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## **The Truth Finally Comes Out About AIDS Network's ACT Ride**

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For more than a year and a half ACT UP Wisconsin has questioned the veracity of AIDS Network's boisterous claims that the ACT Ride returns 87% – 90% of its donations to support AIDS Network client and prevention services. Last year they proclaimed it loud and clear in their marketing of the Ride. Here is their precise statement:

*“Your Contribution Directly Supports AIDS Network Clients....The money you contribute to a rider or crew member for the ACT Ride supports essential services provided by AIDS Network for client assistance and prevention programs. The ACT Ride dedicates the vast majority of funds toward services. After paying for expenses approximately 87% of all the money raised goes directly to funding the provision of our services.”*

ACT UP Wisconsin, which is a local advocacy group, asked AIDS Network for an accounting of Ride finances. We received no responses or answers. We then decided to dig deep into the most recent audited financial statements of AIDS Network and we found the truth.

Della Haugen, past Event Specialist for AIDS Network states, “I'm sorry that I ever urged, pleaded, and asked people to donate money to AIDS Network's ACT RIDE. Although I unknowingly helped market the agency's lies about where the money went, I am saddened that I had any part of it. At the time, I took pride in what I was doing, because I thought the money was supporting the clients.”

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*(Continuation of: The Truth Finally Comes Out About AIDS Network's ACT Ride)*

On pages 16 and 17 of AIDS Network's 2008 audit is the required "Schedule of Revenue and Expenses by Function." This Schedule shows how AIDS Network actually spent its special event revenue which is overwhelmingly ACT Ride donations.

Of \$386,291 in total special event donations, \$295,525 (or 77%) was from Ride donations. Here's the shocking truth of how AIDS Network spent these donations in 2008:

Fundraising Costs \$204,032 – 53%

Management costs \$20,887 – 5%

Volunteer costs \$36,462 – 9%

Education/Outreach \$48,661 – 12%

Client Services \$76,249 – 20%

This audit proves that in 2008 AIDS Network lied to all of the ACT Ride participants when it said that 90% of their donations were used to support AIDS Network prevention and client services. The audit proves that only 32% of Rider donations were used for these services. What is shocking to everyone who has ever invested the time and enormous energy to complete the ACT Ride and raise the funds – is that 58% of their hard earned donations are used by AIDS Network to cover their fundraising and management costs.

Bob Bowers, a founding member of ACT UP Wisconsin and a multiple year crew member of the ACT Ride states, "We have finally learned the truth and can now see why AIDS Network has refused to openly discuss this matter. AIDS Network has hidden the truth from ACT Ride participants, donors, and the media for many years. As a long-time supporter of AIDS Network and the Ride, I feel betrayed and profoundly disappointed."

More details in this matter can be found on the wisconsinhiv.com blog, and a copy of AIDS Network's audited financial statements is linked to it and can also be found at the link below for the PDF document.

<http://wisconsinhiv.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/07/AIDSNetwork.2008Audit.pdf>

ACT UP Wisconsin is committed to informing the general public about the state of HIV/AIDS prevention care and treatment services in the state of Wisconsin. We strive to hold all organizations charged with providing services to the HIV/AIDS community accountable.