

The logo features the word "SOAR" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. A dashed orange line forms a semi-circle around the letters, with a paper airplane icon at the end of the line, pointing towards the right. The entire logo is centered within a white circle that has a thick orange border. This circle is set against a background of a repeating pattern of light blue circles on a darker blue field.

**SOAR**

**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**FY 2021-2022**

**SUPPORTING  
EVERY OHIOAN**

**AUGUST 2021 – JULY 2022**



**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**FY 2021-2022**

**SUPPORTING EVERY OHIOAN**  
August 2021 – July 2022

Prepared by Sydney Sauer  
Released August 15th, 2022

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# A LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PRANAV PADMANABHAN



**"Harm reduction is a social justice issue, and our ultimate goal is to break down stigma, build alternative institutions based on mutual aid, and restore bodily autonomy to people who use drugs."**

PRANAV PADMANABHAN  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I won't sugarcoat anything; it's been a tough year. The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to be felt strongly by the communities we serve, as 2021 saw record numbers of drug overdose deaths in Ohio. Additional stressors, like cost of living increases and outrageous attacks on reproductive rights—which disproportionately harm marginalized groups—weaken societal bonds and make all of us more vulnerable to the overdose crisis. But I remain hopeful because I am inspired every day by what our team and other remarkable harm reductionists across the state accomplish, often with very little support from people in power.

This year saw the end of a successful pilot of our grassroots drug checking platform, and the beginning of a statewide launch. Since August 2021, SOAR provided barrier-free fentanyl test strips by mail to 2,000 individuals and 300 secondary lay distributors, as a new office has allowed for the streamlining of our Strip Club program. Engagement with our deadly batch and overdose surge text alerts, now available in all 88 counties in Ohio, is higher than ever, as we received 68 anonymous reports and sent 42 alerts for deadly batches to over 2,600 subscribers. The system works; our secure platform empowers people with firsthand knowledge of the drug supply to warn their neighbors proactively and save lives. But harm reduction goes beyond handing out resources and sharing knowledge. Harm reduction is a social justice issue, and our ultimate goal is to break down stigma, build alternative

institutions based on mutual aid, and restore bodily autonomy to people who use drugs. To reflect our long-term strategy of uprooting the oppressive structures that led to where we are in the first place, SOAR has branched out into policy and advocacy.

This year, SOAR also took a major step forward in transitioning leadership to people who use drugs. Centering the voices of people with lived experience of the overdose crisis has always been the cornerstone of SOAR's mission, and grassroots support has been critical to the success of Strip Club and the text alert system. With a newly created outreach network consisting of 10 experienced harm reductionists in every corner of the state, we are not only able to provide seats at the table for people with their fingers on the pulse of the community's needs, but also build trust and resilience within these communities and reach those who are the most hidden from public health services. In the coming months, we will continue to provide opportunities for people actively using drugs to shape SOAR's future by establishing a Community Advisory Board and targeted recruiting for decision-making roles, with an eye on making SOAR a drug users' union. Our work is rooted in our values of Safety, Outreach, Autonomy, and Respect.

While we push for systematic change, a safe supply of drugs for all, and a world where people who use drugs are treated with humanity, we know what needs to happen in the meantime to save lives: more funding for naloxone, fentanyl test strips, and syringes; drug checking innovations like mass spectrometers; and the removal of invasive barriers to healthcare services. We are proud and humbled to serve alongside our inspiring partners in the harm reduction fight, and look forward to another year of making progress one step at a time.

Sincerely,

*Pranav Padmanabhan*



# MISSION & VISION

## MISSION

Build up powerful, healthy communities of people who use drugs by implementing innovative harm reduction strategies that advance connection through technology and advocating for policies that promote a safe supply.

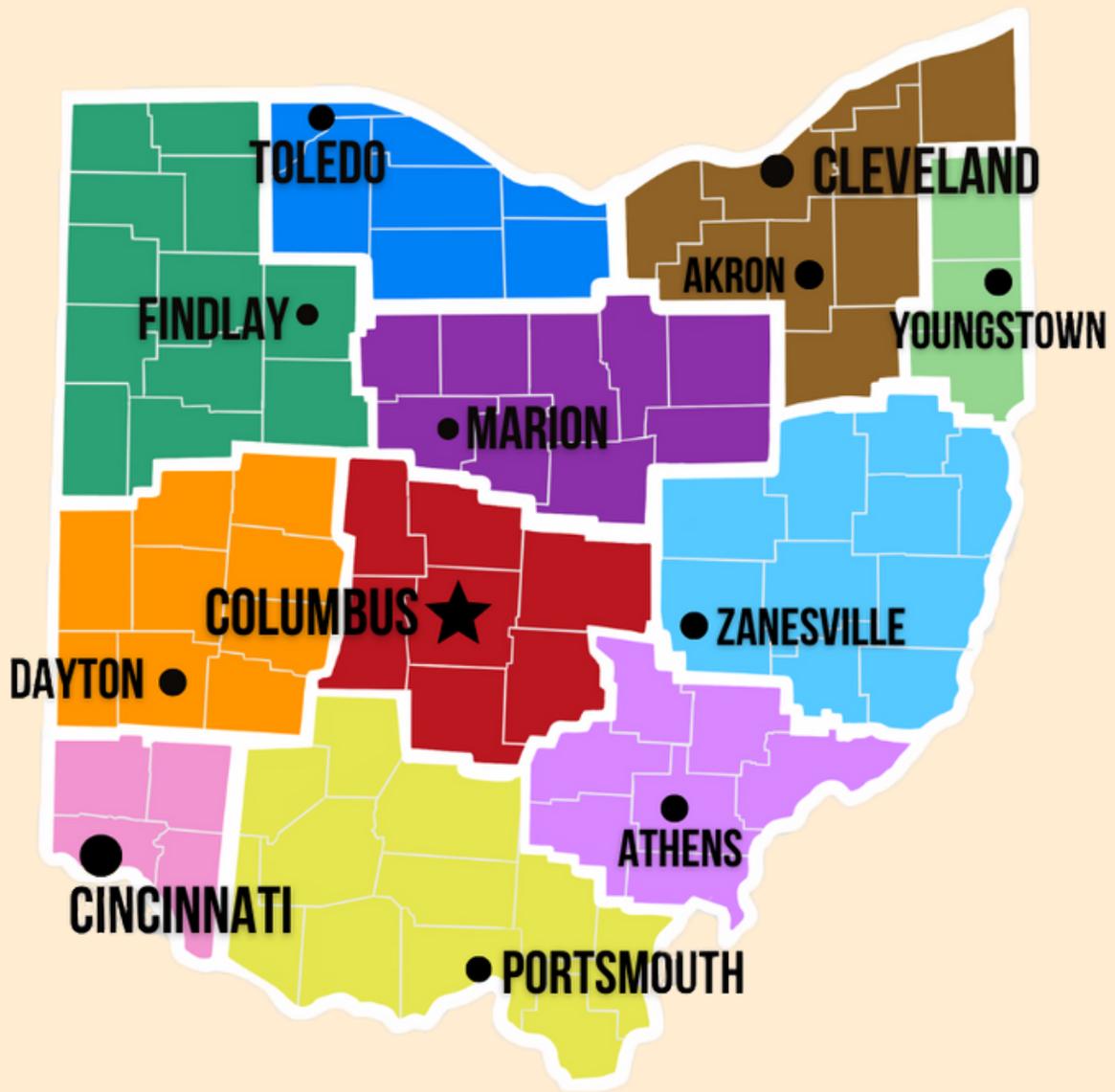
## VISION

End the harmful, racist, and discriminatory War on Drugs and build a world where all people who use drugs can achieve health, safety, happiness, and bodily autonomy.

# PROGRAM UPDATES

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**2,627** SUBSCRIBERS  
 ▲ 230% FROM LAST YEAR

**73**  
 ALERTS SENT  
 ▲ 52%

**68**  
 REPORTS SUBMITTED  
 ▲ 15%

**6**  
 REGIONS ADDED  
 ▲ 120%



# DEADLY BATCH ALERTS

This year marked the close of our 18-month pilot program of the Deadly Batch Alerts system in Central Ohio and the beginning of sustainable statewide expansion. Funded by the State Opioid Response grant, this system sends text message alerts to the community when contaminated, abnormal, or particularly potent batches of drugs are found in their area. We also get data from the medical examiner in order to send out "Overdose Surge" alerts if overdose death counts spike in a 24 or 48 hour period.

The response to this system has been overwhelmingly positive from people who use drugs, their loved ones, other non-profits, and public health officials, many of whom have called this system lifesaving. Our alerts are also widely shared on social media by harm reduction groups and community members, amplifying their impact.

## DEADLY BATCH ALERT!

Heroin called "gray death," which looks like mortar, is causing overdoses near Sidney, OH.

**DRUG:** "Gray death" heroin

**LOCATION:** Sidney, OH  
(Shelby County)

**SOURCE:** Community report



## DEADLY BATCH ALERT!

Cocaine laced with fentanyl has been reported in the Linden area.

**DRUG:** Cocaine

**LOCATION:** Linden area,  
near the intersection of  
24 Ave and Cleveland

**SOURCE:** Community report



On June 26th, we launched 11 alerts regions covering all counties in Ohio. These regions will allow us to send alerts to communities around the state.

"In our pilot program, we hoped to determine whether people would even be interested in this kind of system, and what it might take to get people signed up," says Director of Operations Sydney Sauer. "Now we know that the answer is yes, people do want this, and the way to get this resource out into the community is through targeted, in-person outreach."

This year, we've also focused on expanding the number of community alerts that are submitted to our system. "It takes a large amount of trust for a community member to submit a report regarding a deadly batch," says Jessica Mitsch, Director of Community Relations. "We never collect any personal information, so the person willing to share that valuable information is potentially saving lives with just a couple clicks of a button. There is already a network of PWUD keeping each other in the loop, and we are just trying to make that web even larger and more effective. To accomplish that goal, we urge people to spread the word about SOAR and place their trust in us."

Our team is excited to continue expanding Deadly Batch Alerts to new individuals and new areas in the future.

REGION	SUBSCRIBERS
Central Ohio	1,881
Northeast Ohio	307
Southwest Ohio	127
Mahoning Valley	103
Southern Ohio	44
West Central Ohio	42
Toledo	40
Northwest Ohio	23
Athens	22
Marion	21
East Central Ohio	17

## HOW DO ALERTS HELP?

- **75%** of subscribers share alerts with their loved ones
- **30%** of subscribers have ordered naloxone or test strips after receiving an alert in their area
- **15%** of subscribers reported that our alerts helped them avoid a deadly batch

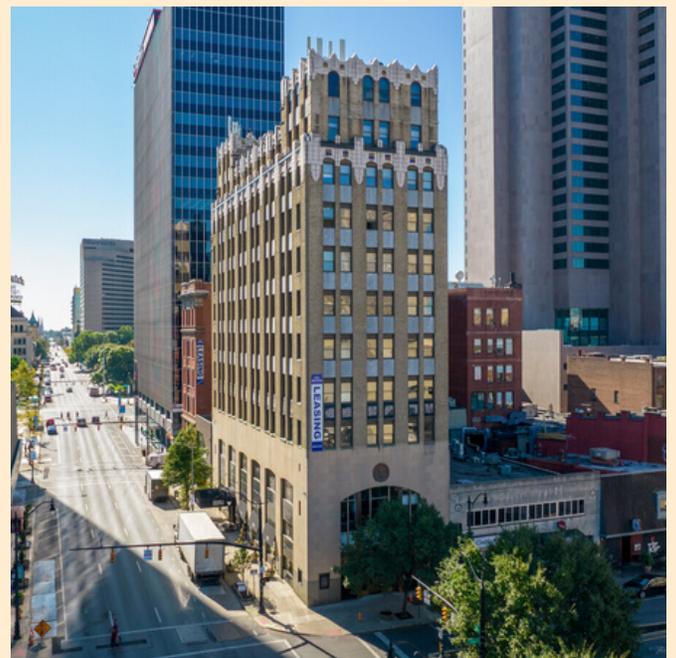


# STRIP CLUB: HARM REDUCTION BY MAIL

**Strip Club is an online service that allows anyone in Ohio to anonymously request five free fentanyl test strips delivered discreetly to their door. Grassroots outreach workers can submit requests for more test strips or additional materials, such as syringes, cookers, tourniquets, bandages, and more.**

This year, we said goodbye to our storage unit and moved into an office in downtown Columbus. With this new space, we were able to send out over 2,400 shipments that reached over 19,000 individuals in 81 of Ohio's 88 counties.

We are also excited to announce that we will be partnering with Harm Reduction Ohio (HRO) to increase the reach and efficiency of this program. HRO ships next-day naloxone across the state, and they will be fulfilling our individual test strip orders through that same system. This partnership will allow individuals to get the resources they need as soon as possible. All outreach orders will continue to be processed by our team, and the individual order form will be available on both the SOAR and HRO websites.



**OUR NEW HOME**



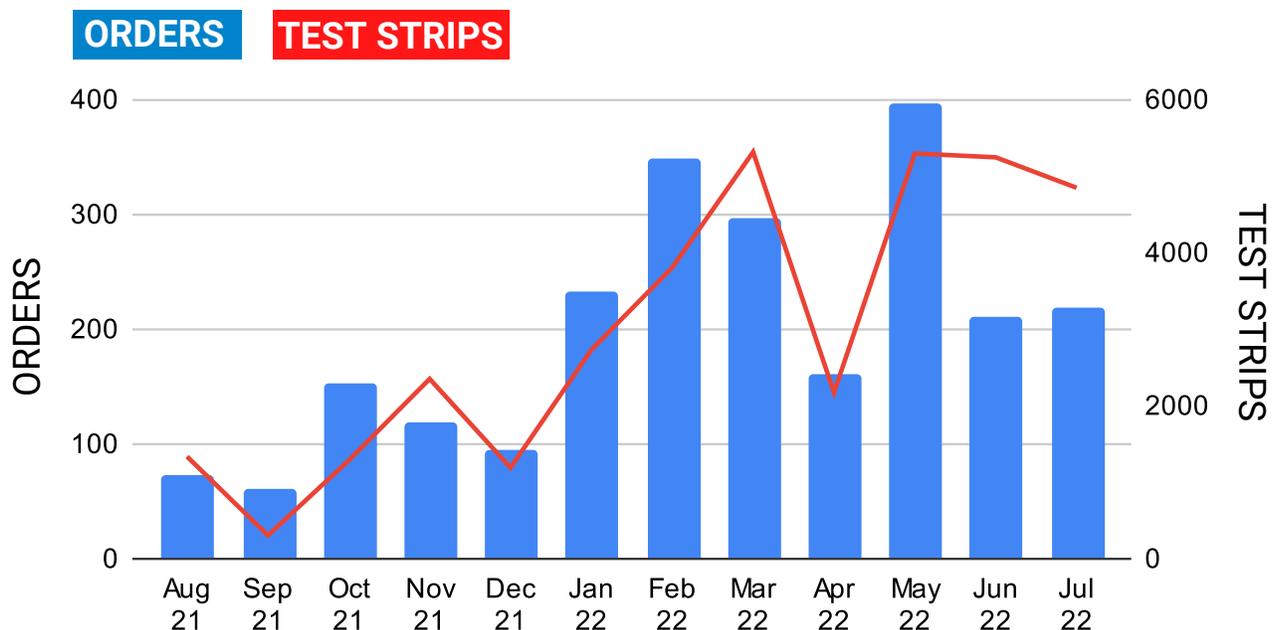
# 19,160

## INDIVIDUALS REACHED

# 36,204

## TEST STRIPS DISTRIBUTED

### Orders and Test Strips by Month



The number of orders received and test strips sent have both increased drastically from the beginning to the end of the year. The large spike in May followed the tragic overdose deaths of two Ohio State students, which prompted dozens of individuals around the university area to use more safely. SOAR was proud to offer free test strips and Deadly Batch Alerts during this time of fear and uncertainty.



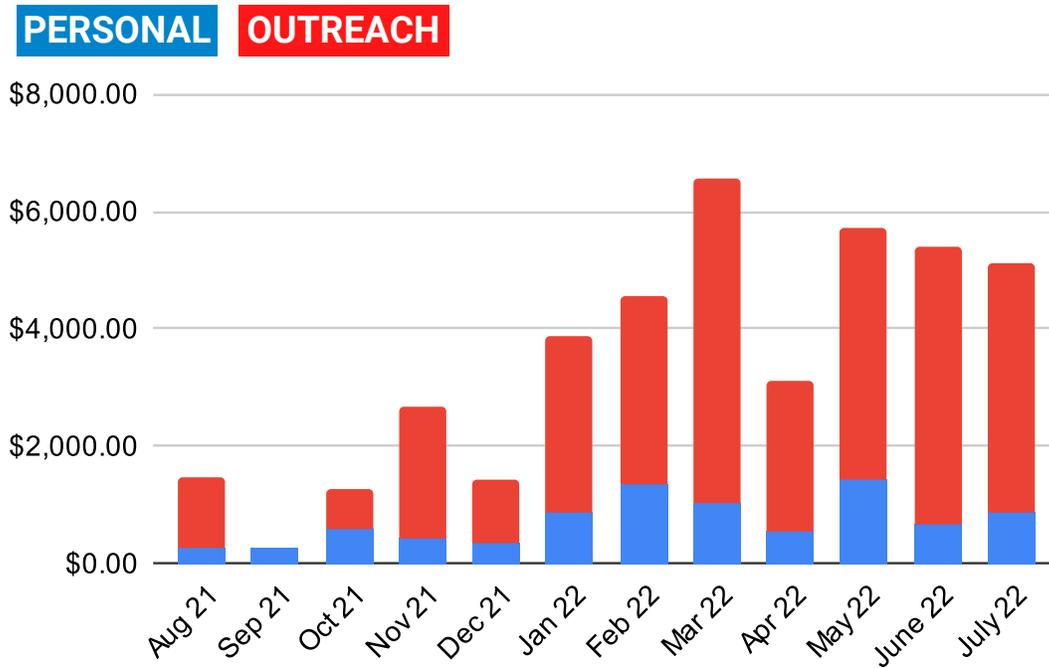
# 2,111

## INDIVIDUAL SHIPMENTS

# 300

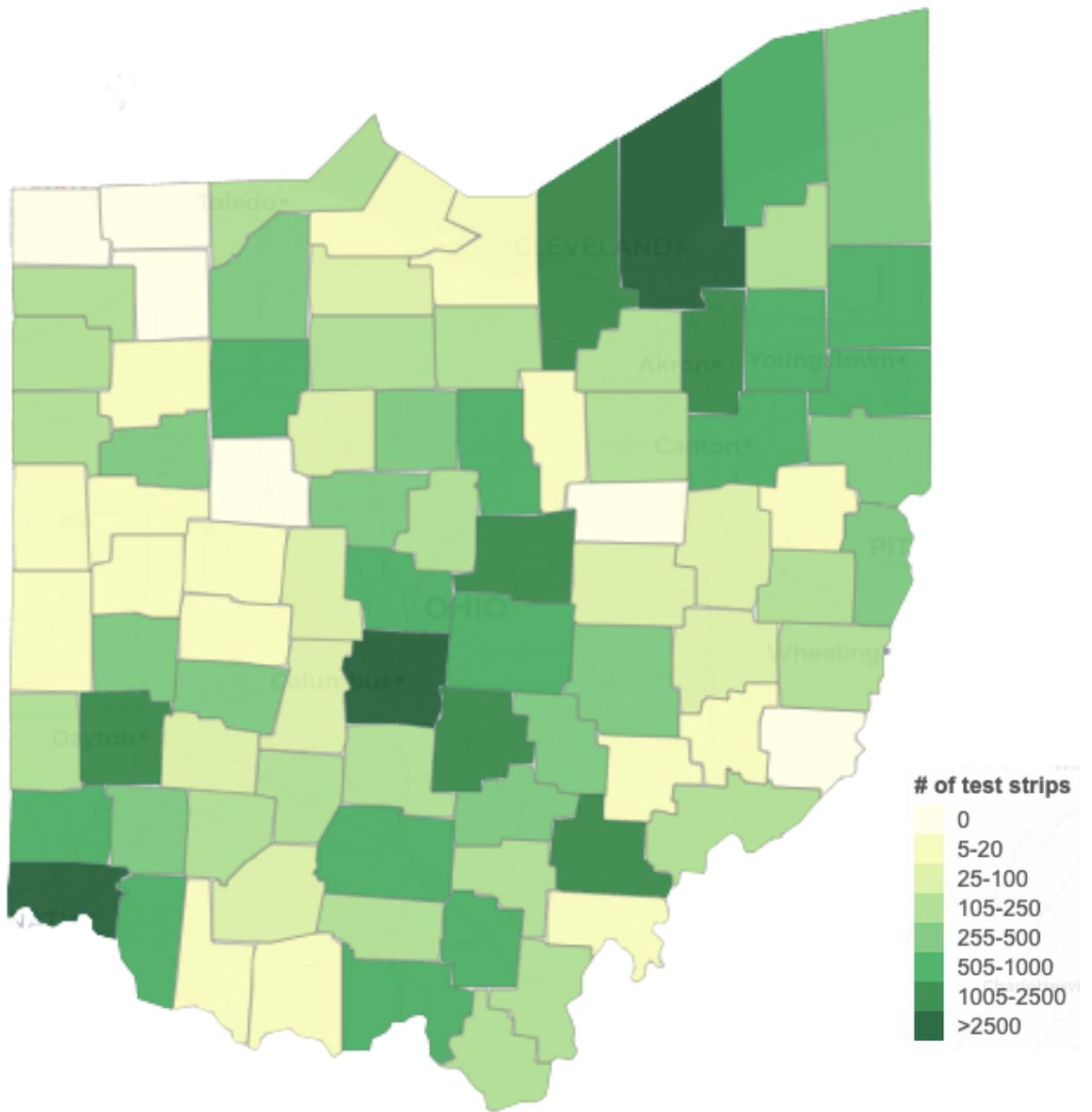
## OUTREACH SHIPMENTS

### Total Spending by Month



As our order volume has increased, so has our monthly program budget. Outreach shipments are much more expensive than personal due to the high volume of test strips in each package. In September, we had to close the outreach order form due to lack of funding. Thanks to your generous support, it has remained available since.





# 81 COUNTIES

*(and counting)*

To date, 1 in 4 test strips have been sent to individuals in counties with no existing harm reduction infrastructure. These "high need" counties are a major focus of our work.



## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT:

# KIM MAXIMOVICH

STRIP CLUB PROGRAM MANAGER



**"It's a very important stewardship for me to be a person of contact and to treat these people with respect. For all I know, I could be the only person in harm reduction or public health that they reach out to."**

KIM MAXIMOVICH  
STRIP CLUB PROGRAM  
MANAGER

Although she'd never worked in harm reduction before, Kim Maximovich fell in love with the concept when she joined SOAR as the Strip Club program manager. At first, she was tasked with assessing whether such a program would even be feasible or desirable. After hours of meetings and research, Kim felt a deep conviction that building the program was necessary.

"I got to hear people's personal stories...about why they needed these things," she said. "I heard so many stories that I will never forget until the day I die."

Since getting the program up and running in the spring of 2021, Kim has led all aspects of the initiative, including order shipments, administrative work, and inventory management, all while juggling a full-time job as a case manager at CoverMyMeds. She's driven by her love for harm reduction to continue working hard.

"Before I realized how unpopular, unshiny, and unglamorous harm reduction was, I was immediately like, 'Oh my god, yeah!'," she said. "It's not just prevention or wagging fingers at people, it's looking at the bigger picture."

Out of everything she does for the organization, Kim's favorite part is answering questions about the service.

"It's a very important stewardship for me to be a person of contact and to treat these people with respect," she said. "For all I know, I could be the only person in harm reduction or public health that they reach out to."



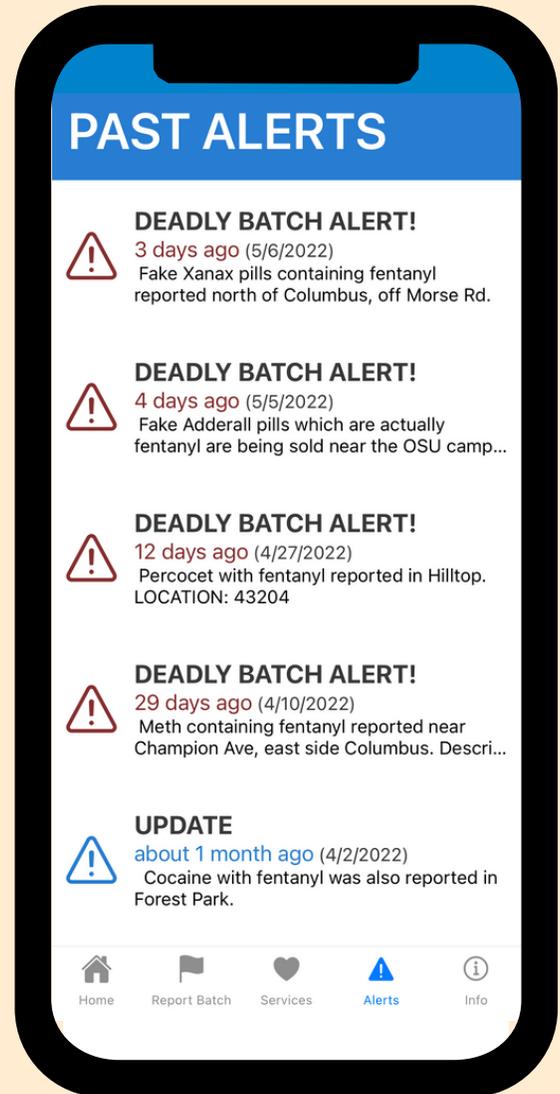
# THE SOAR APP

The SOAR App provides another vessel for individuals in Central Ohio to engage with alerts. Users can submit their own reports, receive push notifications of new alerts, and browse past alerts.

A "Services" tab also allows users to browse different types of harm reduction resources near them, including HIV testing, syringe exchanges, and Narcan.

This year, we have been working on finalizing the design of the app and expanding to all of our alerts regions. We plan to launch the app throughout Ohio by the end of the calendar year.

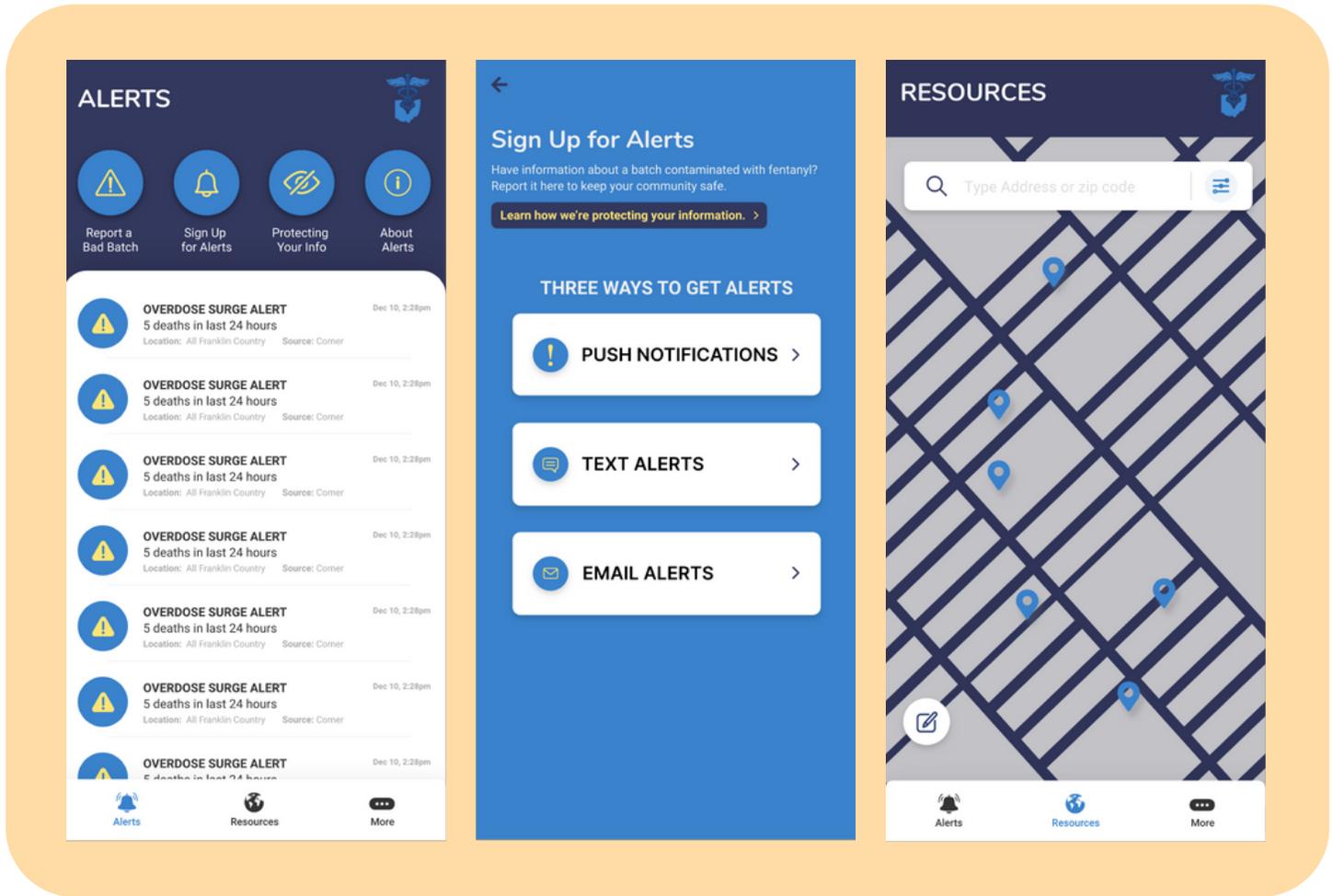
"We developed the SOAR Central Ohio app with a stable technical foundation, and it has successfully reached many people in the region," says Kate Luckerman, App Project Manager. "Our next priority is expanding access to the app across the state to empower more communities to connect and share harm reduction information."



# 1,400

## DOWNLOADS





Get a sneak peak of The SOAR App Version 2, which will be released in the coming months! The new version of the app will feature a sleek, updated design and several new functions, including:

- User additions to the resource map
- The option to toggle between regions
- More accessible FAQs and Privacy Policy
- Email alerts sign-up
- Easily navigable menu

The updated version of the app will continue to be available on the Apple App Store, Google Play Store, and tablets at our partner locations throughout the state, where individuals without smartphone access can view and submit alerts.



# OUTREACH NETWORK

Founded in May 2022, the SOAR Outreach Network exists to both promote SOAR's existing resources, including the Deadly Batch Alerts System and Strip Club, and also support individuals engaging in harm reduction work across the state. Our staff, board, and community partners worked together to recruit over 15 candidates, resulting in a final cohort of 10 outreach workers in diverse communities throughout Ohio, including Columbus, Kent, Troy, Youngstown, Cleveland, Tiffin, and Findlay.



10

**PART-TIME COMMUNITY OUTREACH WORKERS**

7

**REGIONS THROUGHOUT THE STATE OF OHIO**

778

**COMBINED HOURS WORKED TO DATE**



# FINANCIAL REPORTS

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## CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

All figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.

ASSETS		LIABILITIES	
Bank accounts	\$51,300	Credit cards*	\$800
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$51,300</b>	<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>\$800</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>			<b>\$50,500</b>

\*Reflects credit card balances owed on July 31st, 2022, which are paid in full on a biweekly basis.

## CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

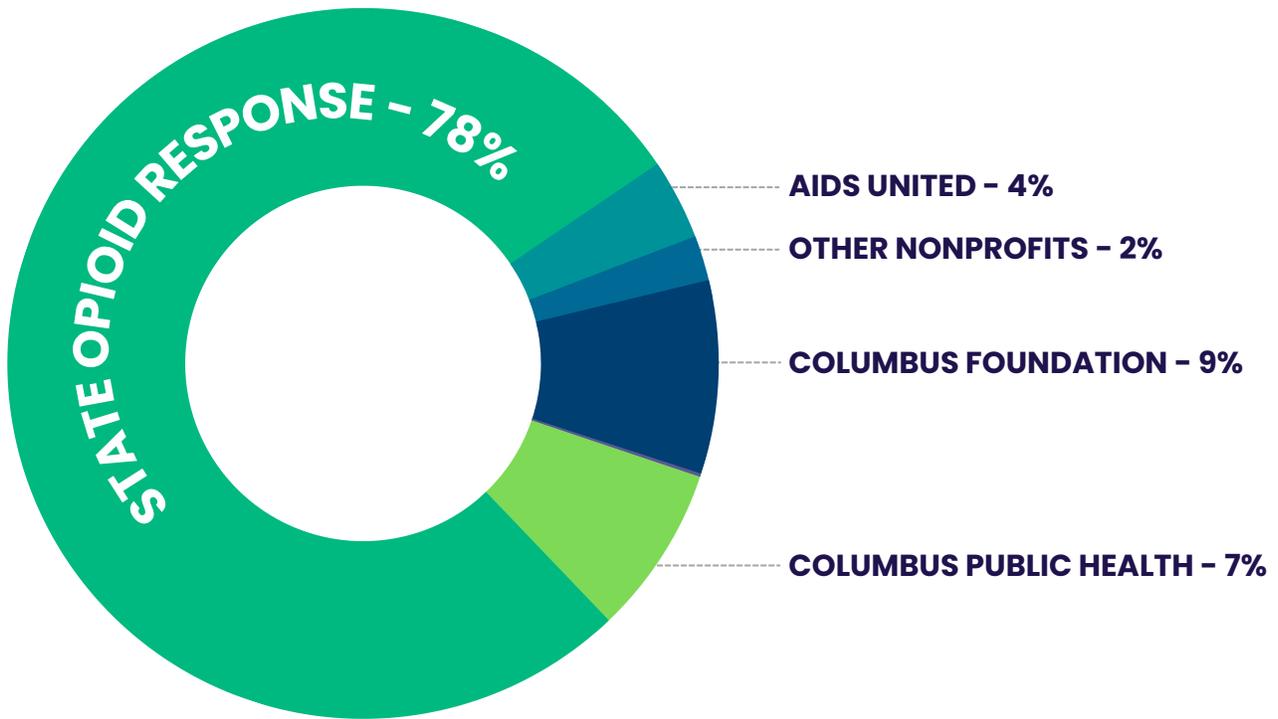
All figures are rounded to the nearest ten.

INCOME	
Government grants and contracts	\$116,740
Contributions from other nonprofits	\$19,460
Interest	\$190
Other income	\$80
Individual donors	\$10
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$136,480</b>
EXPENSES	
Wages and contractor fees	\$53,630
Safe use supplies	\$44,290
Printing and other office expenses	\$13,520
Rent and utilities	\$13,140
Shipping and postage	\$7,360
Software and computing equipment	\$7,030
Advertising and marketing	\$5,210
Conference travel	\$3,720
Vehicle expenses	\$620
Insurance	\$330
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$148,850</b>
<b>NET REVENUE</b>	<b>-\$12,370</b>



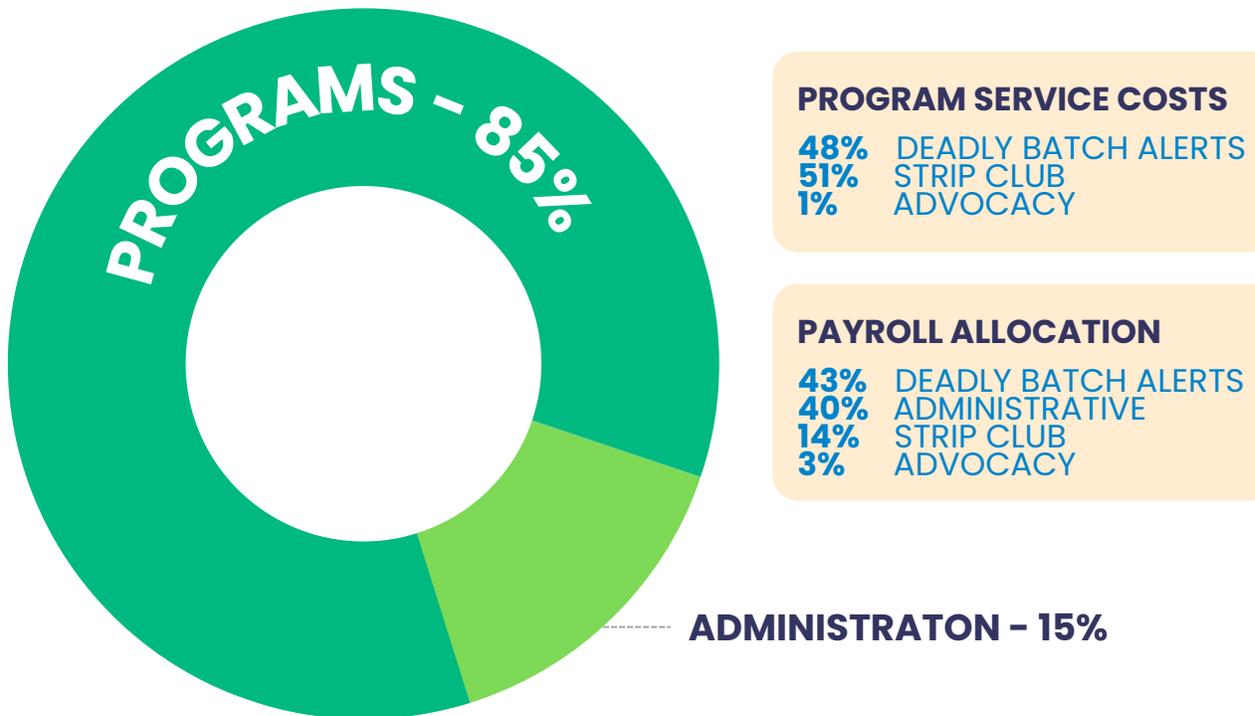
# INCOME SOURCES

INTEREST AND INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS NOT A SIGNIFICANT PROPORTION (<0.1%)



# EXPENSE ALLOCATION

FUNDRAISING COSTS NOT A SIGNIFICANT PROPORTION (<0.1%)



# PARTNERS AND SUPPORT

**Staff and Board..... 21**  
**Partners..... 23**



# STAFF

## ADMINISTRATIVE

**Pranav Padmanabhan**  
*Executive Director*

**Sydney Sauer**  
*Director of Operations*

**Andrea Hefferan**  
*Marketing + Social Media Manager*

**Kim Maxmovich**  
*Program Manager, Strip Club*

**Lydia Bentley**  
*Assistant Program Manager, Strip Club*

## TECHNOLOGY

**Joseph Esposito**  
*Director of Technology*

**Kate Luckerman**  
*App Project Manager + Frontend Developer*

## COMMUNITY RELATIONS

**Jessica Mitsch**  
*Director of Community Relations*

**Ashlee Schlerer**  
*Community Outreach Worker*

**Hannah Qin**  
*Community Outreach Worker*

**Jereme Maffei**  
*Community Outreach Worker*

**Jessica Collier**  
*Community Outreach Worker*

**Mark Verhoff**  
*Community Outreach Worker*

**Matthew Ellis**  
*Government Affairs Coordinator*

**Paige Snyder**  
*Community Outreach Worker*

**Sharona Bishop**  
*Community Outreach Worker*

**Suzanne Plymale**  
*Community Outreach Worker*

**Tonja Catron**  
*Community Outreach Worker*



# EXECUTIVE BOARD

**Larkin Cleland\***

*Chair of the Board*

*Undergraduate Student, The Ohio State University*

**Anne Trinh, MPH**

*Senior Program Manager, Addiction Innovation Fund*

*Evaluator and Community Engagement Specialist, The Center for HOPES*

**Brittany Carter**

*SafePoint Syringe Services Program by Equitas Health*

**Dana Lavender**

*Opioid Awareness Program Manager, African American Male Wellness Agency*

**Dennis Pales\***

*Medical Student, The University of Colorado School of Medicine*

**Evan Robinson, MSW**

*Community Relations Manager of Harm Reduction, Equitas Health*

**Suzanne Plymale**

*Peer Support Specialist, Community Medical Services*

*Leader, Central Ohio Harm Reduction*

**Varshita Chirumamilla\***

*Medical Student, The Ohio State University*

\*SOAR co-founder



# PARTNERS

## COMMUNITY PARTNERS



## FISCAL PARTNERS

