

MEDSHADOW FOUNDATION

**2019 / 2020**

# ANNUAL REPORT



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# PRESIDENT'S LETTER

*Suzanne Robotti*

Dear Friends,

It's no surprise to me that our most popular article of the year was not about COVID-19. It was about the side effects of the COVID-19 vaccination. We've received more clicks, more shares and more comments (well over 300!) on our constantly updated vaccine side effects article. Our site visitors, like you, are smart, you know that drugs given to heal can still cause harm. And you want to decide for yourself and your family's safety if the promised benefit of a drug or vaccine is worth the risk of harm.

## Independent

MedShadow readers know to come to our articles expecting the full truth because we don't have to "play nice" with sponsors who sell drugs and we out-research conspiracy theorists. We don't take pharmaceutical money. We depend on our readers to support us. MedShadow: Unbiased, unbought.

## Health Equality

The spring and summer of 2020 brought Black Lives Matter to national attention and to ours. We took a careful look at MedShadow and found that we could do better. Too many of the articles were targeted to a privileged audience. Too many times we assumed that the reader and their health care provider had an established, long-term relationship. We assumed the healthcare provider was a doctor. While we can't change the system, we can empower our readers to advocate for themselves and their family.

## DES Action USA

MedShadow Foundation also carries the responsibility and honor of being the home of DES Action. DES, diethylstilbestrol, continues to cause health problems two generations after being prescribed to pregnant women. DES Action USA is the largest DES organization in the world.



“

Trust is a beautiful thing. When it comes to taking medication, there are so many reports on the web that do not give full information, so we need to have unbiased reports and statistics. MedShadow is consistent in giving us the real facts. Great job.

- Walter H.

“

MedShadow Foundation is the best site for information on drugs and side effects. This site probably saved my life with all of the useful information it provided me with in my younger, college years. I'm most likely not alone in this regard. They are doing amazing work educating the public with easy to read articles about the side effects of medicine and I am so grateful for their support.

- Leke R.

## PRESIDENT'S **LETTER** CONTINUED

There is much achievement to celebrate across our joint efforts, but our mission is far from accomplished.

**The facts have not changed.**

- Side effects are still the **fourth leading cause of death in the U.S.** (not counting COVID-19)
- More than **40% of us have a chronic disease or illness**
- **More than half of us take prescription drugs**, and we take an average of four regular medications or supplements

**The statistics are sobering.** But the truth is inspiring: informed people are empowered people--people like you and me. When my mother was pregnant with me, a doctor gave her DES, it stunted the development of my fertility organs and put my mother at higher risk of breast cancer. That's why I started MedShadow Foundation nearly a decade ago, because I know first-hand that medicines can heal or harm, and we have to watch out for ourselves and our families. We are here to help you do that. And we are committed to stay here, steadfast in our mission to bring a healthy dose of honesty to medicine, and help fulfill a brighter, safer future for us all.

In gratitude and good health,

**Suzanne Robotti, President and Founder**



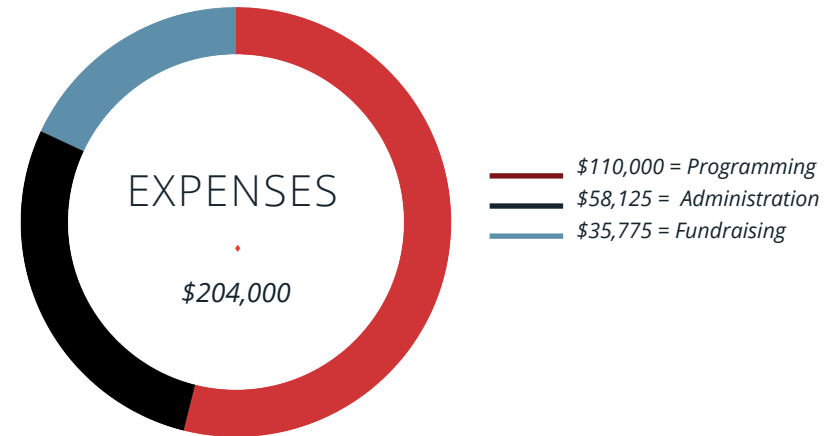
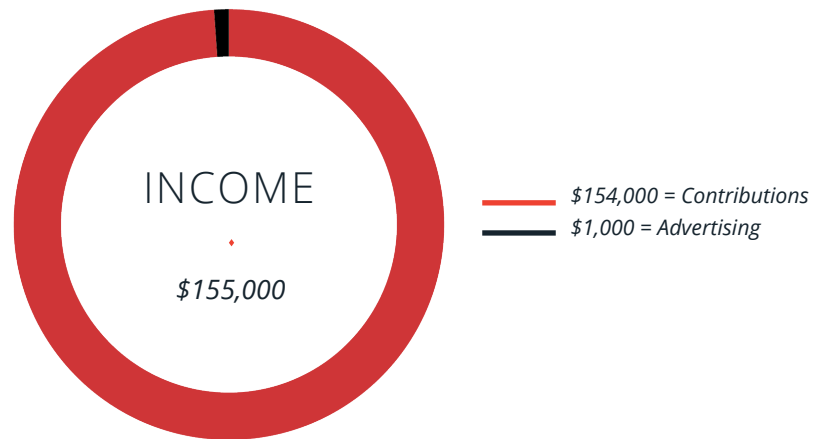
## MISSION FORWARD FOR MEDSHADOW

- Produced and updated 183 original articles
- Seven grants submitted to foundations
- Initiated or sustained partner relationships with Healing for Youth in Pain, Urban Health Medical Project, Breast Cancer Action, HealthWatch USA, CUE
- Identified target reader audiences to reposition branding and site experience
- Revamped home page and email program to put nonprofit mission first
- Increased reader retention with weekly newsletter subscribers--over 7,000 at year end
- Addressed reader engagement, time on site, and return visits by developing cornerstone content and bespoke landing pages
- Giving season campaign launched with digital marketing and email communications systems upgraded
- Committed to increase diversity and expand MedShadow Medical Advisory Board by adding three new members
- Achieved Great Nonprofits Status for 5 years

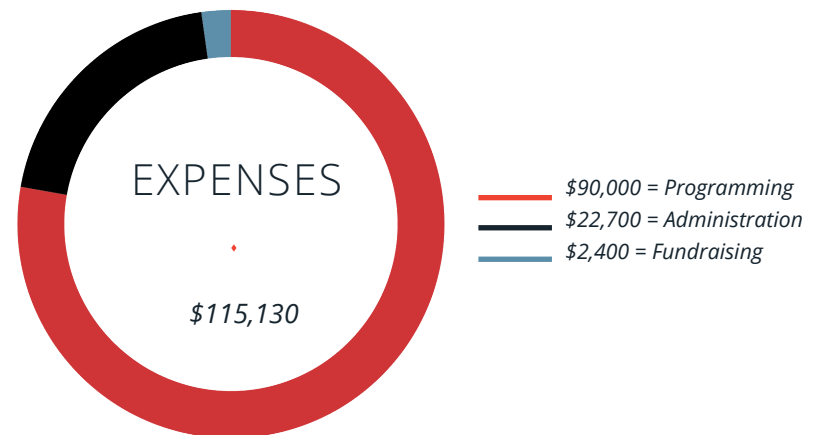
- DES Action completed update of research and information throughout website
- Upgraded 40+ years of VOICE newsletter archives to be searchable by keyword or topic
- Added DES Sons discussion group
- Welcomed new Community Manager as the previous retired
- Hosted shared screening of DES-inspired video
- Welcomed over 100 new members and closed 2020 with 550 total members
- Achieved Great Nonprofits Status for 2 years

## MISSION FORWARD FOR DES ACTION

## MEDSHADOW FINANCIALS



## DES ACTION FINANCIALS



Both MedShadow and DES Action do not accept funding or support from pharmaceutical companies or medical device manufacturers.





# LOOKING AHEAD

*To 2021 and beyond*

We have sustained our mission with stronger publications, just as we have adapted to meet this unprecedented crisis and its evolving public health issues and concerns.

We remain deeply dedicated to providing a balanced view of the risks and benefits of medicines, offering lifesaving, life changing health news and information to all—free, unbiased, and unbought by Big Pharma influence.

We are even more energized by barriers of awareness and the grave impacts of medication harm.

We have worked to expand our content and impact, charted an ambitious vision and taken practical steps to ensure we can elevate our cause and reach millions more readers.

We have made strides on our strategy and development, creating a solid basis on which to build and increase individual and institutional giving, as we refuse to accept any pharmaceutical funding.

We are building partnerships focused on cultivating a wider, more dynamic and engaged community, highlighting our unique credibility as a leading independent nonprofit publisher, and bridging health information for vulnerable groups who lack equal access to quality medical knowledge and care.

All satisfying progress, as we aim higher to deepen connection with readers, supporters, and donors. 2020 has shown us MedShadow must continue to grow, improve, and expand to be of greater service.

# THANK YOU

Thank you to our readers, members and supporters. Thank you to our dedicated staff and to our contributors, partners, and members of our Medical Advisory and Board of Directors, all for their generous efforts, insights and support.

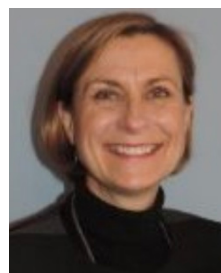
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