

# 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

# A Year of Opportunity



LUCY BURNS  
INSTITUTE

PREPARED JANUARY 2015

# Our Core Projects

## BALLOTPEDIA

Ballotpedia is an online almanac of politics and elections at every level of government, providing high-quality, accessible information on:

- Ballot access
- Ballot measure law
- Federal affairs and presidential elections
- Municipal elections
- Recall elections
- School board elections
- State executive officials
- State legislatures
- State and local ballot measures
- U.S. Congress

## JUDGEPEDIA

Judgepedia is an online almanac on all levels of the judiciary. Judgepedia provides comprehensive information on:

- Judicial budgets and salaries
- Judicial elections and appointments
- Notable court cases
- State and federal courts
- State and federal judges
- U.S. Supreme Court

## POLICYPEDIA

Policypedia is an online almanac of policy issues at every level of the government. Policypedia currently provides information on:

- Budget Policy
- Education Policy
- Election Policy
- Energy Policy
- Environmental Policy
- Pensions Policy
- Significant room to expand into new policy areas

1,600+ inquiries  
FROM VOTERS, ACTIVISTS  
AND JOURNALISTS

MENTIONS  
IN THE MEDIA:

3,056

Over 768,000  
ARTICLES ON OUR  
WEBSITES

38,800+  
SOCIAL MEDIA  
FOLLOWERS

## ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH

- We continue to hold a Gold Star Rating for our transparency, the highest rating in Guidestar's ranking system.
- Award winning journalist, Ron Donoho, joined LBI as the Chief Content Officer in June 2014. Ron is a 20-year veteran of media, and previously held editorial management roles at *San Diego Magazine* and *SanDiego.com*.
- We expanded our universal auditing system, ensuring high standards of writing, administration and content.
- LBI's revenue grew 10% from 2,880,280 in 2013 to 3,171,850 in 2014.

“A quick trip to the enormously informative Ballotpedia.org website provides the numbers that the DC reporters overlooked.”

—Scott Rasmussen, *Real Clear Politics*

# MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

**Ballotpedia ranked as the 536th most popular site** in the United States from mid-October through mid-November 2014, according to Alexa.com, the national standard for website rankings. That was ahead of *National Journal* and *The Washington Times*, and competitive with Real Clear Politics and the Daily Kos.

**We launched our 2016 Presidential Portfolio.** We already cover 32 of the 2016 presidential candidates with our unique, in-depth coverage.

**We partnered with iVoters to design a sample ballot tool for voters.** The tool pulled ballot information from across our websites and compiled it in a convenient, easy-to-read format. NPR (National Public Radio) recommended it to voters in an article on the top five apps and widgets to use at election time. 350,000 people used the application and 15,000 of them shared their email addresses with us.

**We completed our extensive Ballot Access Project,** which explains how to get on the ballot in each of the 50 states.

**Earmarked grants enabled us to expand into original investigative journalism.** An example includes our hard-hitting series on the St. Joseph's school board scandal in Missouri, where award-winning journalist Sam Zeff introduced citizens to key figures such as The Candyman. Thanks to our work, concerned citizens were able to get a clear look at the issues surrounding corruption in their school system.

**Our sites have received over 450 million lifetime page-views,** with about 115 million pageviews in 2014 alone.

**"According to Ballotpedia..." is fast becoming a media catch-phrase.** In 2014, Ballotpedia and Judgepedia were repeatedly cited by news outlets such as *The Wall Street Journal*, *Huffington Post*, *National Journal*, *Daily Kos*, *Fox News*, *National Public Radio*, *Washington Post*, *USA Today*, *Real Clear Politics*, *Forbes*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Politico*, *New York Times*, and dozens of major daily metropolitan newspapers.

# PLANS FOR 2015

**Policypedia will continue its essential role** on Ballotpedia.org, providing easy-to-understand facts and context for important, complex political issues in 2015.

**Policypedia expansion:** In addition to expanding current projects, we will establish a Civil Liberties Portal, with an Affirmative Action Project, Freedom of Speech Project and Privacy Project.

**The Presidential Portfolio will expand** in 2015 to provide comprehensive coverage of the 2016 presidential election. It will provide timely, easily-accessible information about each candidate and all political events.

**Ballotpedia, Judgepedia to merge.** Judgepedia will soon become a project under Ballotpedia, merging the two extensive databases into one major website.

**An even better, more comprehensive sample ballot tool** will be created for voters to use in the 2016 elections.

**Look for our work on the elections of the top 100 cities** in the U.S. (by population) this coming year. We stepped up our Municipal Project in 2014 and will be covering numerous 2015 elections in detail.

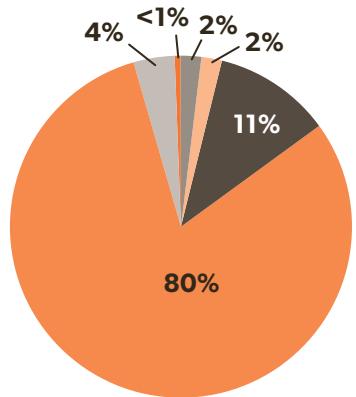
**Our "Movers and Shakers" project will launch in 2015** with 1,500 profiles of the donors, activists and organizations who influence political outcomes

**We will announce more strategic partnerships** with other organizations and media outlets, building on our existing collaborations with Thomson-Reuters, Grassroots Television, CandidateVerification, FindTheBest and iVoters.

Ballotpedia and Judgepedia together received **over 16,000,000 visitors** during election week, 2014. That's nearly **50 percent more traffic** than we had election week, 2012!

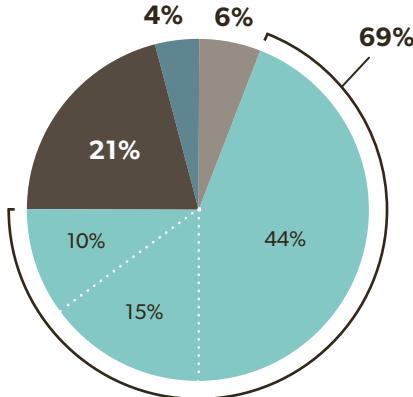
## FINANCIALS

### 2014 Revenue



Corporate:	\$78,779
Direct Mail:	\$75,362
Foundations:	\$349,490
Individual Donors:	\$2,538,470
In-kind gifts:	\$120,237
Investments & other:	\$9,510
<b>Total Revenue:</b>	<b>\$3,171,848</b>

### 2014 Expenses



Communications:	\$187,693
Editorial Programs:	\$2,123,335
Ballotpedia:	\$1,362,632
Judgepedia:	\$460,885
Policypedia:	\$299,818
Fundraising:	\$651,902
Overhead:	\$127,774
<b>Total Expenses:</b>	<b>\$3,090,704</b>

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Jack McHugh** – Senior Legislative Analyst, Mackinac Center (Lansing, MI)

**Tim Dunn** – CEO of CrownQuest Operating, LLC (Midland, Texas)

**Mike Barnhart** – President, State Budget Solutions (Ocean City, Maryland)

**Dan Liljenquist** – President, Liljenquist Strategies, LLC, and former Utah State Senator (Bountiful, Utah)

## Our Mission

The mission of the Lucy Burns Institute is to empower our audience to engage in the experience of our democracy through delivery of the highest quality information.

## Organizational Values

Integrity, Curiosity, Honor & Courage, Distinction & Excellence, Dignity

## Guiding Principles

- The truth is not partisan.
- People seek truth and use it in positive, powerful and unforeseen ways.
- Informed voters are the foundation of democracy. Positive change starts with them.
- Democratic self-governance is not the work of a day; it requires optimism, persistence and the long view.
- The online environment is an extraordinary opportunity to reach voters with comprehensive facts, information and context.



**LUCY BURNS  
INSTITUTE**  
connecting people to politics