



Olean Meditation Center

2025 Annual Report



A Welcome Place for All

The Olean Meditation Center's mission is to provide a a welcoming and inclusive space and offer programs to promote personal well-being, spiritual living, and the mindful well-being of the community.

Affiliated Spiritual Groups

Hindu Society of Olean & Allegany



Southern Tier Sangha



Yoga teacher affiliates

Betsy Afton
(YogaBetsy)



Kimberly
LaMendola



Friends of OMC



Olean
Interfaith
Community



A Message from the President



In 2025, OMC has continued to be a sanctuary amidst the chaos of these times. I wrote similar words last year, yet the uncertainty and sense of groundlessness we have experienced this year have surpassed even what came before. And still, OMC remains a place of refuge – offering space for contemplation, inner development, and connection in whatever way is meaningful for those who come. The programs offered this year have continued to nurture our spirits and strengthen our capacity to meet these challenging times. OMC has reached more people in the community this year through meditation, yoga, sound healing, connection with the rhythms of nature, creative expression, and opportunities for community discussion and learning.

OMC has continued to mature as a dynamic and evolving organization. The decentralized management structure introduced last year has taken deeper root, and the increased participation in our working committees is especially encouraging. This growing involvement reflects a meaningful shift toward becoming a truly community-run organization. To highlight this evolution, this year's annual report includes a dedicated page for each committee, along with a full list of committee members on page 7.

There have also been changes to the Board of Directors this year. We extend our sincere gratitude to Jack Hart who resigned. Jack served as the Chair of the Board since its inception in 2011. See page 7 for more details. We warmly welcome Rich Dayton as the newest member of the OMC Board. Rich has been an active member of the Southern Tier Sangha and worked at the Cattaraugus County Health Department for over 15 years in environmental health, safe water supply and prevention of tobacco use in adolescents. The officers of the Board have also changed this year. It is with great gratitude that I can announce that Steve Cocca has stepped into the roles of Vice Chair of the Board and Chair of the Operations Committee. I am now serving as both Chair and President, and Rich Reilly is now the Secretary. John Vosburg continues in his role as Treasurer.

Behind the scenes, important work continues to support the long-term sustainability of the center. The Operations Committee remains actively engaged in stewardship of the building and grounds, including transitioning our heating system to geothermal energy (see page 6). Our programming continues to expand in both scope and depth (see page 5), and OMC remains on solid financial footing (see page 4), allowing us to plan for the future.

I am deeply grateful to the Board, committee members, volunteers, teachers, donors, and community members who make OMC what it is. In a world of upheaval and change, OMC stands as a place of presence, resilience, and shared commitment to inner development for the benefit of the wider community.

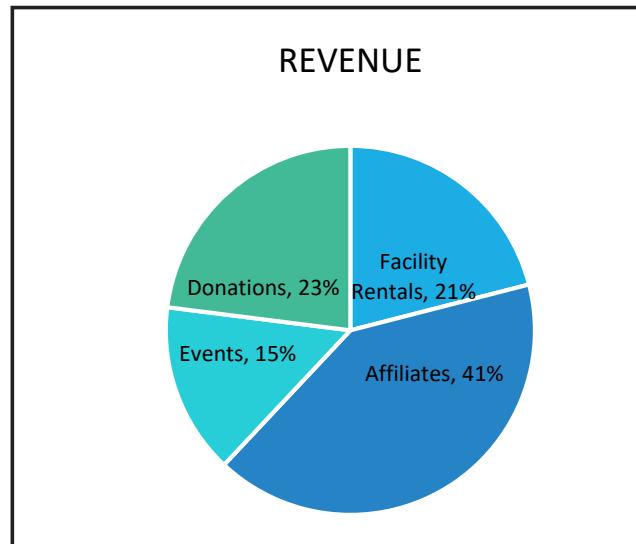
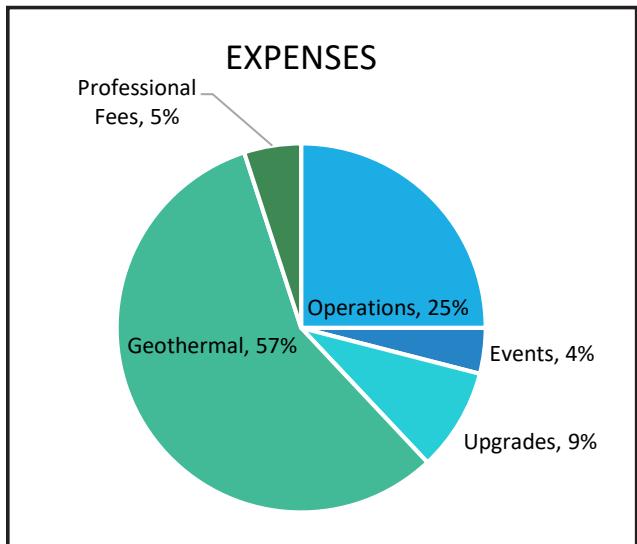
2025 Financial Summary

The Olean Meditation closes out 2025 with an asset balance of \$38,350. The starting balance at the beginning of the year was \$92,625, largely due to the generous memorial gift from the family of K.R. Sundararajan.

Our biggest expense this year was the much-needed upgrade of our heating system. We now have a geothermal system which will provide both heating and cooling for the building. We spent \$51,000 this year and will also incur landscaping costs in the spring to repair the large area of damage from installation of the loop field. However, we expect some reimbursement from National Grid rebates (\$5,000) and a possible federal credit of between \$10,000 and 18,000 next year. In addition, we are expecting monthly savings on our energy bills. Another \$8300 was spent on upgrades to the building and Windfall Gardens (see page 5).

Our community continues to give generously with a total of \$7170 in donations received in 2025. We raised \$4935 on Giving Tuesday, our largest fundraising event, which included a \$500 prize from SolEpoxy for the most donations between 7-8 am.

Looking forward, the Finance Committee recommended that we reserve \$30,000 in an emergency fund, due to both the septic system and building roof being 40 years old and likely needing repair in the not-too-distant future. The remaining funds will be allocated to an Improvements Fund and a Program Fund.



Program Committee News

OMC's program offerings and community reach continued to expand in 2025. In addition to those who attended weekly yoga and meditation, 600 people attended 20 program events in 2025. Thanks to the generosity of our donors, 75% of our programs were offered free of charge and the remaining 25% were offered at a subsidized rate. SBU interns Abby Dykeman and Alexis Garmong were a tremendous help with program promotion. We continued our regular offerings of Death Cafes, Mindful Mornings, Sound Baths, and Solstice celebrations and also sponsored a Fall Seminar Series entitled *Being with Dying: Navigating the End of Life with Grace & Dignity*. Four local and regional speakers shared their expertise in this 3-part series, including Dr. Christopher Kerr, CEO and Chief Medical Officer of Hospice Buffalo; Jennifer Sanfilippo, Death Doula and Grief Counselor; Dr. Gilbert Witte, Medical Director, HomeCare & Hospice; and Dr. Sushama Thandla, Clinical Assistant Professor, ECMC & Jacobs School of Medicine, University at Buffalo.



L to R: Dr. Sushama Thandla, Dr. Gilbert Witte, Dr. Christopher Kerr

Other invited presenters included Marcus Rosten, WNY Land Conservancy on Earth Day; Connie Gaynor, Olean for Mindful Painting; and Angie Kennedy, Salamanca, for Forest Bathing.



L to R: Marcus Rosten, Angie Kennedy (in black jacket), Connie Gaynor

We also expanded our community outreach and collaboration this year including yoga for the SBU Rugby Team, Boliver-Richburg School, Southern Tier Catholic School, and Directions in Independent Living Community Program; and meditation for Total Senior Care and the Parkinson's Caregivers Support Group. OMC had a table at the Total Senior Care/Hospice Health Fair and at the CCA Comedy Show for Mental Health Awareness. Cornell Extension, Pfieffer Nature Center, and Love in Action had information tables at OMC's Earth Day program. In addition, HomeCare & Hospice co-sponsored the Fall Seminar Series.

Operations Committee News

Thanks to the K.R. Sundararajan Family bequest, The Olean Meditation Center has been able to take up the challenge of upgrading its facility and grounds in profoundly beneficial ways. In 2024, upgrades included a new lighting system in the Community Room and resurfacing the Center's driveway and parking area. This year, we added a sound-proofing wall to prevent lobby noise disturbing programs in the Community Room.

At its January 2025 meeting, Committee members prioritized addressing the facility's lack of heat in winter and lack of air-cooling in summer. After months of planning, in recognition of our vision and values of sharing and caring for our resources responsibly and of maintaining a welcoming environment for visitors and program participants, OMC installed a geothermal energy system in 2025. Designed to eliminate the use of fossil fuels, heat pumps use an "earth loop system" to capture the consistent temperature of underground water to heat our baseboards in the winter, as well as to heat air in winter and to cool air in summer through the Center's long dormant air-duct circuits.

The annual Spring-clean up in May saw a dedicated team of volunteers spruce up the gardens and pathways around the Center and plant trees in memory of departed OMC friends, Charanjit "Neena" K. Gulati and John "Jack" Luzier. Also, a dozen hardwood trees were planted in Windfall Gardens. In the fall, the banks of Vista View Pond were regraded and the long path to the Labyrinth was upgraded. Also, a conduit was installed to provide equipment access to Windfall Gardens by crossing a drainage channel feeding the pond.

Darrell Davis continues live on-site providing top-notch daily maintenance of OMC's facility and grounds.



The air handler in the community room required a new wall to contain it.



The open window between the lobby and the community was closed for soundproofing.

OMC Management Team

Board of Directors

Dr. Celine Daly (Chair & President), Stephen Cocca (Vice-Chair), Richard Reilly PhD (Secretary), John F. Vosburg III (Treasurer), Richard Dayton, Dr. Ashok Kothari, Dr. Srinivas Thandla, Jeanne Walk, Robert Walk

Program & Promotion Committee:

Celine Daly (Chair)
Diane Clark
Audrey Hager
Kimberly LaMendola
Rich Reilly
Jeanne Walk

Operations Committee:

Stephen Cocca (Chair)
Gerry Daly
Richard Dayton
Taylor Kauffman
Judy Patton
Richard Reilly
Srinivas Thandla
Robert Walk

Finance Committee:

Celine Daly (Co-chair)
John Vosburg (Co-chair)
Stephen Cocca
Ashok Kothari
Rich Reilly

The Board of Directors extends our sincere gratitude to Jack Hart, Esq. for his 14 years of service to OMC. As an attorney, he brought his legal expertise to OMC decisions and drafted the by-laws when OMC was first incorporated in 2011. He was elected Chair of the founding Board and served in that capacity for the following 14 years until his resignation in 2025. Jack was integrally involved in the decisions that first established OMC and guided its growth in the ensuing years to be the strong and sustainable organization it is today. Jack will be sorely missed!



Ribbon cutting ceremony 2013. L to R – Rich Reilly, Linda Witte (mayor), Jack Hart, Yogi Kothari.



Jack Hart sitting on one of the benches he donated to Windfall Gardens.

The Olean Meditation Center

is a nonsectarian sanctuary elevating personal well-being and spiritual living.

We are committed to honor the values of natural simplicity, inspiration, compassion, and unconditional acceptance of all who visit us.



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