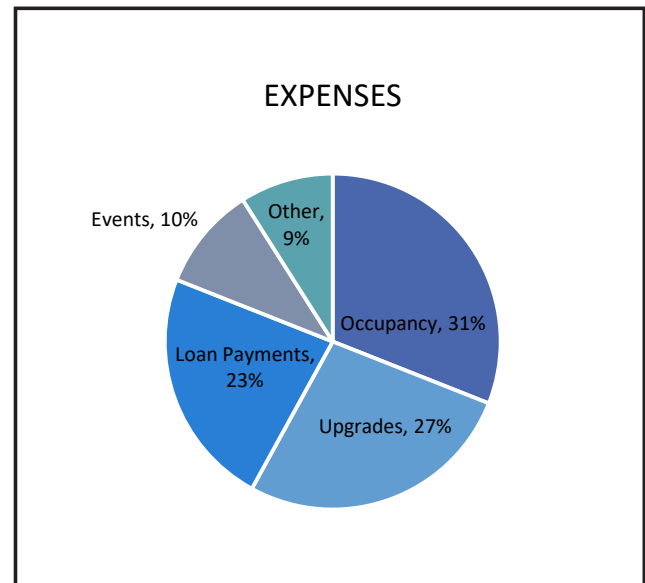
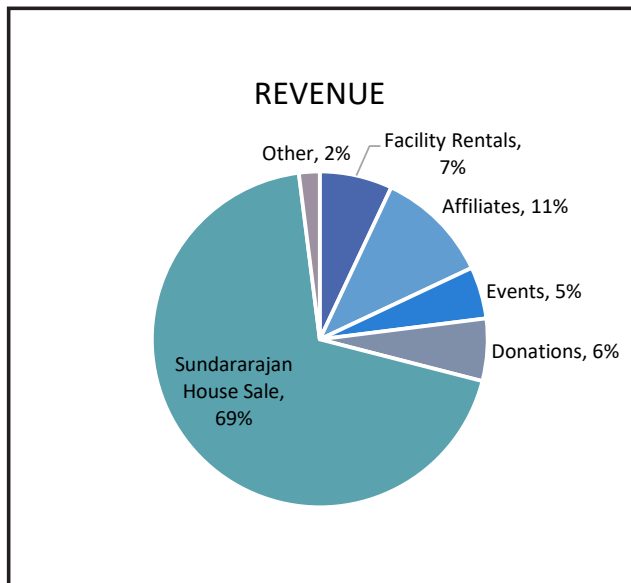
In other news, the planned merger with the Center of Solitude in Belmont, NY is no longer being pursued. The Center of Solitude will remain a separate organization and is continuing its operations as before with Rich Reilly serving their President. OMC has a paid membership for use of the facilities for solitary retreats.

Over the past year, the Program & Promotion Committee expanded the scope of OMC events through invited presenters and workshop leaders (see page 5), as well as collaboration with community schools, libraries, and organizations (see page 6). The Operations Committee has kept the building and grounds in running condition; resurfaced and fixed the drainage in the parking lot; and upgraded the lighting in the community room. In 2025, we look forward to more upgrades and invited speakers due to an increase in the generosity of our donors, including the memorial donation of a house from the family of Dr. K.R. Sundararajan who was a member of the Southern Tier Sangha. We remain committed to being a center for enhancing the quality, scope, and outreach of meditation and self-development opportunities for the benefit of the community.

2024 Financial Summary

The Olean Meditation Center closes out the year with a very healthy asset balance of some \$92,625, an increase of over \$58,500. As reported last year, the family of Professor K.R. Sundararajan kindly gifted the Sundararajan House in Olean to OMC. Last year, \$22,750 was spent on renovating the house and arranging for its sale. The sale price at closing this year was \$82,119 and a renovation loan was closed with 2024 payments of \$14,168. OMC's total revenue for 2024 was \$120,126 and total expenses were \$61,501.

The effect of the Sundararajan bequest has been immediate. Without dipping into our "emergency fund," we were able to complete two important renovation projects: install a new LED dimmable lighting system in our 2500 sq. ft. community room; and redo our driveway & parking area with a "hard surface" and better drainage. For the future, OMC is dividing its assets into three funds: (a) an emergency-endowment fund; (b) a capital expenditure fund for facility renovations and the development of Windfall Gardens; and (c) the "Sundararajan Fund" to help underwrite expanded programming for the community.



Invited Speakers 2024

Zen Master **Barbara Meido Anderson**, Guiding Teacher at O-An Zendo in Julian, PA, led an interactive one-day retreat exploring the meaning and practice of living a wide-awake life, a life of mindful presence, curiosity and wonder in June.



Chip Matthews, certified Forest Therapy Guide, Life Coach, & Director of Student Life at SUNY Geneseo led a Nature Healing Experience in Windfall Gardens in October.



Alan Jamieson, Faith Keeper of the Wolf Clan of the Cayuga People, led a Native American Healing Circle at OMC that was attended by 35 people.



Julia Davis-Voss and Sarah Guglielmi from the Himalayan Institute of Buffalo led a oneday workshop on Yoga & Ayurveda for Seasonal Support in November.



More news...



In Memoriam: Jack Luzier 1956 - 2024

Jack has been greatly missed at OMC after his unexpected death in June this year. He was one of the original members of the Southern Tier Sangha (STS). At the time of his death, he was a coordinator of the STS, leader of the Dharma Study group, a regular facilitator of the Thursday meditation sessions, and a steadfast friend to our community. Jack was well-known among us for his laugh and sense of humor. Contemplating death and impermanence was an integral part of his spiritual practice.

The memorial donations received by OMC will be used to establish a memorial bench in Windfall Gardens with a plaque inspired by the motto on his bumper sticker — “Don’t just do something, sit there.”



Darrell Davis joined OMC as Resident Caretaker in July and is responsible for the day-to-day upkeep of the building and grounds. He moved to Olean from NC and has a long work history of caretaking in healthcare. According to Darrell, “Living and working at OMC is amazing!! I’m very happy & blessed to live in a building that has a strong spiritual presence. What a wonderful job and home!”

2024 was a year of community outreach and collaboration...

- OMC events are approved for wellness points for **InTandem** employees
- Audrey Hager provided meditation instruction at **Total Senior Care** and a 4-week experiential book study at the **Cuba Public Library**.
- **Cattaraugus Allegany BOCES** added OMC as a regular vendor in their wellness program. Kim LaMendola & Fileve Palmer led yoga classes at area schools.
- Kim LaMendola and Audrey Hager led a day-long mindfulness program at OMC for the **Salamanca Schools/JCC Liberty Partnerships** summer camp, and Kim LaMendola led a yoga class at a **Southern Tier Catholic School** summer camp program.

OMC Management Team

Board of Directors

John M. Hart, Jr. (Chair), Richard Reilly PhD (Vice-Chair), Dr. Celine Daly (President), John F. Vosburg III (Treasurer), Stephen Cocca, Dr. Ashok Kothari, Dr. Srinivas Thandla, Jeanne Walk, Robert Walk

Program & Promotion Committee:

Celine Daly (Chair)
Diane Clark
Audrey Hager
Kimberly LaMendola
Rich Reilly
Jeanne Walk

Operations Committee:

Rich Reilly (Chair)
Albert Brown
Steve Cocca
Gerry Daly
Jack Hart
Taylor Kauffman
Judy Patton
Sri Thandla
Rob Walk

Finance Committee:

Celine Daly (Co-chair)
John Vosburg (Co-chair)
Rich Reilly
Ashok Kothari

OMC Vision and Values

As a nonsectarian sanctuary elevating personal well-being and spiritual living, we are committed to honor the values of natural simplicity, inspiration, compassion, and unconditional acceptance of all who visit us.

The Olean Meditation Center acknowledges and honors the ancestral lands of the Seneca people, also known as the Onondowaga, or “the Great Hill People” of the Haudenosaunee (ho-dee-no-SHOW-nee) Confederacy. We recognize that the land we live, work, and play on is covered by The Dish and One Spoon Treaty of Peace and Friendship, a pledge between the First Nations to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes. It is also covered by the 1794 Treaty of Canandaigua, between the United States Government and the Six Nations Confederacy, affirming Haudenosaunee land rights and sovereignty in the State of New York. We are grateful for the opportunity to share this land with the Seneca people.

The **Olean Meditation Center**

was founded in 2011 as a non-profit organization for the promotion of meditation instruction and practice in a variety of forms and spiritual traditions. Our facility opened in 2013.



Olean Meditation Center

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