CITIES STRONG TOGETHER

THE NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES IS THE VOICE OF AMERICA’S CITIES, TOWNS AND VILLAGES REPRESENTING MORE THAN 200 MILLION PEOPLE ACROSS THE COUNTRY.
200 MILLION PEOPLE
MISSION
TO STRENGTHEN LOCAL LEADERSHIP, INFLUENCE FEDERAL POLICY AND DRIVE INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS.
2019 WAS A GROUNDBREAKING YEAR FOR THE NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES (NLC). WE GREW OUR MEMBERSHIP, EXPANDED OUR RESEARCH AND PROGRAMMING, FORMED NEW PARTNERSHIPS, AND STRENGTHENED EXISTING RELATIONSHIPS.

This is the moment to build on our accomplishments from 2019 and set our sights on an even better 2020.

We also launched the Love My City campaign, which engaged local communities across the country to spread the message of love and connection between residents and their local governments by focusing on four pillars of program work:

Encouraging civic engagement, building communities for all generations, uplifting legacy cities and ensuring housing for all.

With these priorities and five organizational goals guiding NLC throughout the year, we achieved our mission to strengthen local leadership, influence federal policy and drive innovative solutions. In the pages that follow, we highlight our achievements specific to three of our 2019 goals: To strengthen relationships with the 49 state municipal leagues, drive solutions to America’s housing crisis, and advocate for infrastructure investment.

Establishing Stronger Coordination With State Municipal Leagues

NLC continues to build strong connections and engagement opportunities with the 49 state municipal leagues. With a presence at 42 state league conferences and record attendance at NLC’s State League Staff Workshop last year, NLC is more in touch than ever with our founding members. In 2019, the state leagues were also deeply involved in NLC’s latest member engagement and advocacy efforts, including the 2019 National Task Force on Housing and the nonpartisan 2020 Presidential Election Task force. State municipal leagues continue to play an important role in guiding the organization’s priorities and serving as a connector to their states.
Drive Solutions For America’s Housing Crisis

Housing instability and homelessness in America are at epidemic levels, and leadership from NLC is vital. That is why NLC created a National Task Force on Housing, chaired by Washington, D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser. The task force was comprised of local leaders representing a diversity of city sizes and geographies that are experiencing a wide array of housing issues. The Task Force developed a set of best practices for the local level as well as policy recommendations for partnership with the federal and state governments. In addition to the work of the Task Force, NLC developed new resources and advocacy efforts, including four new reports and four new programming opportunities. We also led conversations and demanded action from our federal partners, including leaders on Capitol Hill and U.S. Secretary for Housing and Urban Development Ben Carson. There is still much work to be done and NLC will continue to prioritize solutions to housing instability and homelessness in 2020 and beyond.

Advocate For Federal Infrastructure Investment

Infrastructure has been a buzzword in Washington for years. Meanwhile, no real progress has been made by the federal level to improve our nation’s crumbling infrastructure. But, NLC won’t let federal leaders off the hook. In 2019, our advocacy spurred some federal action, including two bills related to water infrastructure, a transportation authorization bill, the reauthorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and more. NLC and our partners also hosted four infrastructure briefings on Capitol Hill, providing local insight on the nation’s infrastructure needs.

There is still work to be done, and NLC will continue to call on the administration and Congress to rebuild America’s infrastructure in partnership with cities. To that end, we have included “building sustainable infrastructure” as a pillar in our nonpartisan 2020 Cities Agenda, asking all presidential candidates to commit to prioritizing infrastructure within the first 100 days of being in office.

A Strong Foundation for 2020

NLC is one of the most relevant organizations in Washington and throughout America. In partnership with our members, the state municipal leagues, and our private sector partners, we are making a difference in the lives of people who call our communities home.

Appropriately, we concluded our year with the 2019 City Summit in San Antonio, where we shared the importance of seizing our moment. This is the moment for cities, towns, and villages. This is the moment for local leadership to cut through partisan division.

Onward,

Clarence E. Anthony
CEO AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
National League of Cities
2019 AT A GLANCE

2,400+ Members

1,450 NLC University Executive Leaders Served

310 Communities provided technical assistance

45 New publications
5,700+ Mentions in the press

$8.3M+ New grant funding

3,300+ Advocacy actions by local leaders
ONE OF THE KEY WAYS THAT NLC STRENGTHENED LOCAL LEADERSHIP IN 2019 WAS THROUGH THE LOVE MY CITY CAMPAIGN AND PROGRAM WORK.

Following the vision and leadership of NLC President Karen Freeman-Wilson, the campaign was structured and supported in a way that could not only drive meaningful marketing and engagement results, but also strengthen and deepen our partnerships and program work. Internally, it meant building a stronger culture of collaboration across departments, engaging members and partners in a new way, and attracting new sources of funding.

To engage members and partners, share content, and reach people across the country, NLC developed a sophisticated, multipronged communications and marketing strategy that included a microsite with extensive resources including a custom logo generator, weekly blog content, a social media campaign with over 8,000 engagements, and a digital billboard and airport collaboration with Clear Channel Outdoor that reached 278 million people.

The Love My City campaign was embraced by local officials, state municipal leagues, and private sector partners in a powerful way.
ESTABLISHING STRONGER COORDINATION WITH STATE MUNICIPAL LEAGUES

Since its founding in 1924 by 10 state municipal leagues, the National League of Cities (NLC) remains committed to its history of advocating for the needs of cities, towns and villages across the country. The NLC governance structure includes a special place for league executive directors and the organization now calls all 49 of the country’s state leagues partners.

Over the years, the state leagues have partnered with NLC on research, advocacy efforts and priorities, in addition to joining special task forces. In 2019, state leagues were invited to join NLC’s housing task force which produced a comprehensive report on the housing crisis in municipalities. State league executives also joined NLC on a bipartisan presidential election task force that produced an agenda of issues that each presidential candidate is being asked to commit to.

NLC and State League Partnership

By The Numbers

- **115** RECORD ATTENDANCE of SML staff at NLC State League Staff Workshop
- **97%** SATISFACTION RATING from SML executive directors at NLC Executive Directors Workshop
- **42** STATES SML CONFERENCES attended by NLC staff or leadership.
The NLC governance structure includes a special place for league executive directors and the organization now calls all 49 of the country’s state leagues partners.
**ESTABLISHING STRONGER COORDINATION WITH STATE MUNICIPAL LEAGUES**

**Spotlight on VERMONT**

**MAURA CARROLL** has spent most of her career in local and state government, including serving on the Concord City Council and as a state representative in New Hampshire. For the past five years, she has served as Executive Director of the Vermont League of Cities and Town (VLCT).

In 2019, she served on the NLC Executive Committee and Advisory Membership Committee.

**Describe VLCT’s involvement with NLC in 2019?**

My involvement with NLC in 2019 was as a Board member and member of the Executive and Membership Committees. VLCT was involved with NLC through attendance at the Congressional City Workshop, the State League staff workshop and City Summit, which two local officials and I attended. In addition, VLCT’s risk pools are involved with NLC RISC and have presented on a variety of topics at conferences and attended conferences with pool Board members. VLCT pool director is a member of the Board of NLC Mutual Insurance Company.

**What was the most memorable experience of participating on the NLC executive committee?**

The most memorable experience was getting to know the officers and members of the committee, as well as seeing the work of senior staff “up close.” I was inspired by NLC President Karen Freeman-Wilson and appreciate the commitment of the organization’s officers and staff to local government and to NLC. Dedication to public service and respect for government at the local level is truly a hallmark of each of their approaches to issues and challenges.

**Describe the relationship between NLC and state municipal leagues?**

NLC provides significant support to state leagues in the form of resources, federal advocacy, amicus curiae through the State and Local Legal Center and assistance with training at national conferences, in individual states and at state league conferences.
What was your biggest takeaway from the Love My City/Town/Village campaign?

When the campaign rolled out, I was concerned that VLCT’s members in Vermont would feel that it didn’t affect or apply to them if it was simply a “Love my City” campaign. Vermont has 9 cities and 237 towns, with villages also added to the mix. The addition of language for cities, towns and villages helped us to involve Vermont communities in the campaign and to showcase the great things happening around the state, including highlighting a locally produced video at the league’s annual conference. It showed that NLC was listening to league concerns and willing to adopt more inclusive language for its membership.

We are continuing the campaign in Vermont and have something special planned for Valentine’s Day 2020.

What was the biggest challenge facing state leagues in 2019 and how did NLC help leagues address?

I asked colleagues for input on this question and there is general agreement that the biggest challenge is having the state and federal government override local hometown decisionmaking and impose its policy and financial will on cities and towns, without providing relief. Examples include presumption issues, preemption issues and unfunded mandates. This issue was a priority for the federal advocacy team and NLC as a whole and it makes a difference having a partner at the federal level helping us to launch a full frontal attack on these issues at the state and federal levels.

“The most memorable experience was getting to know the officers and members of the committee, as well as seeing the work of senior staff “up close.”
Rising home prices and stagnant wages have put tremendous strain on housing markets across the country. Cities, large and small, must deal with their own set of housing and community challenges.

Everyone deserves a home. And in 2019, NLC came together to prioritize housing. Through collaboration, research, programming and advocacy, we’ve built a strong foundation to continue this work into the foreseeable future.

**National Task Force**

More than 20 local leaders from across the country came together to form the National League of Cities (NLC) Housing Task Force, chaired by Washington, D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser. Their goal was to examine the causes of the housing crisis, spotlight innovative solutions already being implemented at the local level and create a set of policy recommendations to support the millions of Americans in need of adequate housing.

The work of the task force culminated in a comprehensive report co-created with the cities, towns and villages NLC worked with.

To date, “Homeward Bound: The Road to Affordable Housing” has been downloaded nearly 2,000 times.
Housing is in a state of crisis in America—and cities, towns and villages are on the front lines.

**Housing Resources and Advocacy**

When it comes to housing, one size doesn’t fit all. Besides the task force report, we put out a number of resources, including:

- **Housing Market Conditions Across America’s Cities**
- **Local Tools to Address Housing Affordability: A State-By-State Analysis**
- **Affordable Housing and Health: City Roles and Strategies for Progress**
- **Addressing Mental Health, Substance Use and Homelessness Series**

And created programming and opportunities so that local leaders can start effecting change in their communities:

- **Healthy Housing Peer Learning Network**
- **Healthy Housing Leaders Forum**
- **Mayors’ Action Challenge**
- **Cities of Opportunity**

_NLC also worked tirelessly to ensure cities, towns and villages were heard at the federal level._

Backed by our members, we:

- Met with HUD Secretary Ben Carson
- Held Hill briefings related to housing
- Submitted commentary on HUD’s Implementation of the Fair Housing Act’s Disparate Impact Standard
Washington, D.C.’s, population and economy have grown in recent years, causing an increased demand for affordable housing for low and moderate income households.

Fortunately, Mayor Muriel Bowser is prioritizing housing, and has launched a number of programs to help the city’s most vulnerable residents.

Following the recommendations of the DC Housing Preservation Strike Force, a team of housing experts and members of the public created in 2015 by Mayor Bowser, the city created a “Preservation Unit” within the Department of Housing and Community Development. The unit focuses on preserving affordable units with and without government subsidies. It also collects and maintains data on all affordable housing opportunities in the city.

Meanwhile, the Small Buildings Grant Program will provide funds for limited systems replacement and other key repairs to eligible property owners of multi-family rental housing of five to 20 units. Repairs are expected to improve substandard housing conditions, including safety and environmental hazards in D.C. as required by other regulatory agencies. Additionally, the Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act gives tenants in buildings for sale the first opportunity to buy the building.

Other targeted programs, like the Single-Family Rehabilitation program and the Safe at Home program, assist seniors with home repairs. The city is also instituting a new Housing Assistance Program for Unsubsidized Seniors that provides modest housing assistance to low-income seniors.

The affordable housing crisis is one of the most critical issues we are facing in this country, and one on which we are effectively working to tackle in Washington, DC. From investing hundreds of millions of dollars for affordable units in new developments to building creative livings spaces like grand-family housing for seniors raising their grandchildren, we know that mayors will lead the way in providing innovative solutions.

Today, the city’s Housing Preservation Fund is expected to grow to about $40 million. The money will be used to help finance eligible borrowers intending to purchase and maintain occupied multi-family housing with more than five units, half of which must be affordable to households earning up to 80 percent of the median family income. As of this writing, more than 800 units have been preserved as affordable housing since the start of fiscal year 2018. And over 1,000 units have been preserved as affordable housing since fiscal year 2002.
ADVOCATE FOR
FEDERAL INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

THE NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES IS THE VOICE OF AMERICA’S CITIES IN WASHINGTON, D.C. OUR DRIVE IS TO EMPOWER LOCAL LEADERS TO ADVOCATE FOR CITY PRIORITIES. IN A TIME OF PARTISANSHIP AND GRIDLOCK IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, OUR COMMUNITIES AND RESIDENTS DEPEND ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS TO DRIVE POLICY AND PARTNERSHIP FORWARD.

LOCAL DRIVE LEGISLATIVE SUCCESSES & NLC SUPPORTED FEDERAL ACTION ON INFRASTRUCTURE INCLUDE:

Two bills related to water infrastructure funding and flexibilities for communities passed the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

The House passed a bill to require full use of the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund for its original intent.

Transportation authorization bill passed the Senate Environment and Public Works committee.

Congress passed a permanent reauthorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund and codified The Every Kid Outdoors program.

Workforce action through Pathways to Health Career Act passed by House Ways & Means Committee.

The DC Circuit partially vacated an FCC order preempting the use of historical and environmental review for small cell wireless facilities.

4 INFRASTRUCTURE BRIEFINGS HOSTED (OR CO-HOSTED) ON CAPITOL HILL, PROVIDING MUCH NEEDED LOCAL INSIGHT ON CRITICAL TOPICS INCLUDING WORKFORCE FUNDING, WATER INFRASTRUCTURE, AND BROADBAND:

- Workforce Hill Briefing with Campaign to Invest in America’s Workforce (CIAW)
- Workforce Hill Briefing with U.S. Conference of Mayors, National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB) and National Association of Counties (NACo)
- City Hall 101: The Role of Cities in Moving America Forward
- Transportation Briefing with Rep. Davis and Rep. Lipinski

4 INFRASTRUCTURE WEEK EVENTS HOSTED (OR CO-HOSTED) ON WORKFORCE, WATER INFRASTRUCTURE, BROADBAND AND TRANSPORTATION
Federal Advocacy
By the Numbers

THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, CITIES, TOWNS AND VILLAGES MADE THEIR PRESENCE KNOWN THROUGH CAPITOL HILL ACTION, MEMBER ENGAGEMENT AND EVENTS:

6 NLC MEMBER BRIEFINGS
for local leaders and state leagues before heading to Capitol Hill.

17 SETS OF COMMENTS
submitted to federal agencies to advocate for local priorities and partnership between all levels of government.

200+ MEETINGS WITH MEMBERS
of Congress and federal officials.

10 CAPITOL HILL BRIEFINGS
providing much needed local insight on critical topics including workforce funding, opportunity zones, water infrastructure, broadband and housing and homelessness.

4 CONGRESSIONAL TESTIMONIES
by local elected leaders, including NLC President Karen Freeman-Wilson, on transportation issues ranging from congestion to innovation.

7 FLY-INS
bringing in more than 150 local leaders to Washington, D.C. to advocate on behalf of their communities.

We are continuing to support our State Municipal Leagues, while partnering with other organizations on every facet of American infrastructure. From investing to grassroots action to policy craft, NLC understands how Washington works. We know that cities, towns and villages need – this is why our residents put us in this position. We are not waiting on infrastructure: we are acting.
INFLUENCING FEDERAL POLICY:
Spotlight on Alliance, Nebraska
Mayor MIKE DAFNEY

ON WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18TH, 2019, MAYOR MIKE DAFNEY OF ALLIANCE, NEBRASKA WAS IN WASHINGTON, D.C. ADVOCATING ON BEHALF OF HIS COMMUNITY. AS PART OF NLC’S 2019 LOCAL LEADERS FLY-IN, 20 LOCAL OFFICIALS MET WITH STAFFERS AND MEMBERS OF CONGRESS IN OVER 40 MEETINGS ON CAPITOL HILL TO LOBBY CONGRESS TO TAKE ACTION ON TRANSPORTATION ISSUES THAT AFFECT RURAL CITIES LIKE ALLIANCE. IT WAS ONLY ONE PART OF AN AMAZING YEAR OF ACTION AND ENGAGEMENT BY MAYOR DAFNEY AND THE CITY OF ALLIANCE.

Local leaders, and NLC members, do not stand alone. Mayor Dafney sits on the Transportation and Infrastructure Services Federal Advocacy Committee, working tirelessly throughout the year alongside his peers to realize American infrastructure goals in 2019. The key to progress is partnership. Partnerships between local leaders and community members, between industries, between State Leagues and NLC, between the federal, state and local governments in our nation – all to rebuild and reimagine our nation’s infrastructure systems.

When it comes to advocating for federal support, Dafney’s top priority aligns with those of American communities, urban and rural, small and large. But infrastructure is not some blanket ideal – it involves safety, mobility, connectivity, and tailoring funding and policy to the needs of diverse residents and communities.

With a long history as a member of his community, Mayor Dafney will continue to do what he sees as best for the future of Alliance and our nation’s cities, towns and villages. “Two things, what’s common sense and what’s the right thing to do, they go hand in hand. When it comes to the taxpayers, I’m real conscious of what I do to them... When it comes to businesses, I’m one of those that says let’s not put obstacles up to
Congress has a lot they need to accomplish for the country right now, and NLC leaders visited with our Representatives and Senators these past few days to share the issues impacting our areas that could benefit from national action – like infrastructure, flood insurance and workforce training. Congress has a chance to prove that the everyday issues can get a vote in both the Senate and House for the good of the country.
PUBLICATIONS

THE NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES CONDUCTS RESEARCH AND GATHERS SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES TO HELP CITIES CONTINUE TO INNOVATE, STRENGTHEN THEIR ECONOMIES, AND CREATE VIBRANT NEIGHBORHOODS WHERE PEOPLE LOVE TO LIVE. IN 2019, WE PUBLISHED OVER 25 PIECES TO HELP UPLIFT, EDUCATE AND INFORM OUR MEMBERS. THESE INCLUDE:

Advocacy
- Rebuild with Us Infrastructure Principles
- Leading Together: 2020 Cities Agenda

Race, Equity and Leadership
- Responding to Racial Tension in Your City
- City Profile on Racial Equity: Grand Rapids
- City Profile on Racial Equity: Louisville
- City Profile on Racial Equity: Seattle
- Online Resource: Repository of Racial Equity and Policy Decisions

Institute for Youth, Education and Families
- Cities Supporting the Early Childhood Workforce
- Early Childhood Alignment Rating Tool
- Toward an Expanded City Role Supporting Youth in the Deep End of the Juvenile Justice System
- Reducing the Use of Jails: Exploring Roles for City Leaders
- Triage Centers as Alternatives to Jail for People in Behavioral Health Crises
- 3-Part Issue Brief Series: Mental Illness, Substance Use and Homelessness
- Cities of Opportunity: Highlights and Summary from 12-City Pilot
- Strategy Guide: City-Corps Partnerships
- Strategy Guide: Libraries as Nature Connectors
Center for City Solutions

2019 State of the Cities
2019 City Fiscal Conditions Report
Homeward Bound: The Road to Affordable Housing
Local Tools to Address Housing Affordability: A State-by-State Analysis
Housing Market Conditions Across America’s Cities
Restoring City Rights in an Era of Preemption
Making Space: Congestion Pricing in Cities
Micromobility in Cities: A History and Policy Overview

Opportunity Zones: What Cities Should Know
Protecting Our Data: What Cities Should Know About Cybersecurity
Place-based Policies for America’s Innovation Economy
Understanding Defined Benefit & Defined Contribution Retirement Plans
Fixing Funding by the Mile: A Primer and Analysis of Road User Charge Systems
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Thank you to our corporate and foundation partners for their generous support.

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(grants received by NLC during 2019)

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The Wallace Foundation
U.S. Department of Energy
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
U.S. Economic Development Administration
US Tennis Association
W.K. Kellogg Foundation
Walmart Foundation
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- HomeServe

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- Accela
- Esri
- Expedia Group
- Starbucks
- Strada Education Network
- Tyler Technologies
- Wells Fargo

**Executive Partners**
- Aetna
- American Institute of Architects
- AT&T
- Bird
- Black & Veatch
- Charter Communications
- Cigna
- Cisco
- CityHealth
- Clear Channel Outdoor
- Colonial Life
- Comcast
- Crown Castle
- Consumer Technology Association
- Enterprise Holdings
- Facebook
- Ford
- IBTS
- ICSC
- Jacobs
- Johnson Controls
- LinkedIn
- Municipal Finance Services
- Square
- Stantec
- Suez
- T-Mobile
- Tesla
- Home Depot
- U-Haul
- Uber
- United Healthcare
- Walgreens
- Walmart
- Waste Management
- Waymo

**Associate Partners**
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2018-2019
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NLC’s leadership provides strategic direction and guidance for our federal advocacy, governance and membership activities throughout the year.

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FINANCIALS

WITH 2019 CONSOLIDATED REVENUES OF $33.1 MILLION FOR THE NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES AND NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES INSTITUTE, NLC’S FINANCIAL POSITION IS STRONG. NLC MAINTAINS RESERVES WITHOUT DONOR RESTRICTIONS OF $22.0 MILLION AS OF THE END OF FISCAL YEAR 2019, WHICH IS USED TO PROVIDE WORKING CAPITAL, MANAGE RISK, AND MAKE STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS IN OUR FUTURE.

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<td>CONFERENCES</td>
<td>2,980,795</td>
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<tr>
<td>FEDERAL ADVOCACY</td>
<td>2,116,045</td>
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<tr>
<td>COMMUNICATIONS AND MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM</td>
<td>1,820,901</td>
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<tr>
<td>STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS</td>
<td>1,093,335</td>
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<tr>
<td>CONSTITUENCY GROUP PROGRAMS</td>
<td>536,188</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>35,361,744</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Revenue*

- **2.7%** Other
- **8.7%** Annual Conference
- **37.8%** Contributions & Contracts
- **12.8%** Corporate Partners/ Sponsorships
- **21.1%** Membership Dues
- **13.4%** Service Fees
- **3.4%** Interest and Dividends

*Excludes donated services

### Expenses*

- **1.9%** Constituency Group Programs
- **6.4%** Communications & Membership Programs
- **36%** Grant & Contract Programs
- **7.4%** Federal Advocacy
- **22.3%** General & Administrative
- **10.4%** Conferences
- **14.3%** State League Programs
- **5.4%** Research and Innovation
- **3.8%** Strategic Partnerships

*Excludes donated services*