



Center Director's Report from Brenda Salgado

March 18, 2016

Spring Has Sprung – Growing at EBMC Together

Beloved Sangha,

As winter gives way to spring, as we move from a season of dormancy, rest and reflection to one of new shoots, growth and new beginnings, I find myself reflecting on Lama Rod Owen's recent article [We Are Tara](#), in Lion's Roar:



Photo by Xiomara Castro



"Tara... sits with her right leg extended outward. This posture is an act of subversion and resistance, because what Green Tara represents is active and direct compassion. She rejects a comfortable seat because she knows that we need her to be ready. Even before we turn our minds to her, she is already leaning forward preparing to help. Tara is ready at any time to get into our messiness as a personal agent of our liberation... Perhaps the most important dharmic truth now is this: we are Tara... Like her, we jump off our comfortable cushions and get involved not just in helping people but also in confronting the ways in which we reproduce violence when we stay on our comfortable seats. Choosing not to move is choosing to sabotage Tara and ourselves. Our practice, like Tara's, has to be more than just caring. It must also be about action."

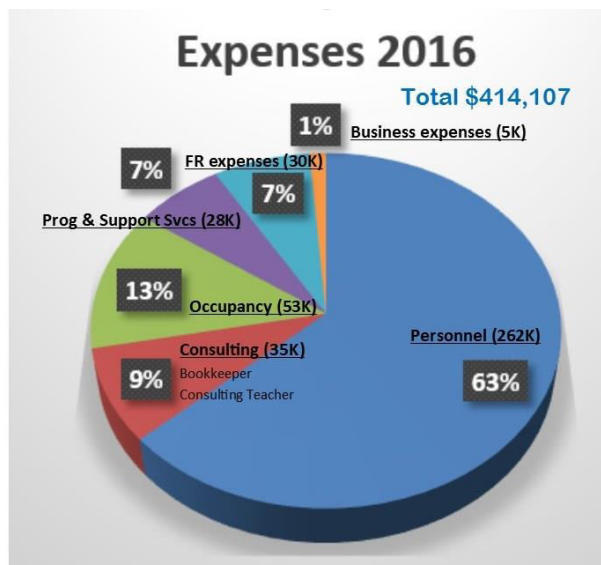
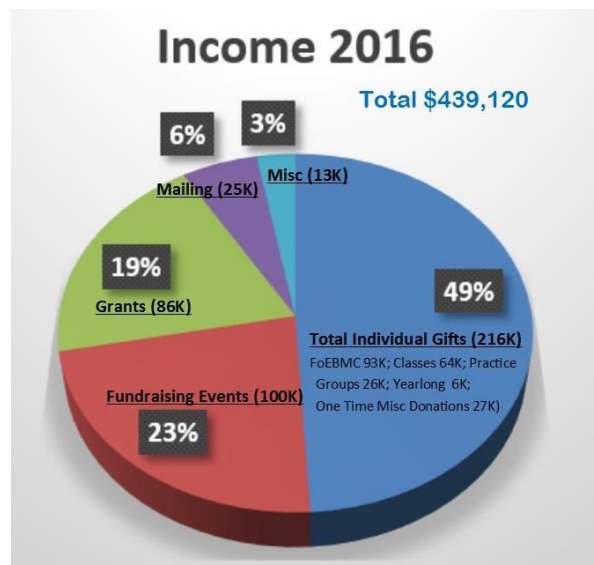
What a powerful message as we enter Spring together, as communities and movements here and around the world are waking up to their dignity and power! As I watch the kale shoots forming in my garden, I think of the many ways EBMC's founding teachers planted these seeds of action toward collective liberation as central to the vision of EBMC.

Deep bows of gratitude for the many ways large and small that you contribute to co-creating this spiritual and radically inclusive community together through your actions every day. I am humbled by the many sharings and teachings each one of you has given me in my first two years as Director at EBMC, and the ways I am being called to grow and take action off the cushion right now. One important commitment is to continue to deepen our transparency with you about what is happening at EBMC. Here are some highlights:

2016 Finances

As I shared in our Fall 2015 newsletter, we ended 2015 with about \$361,000 in total income and \$357,000 in expenses. Deep bows of appreciation to our EBMC community for your tremendous generosity, and for the sangha members who shared their beautiful stories about the impact of EBMC in their lives. We surpassed our December 2015 end-of-year fundraising goal, met our matching grant from the Kalliopeia Foundation, and we raised more than we ever have before in our end-of-year fundraising campaign. We had a net of \$13,625 for the programs that are transforming lives every day!

For 2016, we are stretching and growing together: we are aiming our sights toward \$439,000 in income, and \$414,000 in expenses. Here is a snapshot for 2016:



What are some of the significant differences in expenses for 2016, you ask? Here they are!

- Consulting Expenses:** Larry Yang came on board part-time as our Consulting Teacher in September of 2015. We have been working with him on strategic policy documents for our Practice Groups, our Teacher Sangha, and Restoration and Resolution Policies. Larry’s expertise has been invaluable in shaping the first drafts of these documents, which he is now shepherding in discussions with the relevant committees and leadership groups, so these policies are informed by the community. This is an important investment in EBMC’s organizational development and maturity as a Sangha, and we are thankful to be able to demonstrate reciprocity for the time and skills that Larry is bringing to these efforts.
- Personnel Expenses:** Our Assistant Director Xiaojing Wang continues to bring amazing and professional skills to our team. As we grow and identify urgent areas to be addressed in the organization, Xiaojing has increased her time to 30 hours in 2016. Some of her additional time will be focused on projects related to our donor database, as well as additional HR and administrative functions.
- In alignment with our social justice values, we began offering sick, vacation and holiday pay to our employees in 2015. Our goal in 2016 is to begin to offer health benefits to our employees in July 2016, which is dependent on the success of our fundraising between now and June. The health and well-being of our staff is vital, and health care plays an important role in honoring and compensating their hard work in keeping EBMC running smoothly. Can you help us get there?

Fundraising 2016 — Reaching our goals together

We can’t get there without you! The Dharma-thon takes place April 1-2, 2016. Our goal is to raise \$25,000, and to have 25 Dharmathoners fundraising! See Cassandra’s section in this newsletter for more details on the exclusive thank you dinner for Dharmathoners with Sharon Salzberg and Spring Washam.

Other fundraising activities to stay tuned for this year:

1. **Save the date!** June 15, 2016: An exciting Alice Walker and Jack Kornfield event is in the works.
2. We will be hosting some innovative program partnership events with Impact Hub Oakland this year.
3. We are budgeting for a 5% increase in Friends of EBMC (monthly donors) and Registered Class revenues.
4. We are budgeting for a 10% increase in Practice Group and Yearlong Programs revenue.
5. We are pursuing some new foundation proposals this year, and welcome any connections to aligned foundations that you can help us to cultivate relationships with — please contact us through the EBMC website.
6. We are re-launching our Generosity Committee to provide strategic leadership and support for long-term EBMC Development Planning. Contact me directly if you are ready to roll up your sleeves and join this wonderful team! We are going to have a great time calling in abundance for our Beloved Community and all we are doing here.

Welcome new Leadership Sangha members!

We are pleased to announce our three new Leadership Sangha members joining the board in March 2016. They include Ramon Honea, Melissa Green and Jinky de Rivera.

Ramon has been coming to EBMC for 8 years, volunteering at various programs and events over the years. For the past two years he has been a member of the Coordinating Committee for the People of Color Sangha, and he serves in a leadership role with two Deep Refuge groups.

Melissa began attending EBMC in 2009, has served on the Generosity Committee, completed the 2014 cohort of Commit to Dharma, participated in the inaugural White Allies Active and Awakening in Sangha 6-month program at EBMC in 2015, and is a founding member of the Deep Refuge group that emerged from this practice group. She also serves as part of EBMC's social media volunteer team.

Jinky has been involved with EBMC on and off over the years, and was one of EBMC's first bookkeepers many years ago. She is active in LGBTQI leadership and organizing issues, and she is bringing her many years of experience in nonprofit finance and budgeting to our LSangha.

We are grateful to our [new and existing board members](#) alike for their generous spirit of service, for their love and stewardship of EBMC, and for commitment to EBMC's strategic leadership, growth and sustainability. Welcome aboard, LSangha of 2016!

Staff Transitions, Gratitude and Welcome

Mahogany Moton, EBMC's Event Coordinator, has provided such wonderful support over the years to keep our programming and operations running smoothly. She first visited EBMC in 2010 for a meditation class, began volunteering right away, and was eventually invited to serve as EBMC's first Event Coordinator, a position which she has been growing and shaping over the years. She recently accepted a

position as Office Manager with [Red Bay Coffee](#), an Oakland company aligned with many of EBMC's values. Red Bay Coffee aims to diversify the world of specialty coffee roasting and service by hiring and training workers who traditionally face barriers to employment, and also strives to disrupt the traditional café business model through profit sharing with employees. We wish Mahogany and Red Bay Coffee many blessings as she joins their team. Though she is leaving our staff, Mahogany will still be part of our EBMC family and Sangha. She shared with me recently that she is excited she will have the chance to begin attending classes as a participant soon, so don't be surprised if you see her on a cushion or chair beside you!

We are greatly pleased to announce Alicia Kester, EBMC Sangha member and former volunteer, as our new Event Coordinator. Alicia began attending EBMC several years ago when we were still at our Broadway location, and she is excited to be joining the EBMC staff and bringing her experience to our team in this new capacity. Alicia has a 15-year career in event planning, operational management and fundraising, and comes with many skills specific to this position. Please join us in offering her a warm welcome. Welcome to our staff team, Alicia!



In closing, I want to share a few things. At the end of April I will be speaking at the Mindful Life Conference on transformative practices and social justice movement building. In early May I will be offering the Commencement Address at Naropa University, and will be taking time out during that trip to speak to Naropa faculty and Hemera Foundation staff about East Bay Meditation Center's work and our unique model.

I attended Wisdom 2.0 last month, in part to celebrate some of our Sangha members and close friends hosting an important panel there. Konda Mason, Diane Johnson, Jakada Imani, and Drew Dellinger led *Sustaining Change: Contemplative Practice, Black Lives Matter and Strategies for Compassion*. There was a lot of love spoken for EBMC's work, from the panel, teachers, audience members, and many attendees throughout the two days I was there. I wanted to share that praise with all of you because it belongs to all of us.

That's all the news for now. I would love to plant one more seed for you to germinate on. The staff and I are already dreaming together about what our 10 Year Anniversary celebrations might look like next year! Such an important milestone for us all, and for the founding teachers who planted the seed of what EBMC was to become today.

Thank you for your commitment to this path we are on together, for making it possible for us to enter our tenth year preserving our strong commitment to a gift economy model, for the conversations many of you have shared with me about maturing our Sangha practices together these past two years, and for the opportunity to serve, learn and grow with you.

In peace and metta,
Brenda Salgado
EBMC Center Director