



# FIVE YEAR REPORT

2008-2013



# A Letter from our Board President and our Executive Director

---

Eight years ago, in December 2005, community members from Tompkins County Solid Waste Management Division, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County, Ithaca College, Cornell University, and others banded together to form a workgroup to begin planning a Community ReUse Center that would fit the needs of Tompkins County.

Finger Lakes ReUse, Inc. was modeled on several successful private and not-for-profit reuse operations around the country and was incorporated as a not-for-profit organization in 2007, receiving charitable 501c3 status from the IRS a few months later. It was officially launched with a pooled investment of \$700, followed in 2008 by grants from Tompkins County, the Park Foundation, and the Appalachian Regional Commission. Today, Finger Lakes ReUse is completing its fifth year of operations with a \$750,000 budget, 14 employees, 9 college work-study students, more than 20 job trainees and 60 regular volunteers.

## Transforming local liabilities into community assets...

Our vision for a healthy community, economy, and environment is one that encourages resourcefulness through convenient, affordable access to goods and technology, and inspires examples of creative and practical reuse. By offering a Community ReUse Center that is open every day, and programs that proactively address some of the most problematic materials entering the waste stream such as demolition debris and hazardous e-waste, Finger Lakes ReUse transforms local liabilities (discarded items) that have traditionally been trucked off to landfills into community assets (jobs, dollars, and workforce development).



This amazing effort has also transformed all of those who have been involved in the development and evolution of Finger Lakes ReUse. Together we are working for the well being and prosperity of the people in our community. We could not make this happen without the dedicated labor of the employees and volunteers who have chosen to participate in the often challenging, but always delightfully surprising and deeply satisfying experience of operating a Community ReUse Center.

As we continue to demonstrate the positive impacts that the simple act of reuse can have, we will share this model with our neighboring communities as an open-source template. We will also continue to join, support and build on the beneficial work that is happening in our community in so many different ways. It is with a collaborative spirit that we will heal and enhance quality of life and preserve the beautiful world in which we live.

We are truly grateful for all the support demonstrated by **you, our community.**

Thank you.

Sincerely,

**Lynn Leopold**, Board President

**Diane Cohen**, Executive Director



Between November 2008 & September 2013...

# The ReUse Center

The ReUse Center provides a convenient and affordable way to donate, purchase, and reuse materials including household goods, furniture, building materials, refurbished computers, computer peripherals, and home electronics. Our friendly staff and volunteers make shopping a welcome adventure! You never know what you are going to find!

Since opening on November 12, 2008 and operating in just over 13,000 square feet at Triphammer Marketplace, the positive and growing response from the community creates challenges regarding space and material-handling efficiency. As we look toward the future, we will look at expansion options to allow us to offer exterior storage in a "lumber yard" environment for building materials, as well as creating additional access points to donate and purchase materials. While space constraints have continued to be an issue, this challenge has forced us to maximize efficiencies in receiving, processing, and selling materials, while giving us a keen sense of what the community needs and wants.



**399,427**  
**ITEMS SOLD**  
& returned to  
active use

**11,333**  
**PIECES OF**  
**FURNITURE**

**21 MILES**  
**OF LUMBER**  
in linear  
feet

**1,392**  
**DOORS**

**99,001**  
**HOUSEHOLD**  
**ITEMS**

**700**  
**REFURBISHED**  
**COMPUTERS**

**1,551**  
**LAMPS**

**809**  
**DESKS**

**458**  
**REFURBISHED**  
**PRINTERS**

**392**  
**SINKS**

# Deconstruction Services

The Deconstruction Services program harvests valuable building materials from whole buildings and from remodeling projects. Through manual deconstruction, 70% to 90% of a building's components can be reclaimed for reuse or responsibly recycled, as opposed to 80% to 100% of the building going to the landfill through more common demolition practices.



Deconstruction creates job opportunities and generates affordable, locally sourced building materials, reducing the pressure on raw materials extraction as well as the carbon footprint produced by shipping materials to our community.

## Services:

- Full building deconstruction—small sheds to whole house removals.
- Salvage and remodeling strip-outs (kitchen and bath); siding or deck removal; and hardwood flooring removal.
- Fully insured; RRP (lead abatement) & OSHA Certified.
- Detailed, itemized receipts listing each donated item.

## Economic Benefits:

- Affordable building materials – generates a wide variety of quality inventory at the ReUse Center at 50-90% below retail prices.
- Tax savings – While deconstruction is more labor-intensive than standard demolition, costs can be offset through tax-deductible donations of building materials.
- Job creation – Deconstruction is labor intensive and creates living wage jobs and job-training opportunities.

# The eCenter

The eCenter accepts donated computers and peripheral equipment for refurbishing or recycling, resells refurbished computers and peripherals, and provides low-cost computer service. The program specializes in all operating systems (Windows, Mac, and Linux) and operates with one full-time staff member and strong volunteer support.

The eCenter was launched in April 2010 with help from the Ithaca Youth Bureau's Computer All Stars program and former volunteers of the Sciencenter's Babbage's Basement program. It is a registered NYS eWaste Collection Site.

Computer and peripheral sales, computer repair, data transfer, and virus removal services are the primary revenue-generating activities of the eCenter. Currently the program refurbishes and resells an average of 3-4 printers, 6-10 desktops, 0-4 laptops (as many as we can refurbish), and numerous parts, cables, and other related components each week. The eCenter computer-refurbishing lab offers a rich, real-world educational environment for our ReSET job-training program.



# Job Training, Workforce Development & Education

Finger Lakes ReUse has offered training and workforce development opportunities through partnerships with the Ithaca Youth Bureau's Computer All Stars Program, GIAC's Summer Conservation Corps and Youth Conservations Corps, Challenge Workforce Solutions, Tompkins County's Service Work Alternative Program (SWAP), Tompkins Community Action, and the Department of Social Service's Community Work Experience Program. We have organized educational programs for local elementary and high school students, college students, at-risk youth, and low-to-moderate income adults in our community. We frequently collaborate with Cornell University, TC3 and Ithaca College, providing educational programs, giving lectures, and taking on interns and work-study students. Staff members from Finger Lakes ReUse and Tompkins County Solid Waste Management Division have presented to local public schools on the 4 R's (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, and Rebuy) and Finger Lakes ReUse regularly hosts tours of our facilities for students of all ages (most recently for 6th graders from Odessa/Montour).

**29.6% of households indicated "not being able to find work" was a critical problem for someone in their household**

- United Way of Tompkins County, Compass II 2.0 Report



## ReSET Job Training Program

Finger Lakes ReUse launched its job-training program ReSET (Skills & Employment Training) in March 2013. This job-training program prepares individuals for long-term employment through hands-on training in technology and construction. ReSET Tech provides skills in computer technology, and ReSET Construction offers skills in green building. Training is conducted in a hands-on learning environment, through participation in day-to-day business activities in either the eCenter computer refurbishing program or the Deconstruction Services program.

**"Preparing to apply for the (ReSET) apprenticeship helped build my confidence in my abilities and made breaking into the job market less intimidating."**

- Nathan Hall,  
ReSET Apprentice

Thanks to Brightworks Computer Consulting, The Cornell University IT Department, Databound Solutions, Susan Beckley, Norm Adelewitz, Sean Dembrosky, Steve Pacenka, Tom Baldwin for volunteering time to teach ReSET Tech sessions.

Thanks to ASI Renovations, Barn Livin', Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County, Cosentini Construction, Double Dog Timberworks, EcoVillage of Ithaca, Habitat for Humanity, Holt Architects, New Earth Living, Taitem Engineering, Tugleywood Timberframing, and Snug Planet for helping to educate our ReSET Construction participants.



# Our Exceptional Volunteer Corps

*We would not be able to do everything we do without strong volunteer support from the community, so each month we now honor a special volunteer.*

## Tom Baldwin • October 2012

Choosing Tom Baldwin as our very first honoree of our Volunteer of the Month program was an easy decision. A dedicated, energetic volunteer and early retiree from Cornell University, Tom has selflessly put in many, many volunteer hours at the eCenter refurbishing and servicing almost every Mac system sold at the ReUse Center. Tom has been instrumental in supporting and helping conceptualize many of the improvements in the eCenter program.

## John Burgess • November 2012

John always works very hard and frequently stays beyond the end of his shift to finish a task or complete a project. John is a participant in the Community Work Experience Program and helps out with deliveries, pickups, and helps us stay organized with his incredibly detailed memory.

**"Do well by doing good...Once people learn about this business and the good it does, they want to contribute in some way. That's what it is. You have generosity and the caring for others. I think that's the essence of community."**

-John Burgess

## Michael Nemecek • December 2012

Also a participant in the Community Work Experience Program, Mike has a firm grasp of building construction. He has done some beautiful repairs on broken furniture that we didn't have the heart to discard. Michael is always polite, follows through, and is appreciated by us all.

## Steve Pacenka • January 2013

A full-time Research Support Specialist in the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences at Cornell University, Steve has been our main (and often sole) printer refurbisher since the eCenter's inception in 2010, and for many years prior he was a main volunteer for Babbage's Basement. Steve consistently volunteers every Saturday and even some weekdays. We wouldn't have refurbished printers for sale without his incredible generosity of his time and expertise.

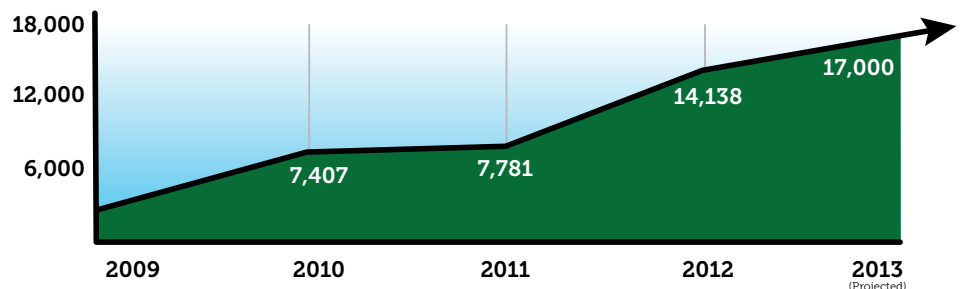
## Ruth Ann Christie • February 2013

Ruth Ann volunteered in the ReUse Center every Saturday in the Spring 2013 semester after her Federal Work Study money ran out, simply because she saw that we had a real need. She worked from 9am until 6:30pm every Saturday and was always professional and pleasant no matter how busy it was. She kept her cool under pressure and provided excellent customer service and did absolutely everything she could to be helpful. She requested additional data entry projects that could be done in quiet moments at the cash register and her work was always thorough and accurate. Now that she has graduated from Cornell, we miss her and wish her the best!

## Dan Gee • March 2013

Dan is a youthful and energetic retiree from the U.S. Postal Service and his tireless dedication to professionalism and productivity as a volunteer is an inspiration to everyone who works with him. Dan transitioned from more than a year of volunteering at the cash register to a welcome spot on our deconstruction team, and has been regularly helping out at critical times with our highly demanding pick up and delivery services. His sense of humor and mild-mannered demeanor lighten the load for all of us.

## Volunteer Hours by Year



### **Norm Adelewitz • April 2013**

Norm is an energetic and dedicated retiree who has been volunteering in our eCenter three days a week for nearly two years. He is pleasant, self-directed and is willing to help in many different facets of the eCenter. He will just as willingly sort and organize cables and adapters as he will refurbish a Windows laptop or help a customer with a purchase. He also brings in cookies to share from time to time! Norm has been immensely helpful with the ReSET job-training program, always providing an experienced perspective on challenging problems encountered by trainees.

### **Gaye Alvez • May 2013**

While working hard to complete her GED as she participates in the Community Work Experience Program, Gaye is now confident in navigating our complex Materials Tracking Point-of-Sale Database System. In addition to pricing and entering hundreds of donated items each week, Gaye often goes the extra mile by baking cookies and remembering birthdays and has done an amazing job helping to ensure smooth workflow by quickly moving merchandise onto the sales floor.

**"When my son finished with graduate school I said, 'Don't throw anything away until I get there!' " -Gaye Alvez**

**"Community and cooperation [are] great here. I mean people are really supportive. ... and a lot of them like the idea of what we do here." – Michael Nemecek**

### **Chris Jung • June 2013**

Chris is very flexible and has been enormously helpful with retail and receiving donations, especially with researching items. She has made big improvements to the ReUse Center by organizing merchandise and is full of great ideas about how to display and sell things.

### **Lynn Leopold • July 2013**

An original member of the first ReUse Center advisory work-group and our current Board President, Lynn has demonstrated a willingness to represent Finger Lakes ReUse at events in the community. More recently she has been rolling up her sleeves to help process the growing volumes of materials donated to us. Lynn is ever cheerful, and always ready with an inspiring idea for creative reuse!

### **James Collins • August 2013**

James was a participant in the Community Work Experience Program and has been a tremendous asset to our operations. He helped with deliveries and cleaned up and reorganized the warehouse, and made a huge difference in our donations receiving department. He offered excellent customer service and was always helpful. We are delighted that he recently was hired for a full time position and wish him great success as the new Receiving Manager at Significant Elements!

### **Mark Darling, Barbara Eckstrom, Tania Schusler – September 2013**

Our three founding board members completed their two 3-year terms in September, and each showed incredible dedication, commitment, and support for Finger Lakes ReUse in its formative years.

Mark is the Sustainability Programs Coordinator at Ithaca College and was our board president for 6 years. We are sorry to lose his leadership and his sense of humor, as he has set a great example by his willingness to participate in outreach events, and has identified significant amounts of both material and student resources to help out with our reuse efforts. We know he won't be able go too far, because of his deep commitment to innovative and progressive resource management ideals.

Barb is the long-time Solid Waste Manager at the Tompkins County Solid Waste Management Division. It was largely her vision and drive to initiate a ReUse Center as part of the 1995 Solid Waste Management Plan that paved the way for all the reuse that is happening in Tompkins County today. She has been a key advisor, dedicated board member, brilliant strategist, and a good friend.

A former environmental educator at Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County, Tania helped co-write the original business plan and grant proposals that launched FLR. Even though Tania moved away from the area in 2008 to take up a career in teaching, she has joined FLR meetings by telephone for more than five years, and always continued to help with critical decision making and planning. Tania has further displayed her dedication by combining travel and vacation plans with Finger Lakes ReUse events.



# Ithaca Fixers Collective

This casual and fun gathering of community members has repaired items ranging from lamps to tools to holiday lights to coffee makers. Founded in November 2012 in order to gauge the interest and skill sets of those interested in fixing, repairing, and fighting back against 'planned obsolescence' (the purposeful designing of a product with a limited useful life, so it will become obsolete), the Ithaca Fixers Collective meets twice a week in the ReUse Center's educational zone. More information can be found at [www.fingerlakesreuse.org/ithacafixers.shtml](http://www.fingerlakesreuse.org/ithacafixers.shtml). All are welcome!

**With an impressive 70% success rate,  
116 of 168 items have been successfully fixed  
or repaired to date!**



## Collaborative Programming

### Share The Warmth

Since 2008, Finger Lakes ReUse has been donating the use of its box truck and staff to help with the fantastic effort by the Ithaca & Trumansburg Rotary Clubs to get warm clothing to those who need them. Last December (Rotary's 20th annual Share The Warmth Campaign), items were distributed by Catholic Charities to 1,655 households in Tompkins County, and more than 4,650 items of warm clothing and blankets were collected and sorted by Finger Lakes ReUse and Rotary volunteers.

### Cornell University's Dump & Run program

Finger Lakes ReUse became an official agency of the Dump and Run (D&R) program in 2013. Since 2009, it has helped D&R with pickups from departing college students, and has enjoyed an increasing collaboration with the student-run initiative each year. This Herculean volunteer effort has diverted hundreds of tons of clothing, furniture, and household items since it began more than 10 years ago!

### GIAC Conservation Corps & Summer Conservation Corps

We have been delighted to work with local youth through the Greater Ithaca Activities Center's Conservation Corps programs for middle school and high school aged youth for the last 2 years. The Conservation Corps worked with our Deconstruction and eCenter programs, providing assistance with processing salvaged lumber, disassembling computers and hard drives, and sorting and matching up power supplies to computer peripherals that would have otherwise been scrapped.

### Celebrate ReUse! At CSMA

The Community School of Music and arts hosted an art opening and show in their art gallery in August 2013 featuring local artists working creatively with used materials.

### Challenge Workforce Solutions

Challenge has provided temporary summertime labor to help with deconstruction and student moveout projects, Challenge staff have provided expert guidance in our program development, and Challenge program participants have contributed important assistance with computer disassembly, greeting customers, and cleaning and processing donated items.





# The Heart of the Organization

## 2013 Employees

Steve Ayres, *Warehouse Assistant*  
Terrence Breslin, *Facilities & Warehouse Assistant*  
Carol Clarke, *Materials Intake Coordinator*  
Diane Cohen, *Executive Director*  
Barbara Dayton, *Finance Director*  
Shelbi DuBord, *Development & Communications Coordinator*  
Louise Henrie, *Administrative Manager*  
Anise Hotchkiss, *Community Programs Coordinator*  
Jessica Orkin, *Deconstruction Crewmember & Vehicle Coordinator*  
Ric Porter, *Retail & Warehouse Assistant*  
Andrew Tretiak, *Deconstruction Coordinator*  
Michael Troutman, *eCenter Program Coordinator*  
Bill Woodard, *Retail & Warehouse Assistant*  
Ivan Yalanzhi, *Operations Supervisor*  
Nathan Hall, *ReSET Tech Apprentice (6/10-10/31)*  
James Yuhasz, *ReSET Tech Apprentice (6/10-10/31)*  
Nathan Arnold, *ReSET Construction Apprentice (8/12-11/29)*

## College Work-Study Students

(Fall 2013)

Jessica Anson	Kara Seto
Blake Michael	Maya Tellman
Jourdan Norman	Daniel Tjie
Yining Lu	Sean Wertheim
Tori Ricelli	

## Consultants/Contractors

Marty Schreiber, *Computer All Stars*  
Paul Colucci, *Deconstruction Program*  
Sean Dembrosky, *FLR IT Services*  
Rodolfo Ledesma, *eCenter IT Services*  
Brian Dudla, *COBP Design*

## 2013-2014 Board of Directors

Lynn Leopold, *President*  
Marlene Sack, *Secretary*  
Jennifer Estler, *Treasurer*  
Lindsay Hahnes  
Jodie Herbert  
Jan Rhodes Norman  
Pedro Perez  
Mark Darling (term ended October 2013)  
Barbara Eckstrom (term ended October 2013)  
Howard Hartnett\*  
Patrick McKee (term ended August 2013)  
Tania Schusler (term ended October 2013)  
Sharon Tregaskis (term ended February 2013)

## Finance Committee

Jennifer Estler, *Chair*  
Lynn Leopold  
Amy Newman  
Pedro Perez  
Barbara Dayton  
Diane Cohen

## Program Volunteers

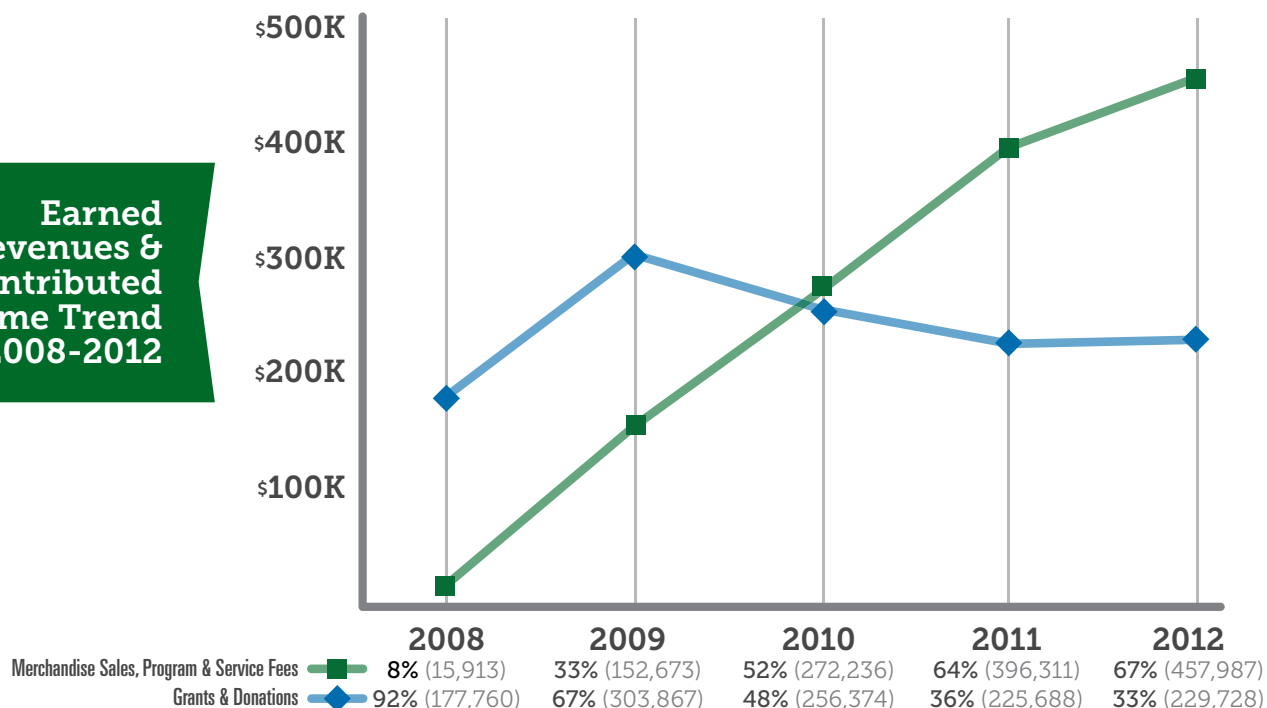
Norm Adelewitz	Ron Humerez	Keith Reeves
Gaye Alvez	Roc Kauffman	Neil Rotach
Tom Baldwin	Lonnie Hinckle	Ron Rotach
Rik Bardrof	Frank James	Marlene Sack
Logan Bell	Bruce Johnson	Nikki Sayward
Roger Bell	Rick Jones	Nick Sledziona
Alicia Boggs	Chris Jung	Andrew Sternglass
John Burgess	Jeremy Keen	Denise Sullivan
Brian Chabot	Chris Kendall*	Jean Taylor
Carol Clarke	Nikolas Lamb	Mark Thornton
James Collins	Lynn Leopold	Willie Thompson
Pete Curinga	Linda Loomis	Don Tompkins
Pam Duckett	Joan Lorson	Joanne Turnpenny
Steve Farrell	Paul Martin	Herb VanDoren
Paula Feria	Dave Matthews	Evan Wray
Tavis Flanagan	Kat McCarthy	Jessica, Chris,
Kris Foster	Doug Miller	Aziza, Amber,
Dan Gee	Bill Mutch	Shawn & Brent
Susana Gomez	Michael Nemecek	from Challenge
Mike Guo	Staci Nugent	Workforce
James Harriott	Steve Pacenka	Solutions

## Mentors, Inspirations & Advisors-at-Large

Sarah Adams	George Gesslein	Tom Murray
Chris Anagnost	Linda Jacobs Glansberg	David Newman
Bill Apgar	Justin Green	Lisa Newman
Leslie Appel	Brad Guy	Tina Nilsen-Hodges
Roxi Bahar-Hewertson	Lindsay Hahnes	Amy Newman
Bob Barnes	Howard Hartnett*	Jan Rhodes Norman
Larry Baum	Al Heiman	Marjorie Olds
Rich Bennett	Pete Hendricks	Eric Ott
Frédéric Bouché	Amie Hendrix	Phyllis Radke
Diane Bradac	George Hewertson	Valorie Rockney
Travis Brooks	Scott Heyman	Patricia Rodriguez
James Brown	Jean Hubbell	Victoria Romanoff
Mary Beth Bunge	Brigid Hubberman	Monika Roth
Joe Cassaniti	Elia Kacapyr	Jim Salk
Henry Cohen	Mary Kane	Tom Sanford
Susan Cosentini	Erich Kruger	Ken Schlather
Susan Currie	Lynn Leopold	Tania Schusler
Mark Darling	Doug Levine	Elan Shapiro
Barb Eckstrom	Tom Longstreth	Mark Sullivan
Rich Entlich	Josh Lower	Michael Tokman
Chris Fagan	Joel Lubell	Frost Travis
George Ferrari	Bill Lower	Alan Vogel
Linda Finlay	John Majercak	Scott Whitham
Joanne Florino	Patrick McKee	Chris Wolff
Bill Garrard	Steve Mount	Paula Younger

\*Deceased

## Earned Revenues & Contributed Income Trend 2008-2012

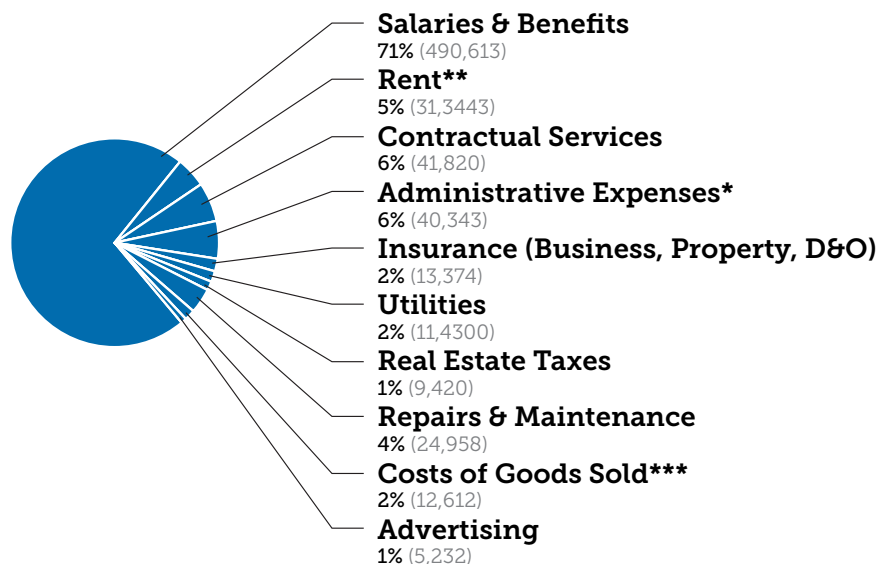


## 2012 Expenses

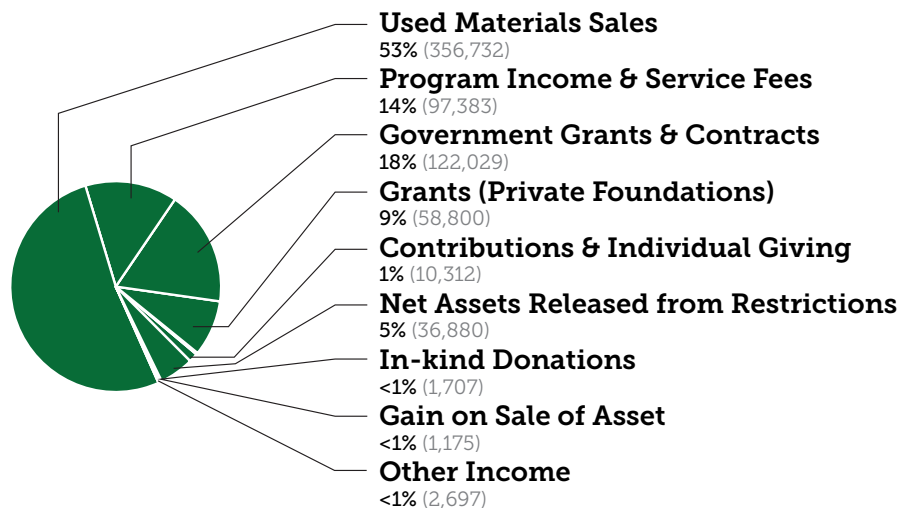
\*Administrative Expenses include Legal & Accounting, Supplies, Printing & Postage, Travel & Meals, Meetings & Conferences, Telephone & Internet, Dues & Subscriptions, Depreciation, Miscellaneous

\*\*Rent does not include triple net expenses (shared utilities, pro-rated property taxes, common-area maintenance)

\*\*\*Costs of Goods Sold includes consignments for nonprofit organizations, purchases of parts for repair/refurbishing computers



## 2012 Income



**Our Mission:** To enhance community, economy, and environment through reuse.

**Our Goals:** To reduce waste  
To relieve poverty  
To teach job skills through reuse activities.



### **Finger Lakes ReUse, Inc.**

2255 N. Triphammer Road / Triphammer Marketplace  
Ithaca, NY 14850

(607) 257-9699

[fingerlakesreuse.org](http://fingerlakesreuse.org)

---

### **Made possible with support from:**

---

Tompkins County Solid Waste Management Division  
The Park Foundation  
Appalachian Regional Commission  
Community Foundation of Tompkins County  
Helen T. Howland Foundation (as administered by the  
Community Foundation of Tompkins County)  
Ithaca Urban Renewal Agency  
Triad Foundation  
Tompkins Charitable Gift Fund  
United Way of Tompkins County  
United Way – Youth & Philanthropy Program  
United Way – Stone Soup Philanthropy Corps  
Human Services Coalition of Tompkins County

The Legacy Foundation of Tompkins County  
Social Service League of Tompkins County  
The Sunshine Lady Foundation  
Ithaca College  
Challenge Workforce Solutions  
Cornell University  
Autodesk Foundation  
Brightworks Computer Consulting Services  
Triphammer Development  
Ithaca Rotary Club  
Sustainable Tompkins Mini-Grants  
Alternatives Federal Credit Union Round Off Program

---

**Awards:** 2010 Tompkins County  
Chamber of Commerce  
Not-for-Profit of the Year

2012 Jeff Furman Award  
for Social Responsibility  
in Business – Alternatives  
Federal Credit Union







## Our First Five Years

WELCOMED  
**180,000**  
SHOPPERS  
to the ReUse  
Center

SUPPLIED  
**60** NON-  
PROFITS  
with  
discounted  
items or  
services

DIVERTED  
**1,040** TONS  
from  
landfills

SERVICED  
computer  
equipment for  
MORE THAN  
**300** PEOPLE

PROVIDED  
**6,000** HOURS  
of JOB TRAINING

GREW WITH  
**45,000**  
HOURS of  
VOLUNTEER  
TIME

SOLD  
MORE THAN  
**400,000**  
reusable  
items

HELPED  
TRANSITION  
**7** people off  
of public  
assistance

GENERATED  
**1.7 MILLION**  
in merchandise sales  
and program services  
revenue

CREATED  
**14** Living  
Wage  
Jobs