

## **PLATO BY THE NUMBERS: ANNUAL REPORT ON ACTIVITIES & FINANCES 2016-17**

PLATO is a member organization. As such, member dues are collected and spent on a wide variety of activities that support the organization and its mission. Revenue is also generated from grants, donations to support specific activities, fees charged for some special event activities and the annual luncheon. Donations to the PLATO Education Fund are not used to support PLATO operations.

Currently PLATO has about 1,270 members and our dues are \$60/year. During this fiscal year PLATO dues (\$73,500) and other revenues (\$10,000) will generate approximately \$83,500 to support the organization's services. This does not include revenues and expenses for Special Event Trips, which are designed to be financially self-supporting.

The following represents how member dues are used to support PLATO services. The amounts and per centages are estimates based on projections for this entire year (July, 2016-June, 2017).

**UW/DCS Support Services:** PLATO and the UW Division of Continuing Studies (DCS) have a longstanding relationship, extending back more than 29 years. UW has always provided administrative support for PLATO. In recent years this relationship has evolved and, as PLATO has grown in size and variety of initiatives, become more complex. Forty percent of PLATO dues are allocated to UW/DCS to underwrite the costs of our office operations, additional DCS services, and space utilization. This year \$29,400 is allocated to pay for these services.

**Courses:** At the core of PLATO are the courses offered by PLATO volunteers for the benefit of our members. Currently PLATO offers more than 100 courses during the fall, winter, spring and summer semesters. To support these initiatives member dues are spent to pay rent to 15 different facilities, printing and copying course materials to inform our members, hosting Preview Events for the fall and spring semesters, and purchasing equipment for the courses. Members do not pay anything extra to attend courses, although they may be expected to pay for the cost of books or materials for a given course. Approximately 17% (\$12,600) of member dues support these efforts.

**Special Events:** Special Events (SE) have become an important part of the educational/social activities offered by PLATO. These include, trips to museums and live performances, locally based field trips, lectures, social events, and support for PLATO sponsored previews and lunches. This year there will be approximately 16 trips and 20 lectures and local events. Member dues are used to support committee operations, honorariums, and to be a partner in the Global Hot Spots Lecture series. Approximately 7% (\$5,200) of PLATO dues are used to pay for these services. The cost of trips is totally supported by individual participant fees, not by member dues.

**Membership & Communication:** Earlier this year the Membership and Communication Committees were combined. The duties of the new committee are:

- Retain new members.
- Recruit new members (in alignment with goals established by the Board).
- Develop and/or deliver internal and external communications as needed to achieve these membership responsibilities.
- Provide assistance to other committees or parties communicating on behalf of PLATO.
- Provide administrative oversight for The Persimmon and The Agora.

Approximately 6% (\$4,500) of member dues are being used to support these services. This includes a comprehensive PLATO branding initiative.

**Fund Development:** In 2011 the PLATO Board voted to set up a charitable fund that initially supported returning adult students at UW who had significant financial needs. The PLATO Education Fund was established at the UW Foundation in 2012. The Fund, which is now worth about \$140,000, was initially funded with \$80,000 as a base, from general PLATO reserves. Over the past four years PLATO members have donated more than \$67,000 to the Education Fund, all of which has been distributed as scholarships and grants. The Fund now supports the Odyssey Project (\$5,000), Returning Adults Students (\$10,500) and three community agencies supporting youth education (\$7,500). **No member dues are used to support the costs of fund development.**

**Technology:** This committee is responsible for providing technology planning and assistance, maintaining the PLATO website, assisting committees with data retrieval and analysis, and recommending data storage and retention policies. This year approximately 3% (\$2,000) of member dues are being spent on these efforts.

**Agora:** The Agora is a juried literary/arts journal of works created by PLATO members. Volume 1 was published in 2011 and Volume 5 will be published this summer. Volumes 4 and 5 were funded from a combination of member dues, donations, and sponsorships from community organizations. Approximately 3% (\$2,000) of member dues supported the costs of this initiative for this year. The PLATO Board has approved allocating \$2,000 annually of member dues to support this work.

**Administration:** The PLATO administrative costs include a variety of activities that are needed to maintain the organization. These include accounting and bookkeeping costs, financial reporting, insurance, general administrative expenses, credit card fees, annual meeting costs, and general postage and copying costs. Approximately 24% (\$17,800) of member dues this current year support these services. In addition, this year, the PLATO Board has authorized spending up to \$10,000 from reserve funds for a strategic planning initiative to help guide PLATO over the next few years.

If you have questions about this information please contact me.  
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**PLATO** IS A COMMUNITY OF INTELLECTUALLY CURIOUS ADULTS, TYPICALLY 50 & OVER, WHICH EXPLORES SUBJECTS OF INTEREST THROUGH MEMBER-LED DISCUSSION GROUPS, LECTURES, TRAVEL, & CULTURAL ACTIVITIES.

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