



Annual Report

Beat Parkinson's Today

2025



www.beatpdtoday.com



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Michelle Hespeler

Chairman of Board



Dear Supporters, Friends, and Partners,

When I started Beat Parkinson's Today, it came from a deeply personal place—not just a belief in the power of exercise, but a belief in people. People who refuse to be defined by a diagnosis. People who show up, even on the hardest days. People who choose movement, connection, and hope.

This year reminded me why this work matters so deeply.

I have witnessed members regain confidence, build strength, and find connection—often when they needed it most. What started as a program has grown into a supportive community that shows up for one another every day.

Looking ahead, our focus is clear. We are working to expand satellite locations across Connecticut and into southern states, secure increased grant funding to support sustainable growth, and deepen member engagement so no one feels alone on their journey.

Beat Parkinson's Today moves forward because of you—our members, donors, instructors, and partners. Your belief in this mission makes everything possible.

Thank you for standing with us and helping prove, every day, that Parkinson's does not define what is possible.



Michelle Hespeler

Chairman of the Board, Beat Parkinson's Today



OUR YEAR'S IMPACT



261 Beat PD members part of our program

80 New Beat PD Today members in 2025

8436 Total classes attended by Beat PD members

170 Donors committed to our program and support our vision

24 Trainers, staff & board members are part of our Beat PD team

100+ Attendees to our "Fuel the Fight" webinar

5th Annual Golf for Parkinson's tournament with over **175** attendees

\$102,294 raised for Beat PD Today



THE HIGHLIGHTS

- 5th Annual Golf Tournament
- *Prevention* Magazine Highlight
- Book Club
- Beat PD Buddies
- CureNow:PD Partner
- Breathwork Series
- Moving Day NC & CT
- Yale University Studies
- PET Scan Study
- Weekly Team Meetings
- Operating Manual Finalized
- Giving Tuesday Campaign
- Fuel the Fight Webinar
- Novant Health partnership
- CrossFit Podcast (April)
- Medically Diverse Board Members
- UNCW Collaboration
- Continued HHC Partnership





SATELLITE GROWTH

NOVANT HEALTH



CURRENT PARTNERSHIP

Beat PD Today currently partners with **Novant Health** to provide a **free, in-person Parkinson's exercise class** at the Novant Health fitness facility in Wilmington, North Carolina. The class

is offered twice a week and consistently serves 11-15 participants, providing high-quality, Parkinson's-specific exercise and support to the local community. We are grateful for this strong and growing collaboration with Novant Health and deeply value the shared commitment to improving the lives of people with Parkinson's.

FUTURE EXPANSION

Our long-term goal is to expand this partnership **across North Carolina and into additional southern states**, working closely with Novant Health and other neurology departments and in-home senior care to bring this class model to as many patients as possible. Together, we aim to deliver one of the most effective "medicines" for Parkinson's—exercise—to empower individuals to live stronger, more confident lives.



To learn more about our partnership with Novant Health and the Parkinson's exercise class we offer in Wilmington, you can read the full story featured in their latest *Healthy Headlines* article below.

READ ARTICLE HERE!

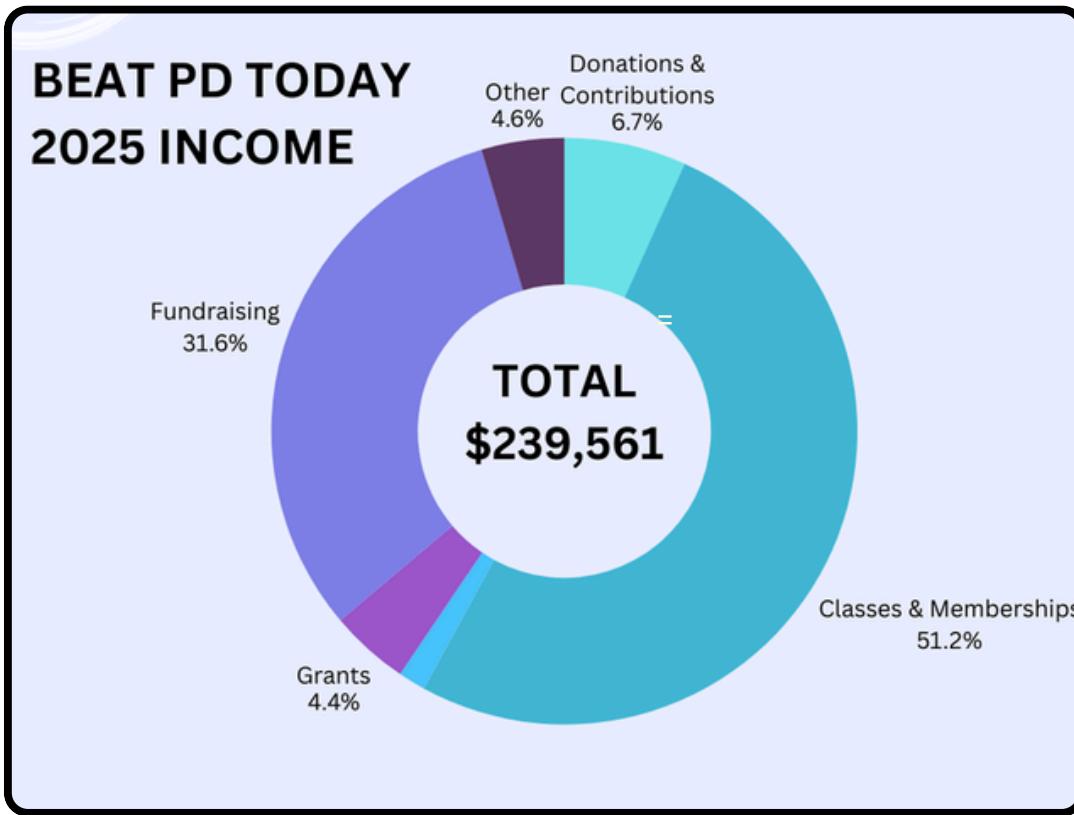
Free exercise class in Wilmington brings strength and support to individuals with Parkinson's disease

By Susan Miller

Exercise is important for improving neurological function and muscle movement in individuals with Parkinson's disease. That's why the Novant Health Foundation has partnered with **Beat Parkinson's Today** to offer an exercise class in Wilmington for individuals with Parkinson's disease, free of cost to participants.

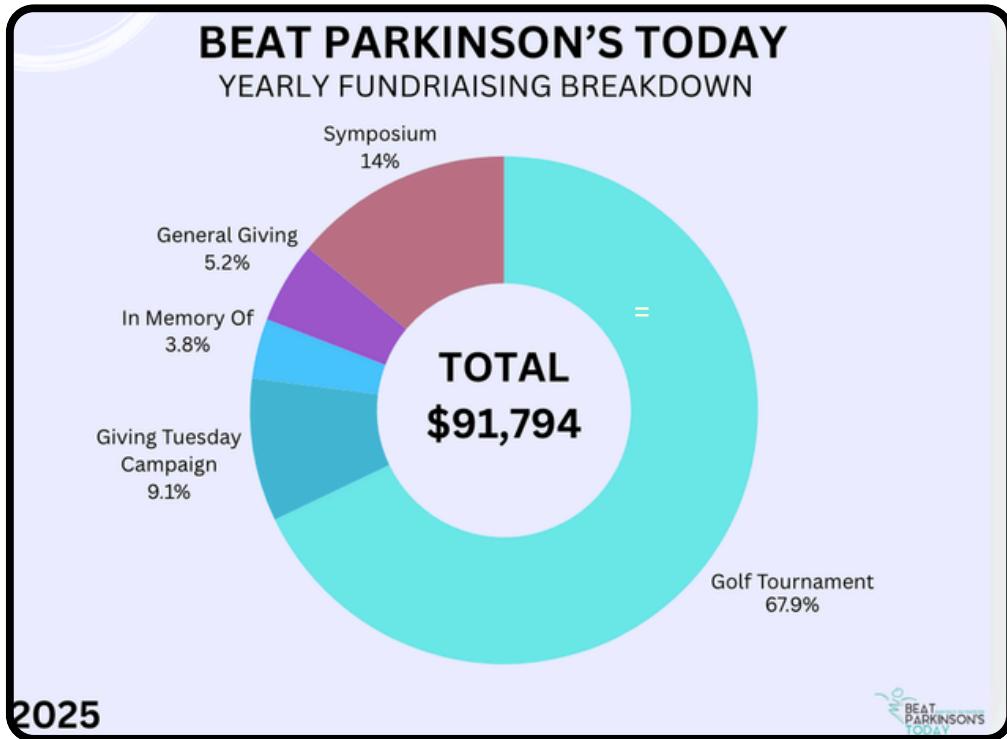
Dr. Rebecca Pratt, a Novant Health movement disorder specialist, recommends Parkinson's-specific exercise classes for her patients because the group format helps attendees stay motivated.

"Apathy or lack of motivation is really common with Parkinson's disease because that part of the brain is closely related," Pratt explained. "I usually ask patients to get involved with exercise classes because they provide an external motivator to stay active."

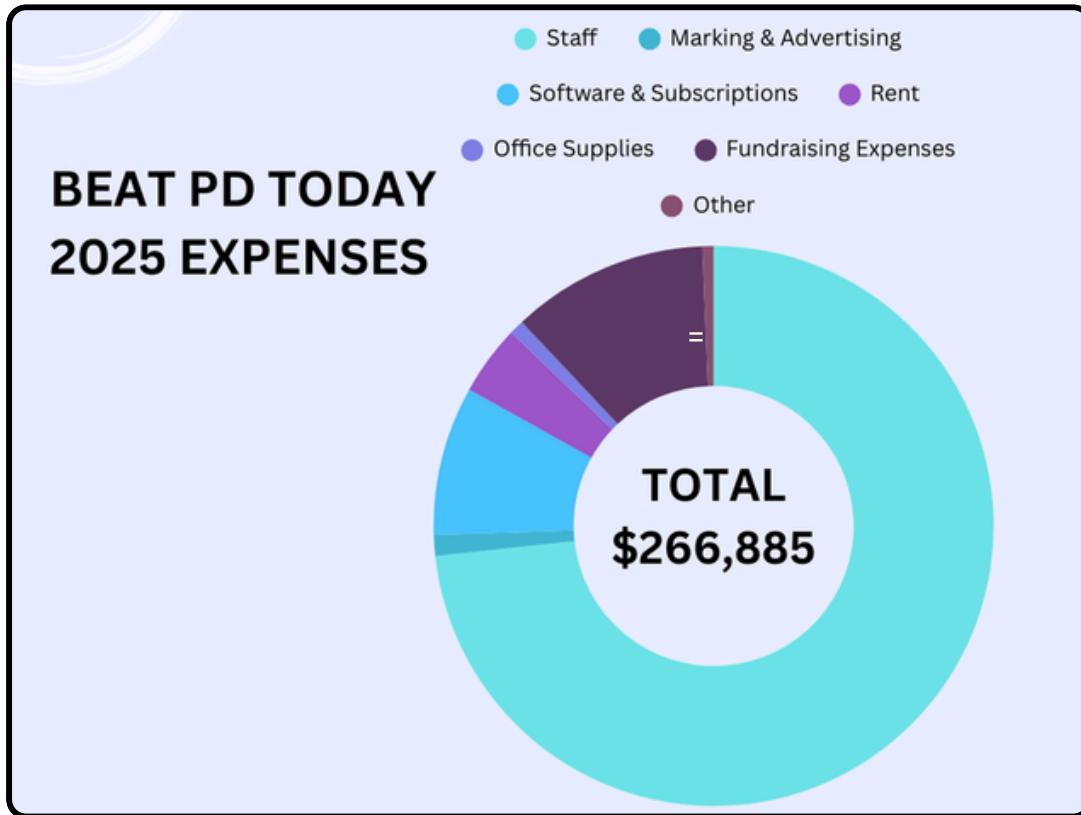


In 2025, Beat PD Today generated **\$239,561 in total income**, supported by a balanced mix of earned and contributed revenue. More than half of our funding came from classes and memberships (51.2%), demonstrating the strong engagement and commitment of our members, while fundraising efforts contributed 31.6%. Additional support from donations, grants, and other contributions further diversified our revenue, helping ensure the sustainability and continued growth of our programs for people living with Parkinson's.

FUNDRAISING BREAKDOWN



Our fundraising efforts generated \$91,794 in 2025, with the **majority of support driven by our annual golf tournament, which accounted for 67.9%** of total revenue—clear evidence of the event's growing momentum and strong community backing. Additional contributions came from general giving, our symposium, Giving Tuesday, and meaningful in-memory gifts. Building on this success, we're excited to expand our reach in North Carolina this year with **a new 5K race and our second annual symposium in October**, creating even more opportunities to engage supporters and grow our impact. Learn more information on our website!



In 2025, total expenses of \$266,885 were thoughtfully invested back into the people and programs that power Beat PD Today. Over half supported staff salaries, allowing us to **hire and retain certified trainers and dedicated team members** who deliver safe, high-quality classes and personalized support. Additional investments in fundraising and essential software and subscriptions help us strengthen our curriculum, expand educational offerings, and create memorable, inspiring events that bring our community together—ensuring **every dollar advances our mission** and deepens our impact for people living with Parkinson's.



IN THE NEWS

PREVENTION MAGAZINE July 2025

Program
Founder, Michelle
Hespeler, tells
her story
featured in
Prevention
Magazine!

HEALTH

MY DIAGNOSIS

I Was Too Young to Have Parkinson's

This athlete and coach was shocked to find out what was happening to her body, but she refused to let it stop her from staying active and helping fellow patients.

BY MICHELLE HESPELER, AS TOLD TO LESLIE PEPPER

⊕ A LIFE-CHANGING DIAGNOSIS

One day when I was around 40, I was driving my kids to school when my right arm and hand started tingling so badly it felt as if electricity were running through my fingers. I brushed it off, thinking it was carpal tunnel syndrome or exhaustion. As a lifelong athlete and a physical education teacher, I trusted my body to stay strong. But soon my fine motor control became challenged: I had trouble unscrewing a water bottle cap and typing on my phone. I kept thinking it was something temporary, like a pinched nerve, but I also noticed that I couldn't scrunch my toes into a sandal. All these random things happened throughout the year, but I never thought it was really serious until a friend and I were walking down a hallway and she asked, "Is something wrong with your right arm? It's not swinging like your left one." I thought it was a strange observation, but I knew then that I had to get answers.

My primary care doctor did several tests that turned up nothing. The next step was seeing a neurologist, who asked about my personal and family medical history and performed a few motor skills tests in her office such as asking me to tap two fingers together, push against her hand as a test of my strength, and walk up and down the hallway so she could see my gait. Almost immediately she delivered the news: "You have Parkinson's disease." The words hit me hard. It was unfathomable to me.

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FEATURED NEWS ARTICLES

"Exercise Is Crucial for Managing Parkinson's Disease"



Check out our website
to read these articles!



"Can exercise slow or reverse brain damage from Parkinson's disease?"





GRANTS & DONATIONS

FUEL THE FIGHT



BEAT PARKINSON'S TODAY
GIVING TUESDAY CAMPAIGN



We are thrilled and honored to announce we received another **\$10,000** grant this year from the **Petit Family Foundation**!

Thank you for supporting our cause and fighting the fight with the Parkinson's community!

Thanks to the generosity of our incredible community, this year's **Fuel the Fight Giving Tuesday campaign** helped us move forward and continue growing. Every gift—no matter the size—is bringing us closer to expanding our virtual classes, reaching more individuals around the world, and empowering people living with Parkinson's to stay strong and keep fighting.





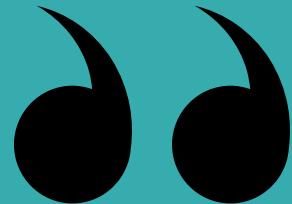
SUCCESS STORIES

“I was devastated by my diagnosis and after only 6 months of being a part of the program, I am emotionally and physically healthier. I am so grateful for the program and what especially Michelle has done to support me.”

-EILEEN K., MEMBER SINCE 2025

The workouts are thoughtfully designed for people like me, and the instructors truly understand the challenges we face. The program gives me confidence and makes me realize I am stronger than I think!”

-LOUSIE B., MEMBER SINCE 2025



“The results I experienced as a result of the superb online coaches have been remarkable: improved posture, endurance, breath control, appetite and energy. I am here to say that Beat PDToday has changed my life for the better and forever. To all at BPD Today, above all to founder Michelle, thank you.”

-ANITA, MEMBER SINCE 2025





PROGRAM STAFF



MICHELLE HESPELER
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

COURTNEY FINK
PROGRAM DIRECTOR
LEAD TRAINER



VICKI KULAS
FINANCE MANAGER

KRISTA SLOT
COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR



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MEDICAL ADVISOR



FUTURE OUTLOOK

Fueling the fight against Parkinson's

Expanding Our Reach: We are committed to growing our satellite locations across the southern United States while continuing to strengthen our presence throughout Connecticut. By partnering with new facilities and communities, we aim to bring our specialized exercise programming closer to home for those who need it most.

Investing in Sustainability Through Grants: Securing increased funding through grants will be a major focus in the year ahead. These resources will allow us to expand programming, invest in technology, support staff and instructors, and ensure long-term access to high-quality Parkinson's-specific exercise—regardless of geography or financial barriers.

Growing and Engaging Our Membership: With hundreds of members already benefiting from our programs, we are focused on increasing participation and deepening engagement. By welcoming new members, encouraging consistent class attendance, and fostering peer support through mentorship and community-building initiatives, we will continue to strengthen the collective impact of our community.

At the heart of our vision is unwavering hope—hope for greater access, stronger bodies, deeper connections, and a future where no one faces Parkinson's alone. Together, we will continue to move forward, one step, one class, and one victory at a time.

**INTERESTED IN PARTNERING WITH US?
BECOME A SATELLITE LOCATION
CONTACT US TODAY!**



THANK YOU



THANK YOU FOR YOUR
CONTINUED SUPPORT!
WE LOOK FORWARD TO ANOTHER
SUCCESSFUL YEAR IN 2026!