

2008-2009 Annual Report

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Mission Statement

Uniquely focused on the needs of musicians with bipolar disorder, The Sean Costello Memorial Fund for Bipolar Research supports and conducts research on bipolar disorder and creativity while promoting awareness, providing education, and serving as a resource for these musicians and their support systems in order to foster acceptance, functioning and health.

Executive Summary

This report reflects a calendar year, not our fiscal year activity. The concept of this organization emanated from a frustration with health professionals and interventions that left Sean struggling to find a way to get better. Sean's family immediately felt that if they had more information and better treatment, Sean's passing could be a rare rather than common tragedy. The general public is not always sympathetic to overdose victims, as if they deserve their fate. But as Sean's friend, Levon Helm, was quoted as saying: "Sean didn't die from sex, drugs and rock and roll." That wasn't who Sean was. No one grows up wishing to be addicted to a substance. Certainly, Sean's aspirations were far greater than that, and he worked hard to achieve them.

In spite of unspeakable grief, much was accomplished in our first year, so much of it due to the effect Sean had on so many people. The Fund was granted its not-for-profit status, something that is essential to successful fundraising; we recruited an incredible Board of Directors and attracted a phenomenal Advisory Board who has already begun new and relevant research. In Atlanta, we pulled off in six weeks a beautiful and passionate tribute to Sean, while several others dedicated amazing benefits in his honor. The incredible generosity of all of those who knew Sean or who are moved by his story has given the Fund the energy to continue this work even in the face of understandable challenges. As described in our first newsletter, we are in our infancy and are just in the process of articulating how we can best realize our mission. To that end, we are supporting conference calls with members of our Advisory Board; we have developed a comprehensive web site; we have invested in materials that spread the cause; and we just completed our first Strategic Planning meeting. By this time next year, we should be on our way to accomplishing clear and achievable goals.

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Debbie Costello Smith

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Aileen Kenneson

Amy Pollick, Ph.D.

Activity

It has been a year and a half since Sean passed and the consequent inception of the Sean Costello Memorial Fund for Bipolar Research. The form that the Fund would take was vague for many reasons: the primary being the unexpected passing of Sean and the recognition of what we did not know to be able to save him. During this year, despite the shock and grief of Sean's passing, much has been accomplished. Most of this progress is attributable to his expansive network of friends and fans. In less than a year, there were no fewer than five memorial concerts. We were designated a 501(c)(3) corporation by the IRS, making us eligible for matching funds as a not-for-profit organization, and, we have raised over \$20,000, much of it from individual contributions from people who were touched by Sean or our cause. We even had an article written about us in the June/July issue of Blues Revue! Intrinsic to our success is a clear mission with goals and objectives, which have been solidified in the recent Strategic Planning meeting. While our core mission remains stable: funding ways to help musicians with bipolar disorder get effective treatment while supporting early diagnosis, education and research, our goals are organic, evolving as we garner information. Though our fundraising efforts have been overwhelmingly successful for such a young organization, our reserves are clearly not sufficient to support an ongoing program. We will have to mobilize our resources to obtain grants and partnerships to effect our goals. This, of course, takes time and talent. As a totally volunteer organization, it is amazing how much has been accomplished; however, to move forward, we will need to intensify our efforts.

Our Mission

We have, as an organization, established a three-pronged mission: education, intervention, and research. To date, two of those are in play.

Education

In the education realm, we have a comprehensive website (www.seancostellofund.org) which includes links to many resources on Bipolar Disorder. Additionally, we have held our first annual benefit concert at which brochures and literature were distributed. This was augmented just recently at the Blues Music Awards in Memphis (Sean received the 2nd and 3rd nominations of his career!) where brochures, bumper stickers, and pins were distributed to attendees of the Delta Groove party by a friend of Sean's, Dar Lopez. Hailing from South Florida and host of a well-known Blues radio program, she has vowed to continue to spread the word about Sean and the Fund. There is much more to be done in education to be sure, but just reducing the stigma of mental illness and placing the discussion in an open forum is the first step.

Research

As for research, we are blessed with talent in every aspect of the issue, led by Dr. Sheri Johnson of the University of California, Berkeley. She has recruited scientists, some as far away as Australia, who are renown for their expertise in such related areas as creativity and sleep disorders. (For a complete roster of our scientific advisory committee, please see our website.) To me, research is the brain of the organization. Diagnosis takes eight years on average, during which time people self-medicate. This compounds the problem of diagnosis and requires expert treatment. Medication that may work for the average person may result in diminished creativity - an obvious issue for a musician. One tenet of treatment is a scheduled life; again, difficult at best for someone who tours for a living and has a mandatory irregular schedule. Both creativity and social anxiety have been linked to the disorder, as they are frequently indigenous to the musical community. Sean was frustrated by the inadequate treatment he received and each failed mode furthered his frustration. The Fund is committed to finding the best, most comprehensive ways to help this population.

Intervention

Intervention is much more complicated for many reasons. First, if we don't know what works for this group, we don't know what to offer. Secondly, musicians frequently have no insurance, thus, they need help to pay for services. Finally, bricks and mortar are expensive to erect and require ongoing seed money. We are currently investigating possible partnerships to make something available to our community. This is the heart of our vision and its ultimate goal: effective intervention. We must offer hope and help to this underserved and hard-working population. In future reports, I hope to provide updates on the progress of the Fund and provide information related to Bipolar Disorder.

Bipolar Resources

www.dbsalliance.org
www.nami.org
www.mayoclinic.com
www.moodtracker.com

Events

- 2009 -

THE FIRST ANNUAL SEAN COSTELLO MEMORIAL
FUND FOR BIPOLAR RESEARCH BENEFIT CONCERT
Sun. Mar. 1, 2009
North Atlanta High Center for the Arts

CHICKEN RAID 09
Sat., Mar. 21 and Sun., Mar. 22, 2009
Northside Tavern
Atlanta, GA

SAIL ON - A MUSICAL CELEBRATION OF THE LIFE OF
SEAN COSTELLO
Northside Tavern
Atlanta, GA
Fri. Apr. 17 2009

- 2008 -

SONIA LEIGH CD RELEASE & BENEFIT CONCERT
Fri. Nov. 14, 2008
Smith's Olde Bar
Atlanta, GA

23rd ANNUAL WRFG LABOR DAY BLUES BARBEQUE
HONORING SEAN COSTELLO (1979-2008)
Mon. Sept. 1, 2008
Park Tavern
Atlanta, GA

SEAN COSTELLO MEMORIAL CONCERT
Sun. Jul. 6, 2008
Sportsmen's Tavern
Buffalo, NY

Fundraising Tools

GoodSearch and GoodShop - Support our Cause while you Search and Shop

What if The Sean Costello Memorial Fund for Bipolar Research earned a donation every time you searched the Internet? Or how about if a percentage of every purchase you made online went to support our cause?

[GoodSearch.com](http://www.goodsearch.com) is a new Yahoo-powered search engine that donates half its advertising revenue, about a penny per search, to the charities its users designate. Use it just as you would any search engine, get quality search results, and watch the donations add up!

[GoodShop.com](http://www.goodshop.com) is a new online shopping mall which donates up to 37 percent of each purchase to your favorite cause! Hundreds of great stores including Amazon, Target, Gap, Best Buy, ebay, Macy's and Barnes & Noble have teamed up with GoodShop and every time you place an order, you'll be supporting your favorite cause.

Just go to <http://www.goodsearch.com> and be sure to enter Sean Costello Memorial Fund as the charity you want to support. We also suggest adding the GoodSearch toolbar to your browser by following the instructions here: <http://www.goodsearch.com/toolbars.aspx>

Recognition

30th Annual Blues Music Awards - Sean Costello Nominated in Two Categories

Sean Costello was nominated for two Blues Music Awards in the categories of Best Contemporary Blues Male Artist and Best Contemporary Blues Album for We Can Get Together.

Sean's parents, Debbie & Glenn Smith, were in the audience in Memphis as winners were announced on May 7, 2009. Although Sean was favored to win in the Best Contemporary Blues Album category, Buddy Guy swept all categories. If you don't already own Sean's acclaimed album, We Can Get Together, you can purchase it and other items through our [online store](#).

[Read full list of Nominees, Projected Winners, and Winners here.](#)

The Fund's 1st Benefit Concert a Success - Event Review Courtesy of Metromix Atlanta

Family, friends and fans of the late blues recording artist Sean Costello, braved the snow Sunday to attend the [First Annual Sean Costello Memorial Fund for Bipolar Research Benefit Concert](#). The event, held at Costello's alma matter, the North Atlanta High Center for the Arts, featured an incredible lineup of blues musicians including Lurrie Bell, The Wood Brothers, King Johnson, Soul Shakers and Felix and the Cats with Jon Liebman. In addition to great music, there was also a live auction.

Costello, a blues recording artist praised as one of the main torch-bearers of the blues flame for the next generation, passed away in Atlanta, on Tuesday, April 15th, one day before his 29th birthday.

The man who wrote "I've got a light that keeps on shining" is doing just that thanks to his music and the work of the fund started by his mother, Debbie Costello Smith. Smith said the fund's mission is to apply Sean's celebrity and the love of Sean's fans and fellow musicians to increase research for treatment of Bipolar Disorder.

A PR Connection for the Fund - www.markwhitacre.com

Mark Whitacre, Ph.D. has an interesting story that will be told this Fall in The Informant! starring Matt Damon. Please check out his website for more information. Mark has graciously adopted The Sean Costello Memorial Fund for Bipolar Research and agreed to promote our cause to educate others about bipolar disorder. Mark's website has recently been updated to include a link to and an entire page about the Fund.

SAIL ON: A Musical Celebration of the Life of Sean Costello - Organized by Jon Liebman

The SAIL ON Celebration, held a day after what would have been Sean's 30th birthday (Friday, April 17th, 2009), at Northside Tavern was filled with friends, fans and fellow musicians. Performers included:

- UNCLE SUGAR with Eddie Tigner, Nathan Nelson, Josh McCormick
- BURNT BACON with Oliver Wood, Jon Liebman, Chris Uhler, Dave Roth
- BILL SHEFFIELD
- JOE McGUINNESS
- MUDCAT

For a listing of all Benefit Concerts, please visit: <http://www.seancostellofund.org/benefit-concerts.html>

The Sean Costello Memorial Fund Web Presence

Facebook Cause Page - <http://apps.facebook.com/causes/129541>

Facebook Fan Page - <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Sean-Costello-Memorial-Fund-for-Bipolar-Research/97347234910>

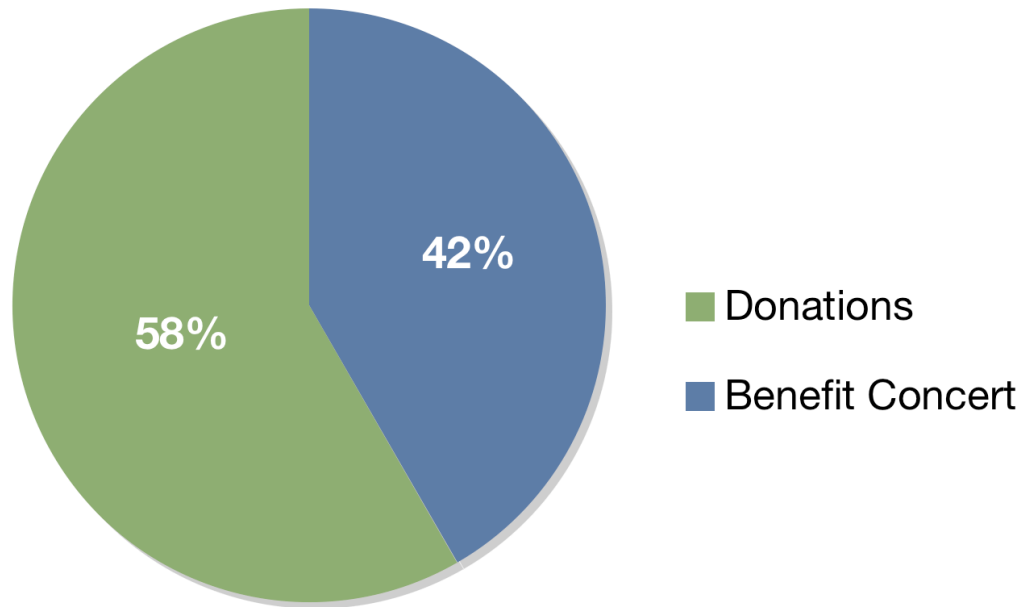
Linked In - <http://www.linkedin.com/profile?viewProfile=&key=47492075>

MySpace Music - <http://www.myspace.com/seancostellofund>

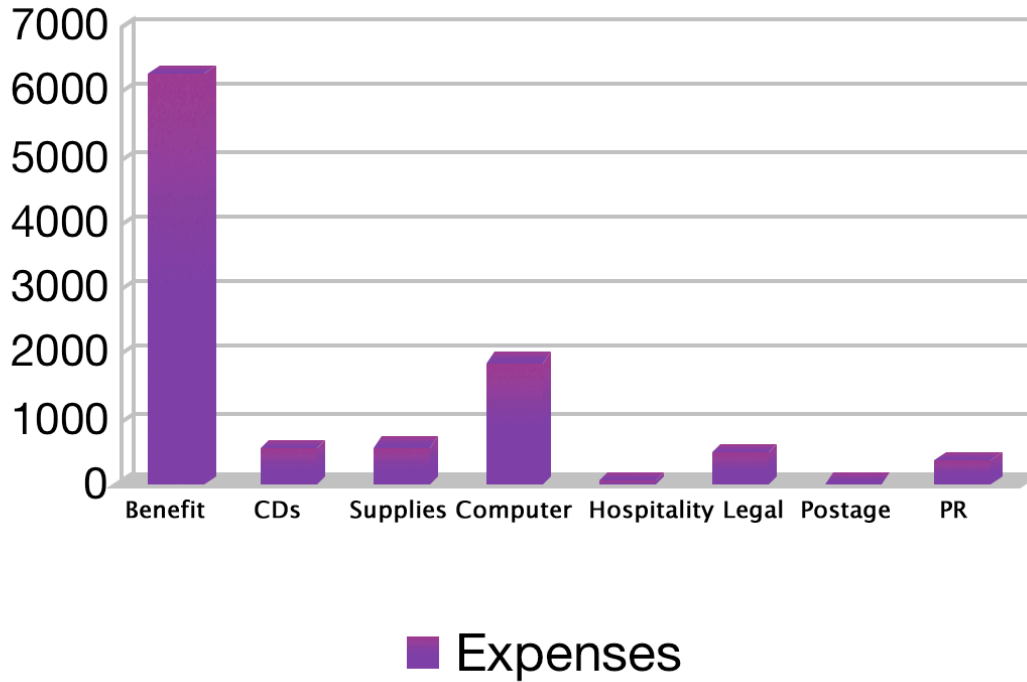
YouTube - <http://www.youtube.com/user/seancostellofund>

Finances

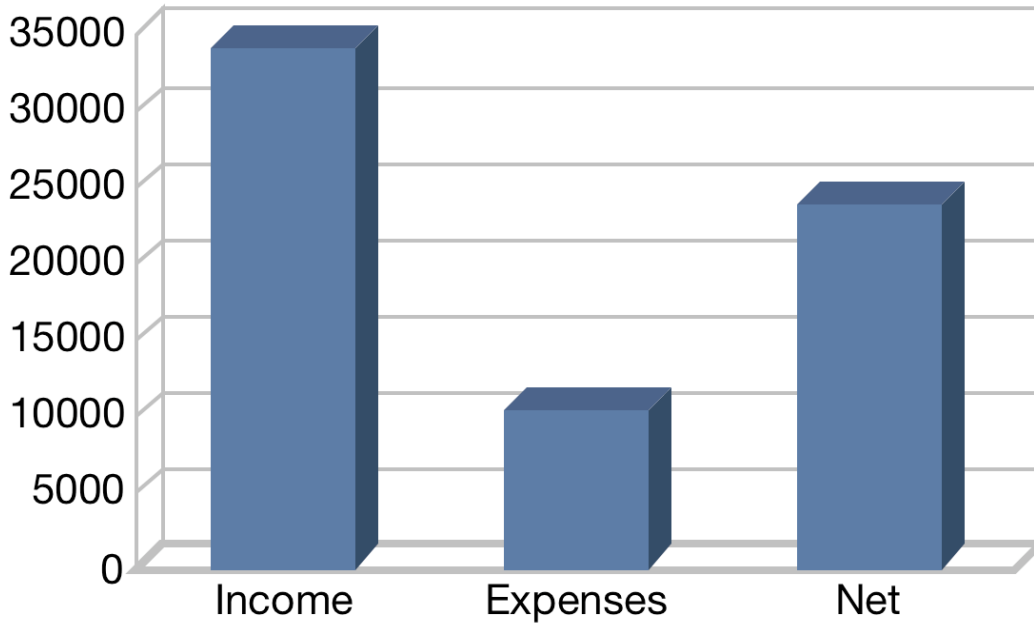
Income Sources



Annual Expense Summary



Annual Net



Donors

Cynthia Adler	Matthew Cudrin	Kris Gloer
Rachel Alley	Helene Cullen	Debra Gomes
Drew Alston	Marion Daigler	Michele Gouveia
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Denny Cook	Mary Flynn	Robyn Liebman
Kendra Cook	Phoebe Freund	
Denny Cook	Scott Glazer	
Bridget Costello	Lynn & Jeff Glenn	

The Sean Costello Memorial Fund for Bipolar Research

Paul Linden	Robert O'Hara	Marta Slosarska
Lawrence Lindstrom	Stasia Ogden	Charlene Smiley Crafton
Little Brother Lessons	Harry Oman	Curtis A. Souza
Sonia Livingston	Henry Parilla	Deborah Ann Smith
Stacey Locke	Anna Pflieger	Katherine Smith
Darlene Lopez	Jan Pierce	Julie Smith
Chad Mason	Misty Pinkston	Jennifer Smith
Holly Marie Mazoch	JB Pinkston	T. Smith & J. Smith
Bryan McClenning	Julie Pittman	John Straw
Brian McCombs	Amy Pollick	Kelli Stripling
Jenni McCoy	Denise Marie Pouliot	Janet Tackett
Susy Meier	Lisa Przepasniak	Leslie Thrasher
The Mendoza Family	Eric Pullen	Libby Titus-Fagen
Louise Milanese-DiBacco	Lois Rigwood	Susan Gayle Todd
Pamela Miles	Gregg Sansone	Meghan Toups
Hope Miller	Anne Sauer	Mary Trauner
Amanda Minchew Hall	Laura Schuster	Claudia Tuttleman
George Minchew	Scott	Sharon Uittenhout
James Monteith	Jan Shearin & Alan Lazzara	Ellyn Webb
T. Mark Moore (Petrosouth)	Deborah Sherman	Andrew Wiesenberg
Josh Needle	Julie Simmons	Douglas Wilson
George Neeman	Julie Simon	Rebecca Wood
Helen Nelling	Betty & Pat Singleton	

Benefit Concert Sponsors

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Northside Tavern

One Consulting
Group

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Maddy Moneypenny

SILVER

Enercon

BRONZE

Blind Willie's

Amy Pollick and
Josh Lipman

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Jason Chapman

Linda Coarsey

Billy Flynn and Family

Paul Linden

Brian McCombs

Misty Pinkston

Julie Simon

Julie Smith

John Straw

Leslie Thrasher

Benefit Concert Silent Auction Donors

Acupuncture Works

AnyHaul.com

Blind Willie's

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Eclecto Groove Records

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Benefit Concert In Kind Donations

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Ticket Alternative

Tiny Design Studio

Benefit Concert Committee

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Melissa Bauer	Jon Liebman	Manda Pullen Turetsky
Patti Beaman	Donald Schellhaas	Lindsey Warren
Bridget Costello	Debbie and Glenn Smith	
Bartley Cross	Kelli Stripling	

Benefit Concert Volunteers

Laurie Antour	Kim Frazier Shaughnessy	Susy Meier
Don Auensen	Magic Fred	Ellen Preston
Jeanne Auensen	John Gibson	Paula Propst
Garrett Bailey	Barbara Hilke	Deb Pruett
Kevin Berry	Martin Houston	Judy Rowe
Nancie Branch	Julia Lloyd	Larry Stotts
Jen Burch	Mike Lynch	Bill Swing
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