



# 2020 ANNUAL REPORT



**BITE ME!  
CANCER!**

# Organization

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## 2020 Board of Directors

### Executive Committee

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Nikki Ferraro, *Founder, Freddie Mac*

C. Michael Ferraro, *Chairman, Training Solutions, Inc.*

Meryl Bisaga, *Treasurer, Brambleton Group*

Sharon Ferraro, *Secretary, Training Solutions, Inc.*

### Board Members

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Chris Buchen, *Retired*

Aaron Clarke, *Halperin Financial*

Donna Corley, *Freddie Mac*

Peter Crain, *Cooley LLP*

Brian Kincaid, *Fairfax County Government*

Pete Schmidt, *Heidrick & Struggles*

### Committees

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Communications

Development

Finance/Operations

Teen Support

Thyroid Cancer Research

Wine Dinner

# Message from the Founder

After a year like 2020, it's easy to point to challenges and setbacks that the pandemic has brought to our lives and communities. I could certainly name a few.

Instead, I want to use this space to express gratitude for a meaningful personal milestone: 10 years.

This past year marked a decade that cancer and the foundation have been a part of my life. I was diagnosed with thyroid cancer in April 2010 as a teenager and began my journey to fight and get back to "normal" life. While I was juggling treatments and doctor visits, I was beginning another journey with Bite Me Cancer – that we would become a foundation by September to help other teenagers with all cancers feel less alone and to further important research to find a cure for thyroid cancer.

In a year that was more of a challenge to conduct fundraising with all in-person events cancelled, I wanted to share a few highlights:

As of December 31, 2020, we reached \$1,070,350 in fundraising dollars since BMC began!

We achieved our goal of distributing our signature Teen Support Bags to teens with cancer in all 50 states thanks to our growing network of hospital partners. Even with the restrictions around Covid, we were able to

ship out bags to 900 teens with cancer.

These bags were even more critical this year, as hospital visitations were restricted during the pandemic.

New volunteers joined our foundation to support our mission and help raise more funds to further our work.

Our board of directors continually managed our finances well to ensure we could sustain a decline in revenue during a tough year.

Our events team rolled with several punches during 2020, repeatedly rescheduling our Annual Wine Dinner, which we look forward to bringing back in 2021.

While 2020 didn't bring us the year we were expecting, we continued to deliver on our mission and be there for teenagers with cancer. We were able to do so because of the immense support and dedication of our volunteers, sponsors and donors.

To all our volunteers, sponsors, committees, board members, donors, research and hospital partners, and friends, I thank you for your support during the past 10 years as we continue to bring comfort to teens battling cancer in 2021 and beyond.



Nikki Ferraro, Founder

# About Us

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**Bite Me Cancer is devoted to supporting teenagers with all cancers and funding meaningful research for thyroid cancer.**

Bite Me Cancer is an all-volunteer nonprofit foundation in Fairfax County, Virginia, founded in September 2010 by Nikki Ferraro, five months after she was diagnosed with a rare form of Thyroid Cancer. At the time, she was 17 years old and a junior at Chantilly High School in Virginia. Nikki was determined to lead a Relay for Life team just two weeks after her diagnosis. She named the team Bite Me Cancer and experienced immediate success raising over \$20,000! When Nikki decided to create a foundation a few months later, she wanted to continue the legacy of her team's name and thus her foundation became Bite Me Cancer.

The foundation began with a small board of directors and a focus on Nikki's 2 goals: (1) to support and inspire teenagers battling all cancers through Teen Support Bags and other programs (2) to work towards new treatments

and a cure for thyroid cancer through directly funding thyroid cancer research grants.

In June 2012, after raising enough funds for 100 Teen Support Bags, Bite Me Cancer began distributing the bags to teens dealing with all cancers. The program grew quickly in numbers of bags and number of hospitals who wanted the bags. The foundation was also able to fund its first of many direct research grants in 2014.

As the foundation grew, the need for a storage space and a small office outside of the Ferraro home was needed in 2015. Currently, the foundation is in a building owned by Service Source (a national nonprofit) at a generous discounted rate and use of all conference rooms and facilities.

Bite Me Cancer continues to be an all-volunteer organization.

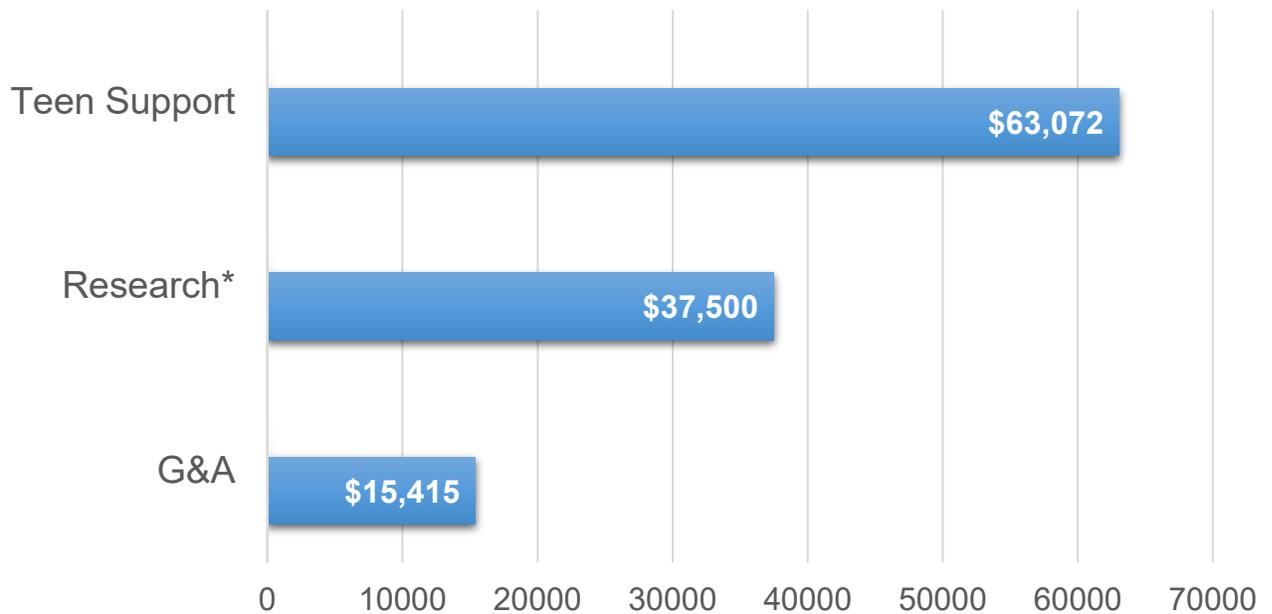
**The beginning of Bite Me Cancer.**

# Financials

**REVENUE = \$87,273**



**EXPENSES = \$115,987**



\*Research payout amount was raised in 2018 and 2019. Research grants are each for a 2-year timeframe. Bite Me Cancer pays ½ at the beginning of year 1 and pays ½ at the beginning of year 2.

# Inspiration

## Teen Support Program

When Nikki was diagnosed with cancer at age 17, she realized that there was not age-specific support for teenagers as they fell between the younger pediatric groups and the adult patients. She felt strongly that a Teen Support Bag was needed that would contain age-appropriate support when battling cancer.

During 2020, our bag assembly events, and distribution of bags became delayed due to the pandemic. Eventually, we were able to distribute 900 Teen Support Bags (instead of the budgeted 1,200 bags) across the country to teenagers dealing with all cancers. The bags were shipped to our hospital partners and a few nonprofits who hand out the bags to their teen patients. We increased our hospital partners to 140 during 2020. We were able to achieve our goal to reach teens in all states (and DC) and

**Bite Me Cancer volunteers safely assembling Teen Support Bags.**

increased the number of states to 140. From inception in June 2012 to December 2020, Bite Me Cancer has reached almost 8,100 teenagers with cancer with our Teen Support Bag. That means 8,100 opportunities for us to help teenagers with cancer to smile, feel supported and even inspired. Many of their families have also shared their positive feedback with us.

Each Teen Support Bag costs us \$75.

Usually, we also distribute meals once/month to families battling cancer on the Pediatric/Oncology Unit of INOVA Children's Hospital. In 2020, due to Covid we only were able to deliver in January and February.



*"I am 15 years old. Last year, I got sick during the pandemic and was in the hospital with many medical issues when they thought I had Covid. My family wasn't allowed to see me. I was then diagnosed with cancer. I loved your bag!*

*Something for teens finally! My favorite thing is the socks!"*

*"I was diagnosed with brain cancer, which is no fun. But your bag really helped me! I recently had my senior pic done and wore your Bite Me Cancer hat!"*

**Help us to support them!**

*"Our Child Life Specialist gave your bag to a teen that just relapsed with leukemia. He immediately smiled, put on his new Bite Me Cancer ball cap and wristband, and started a game of card that were provided. Our specialist stated that these bags are a fun way to help our teens express themselves while fighting the biggest battle of their lives!"*



*"I am 17 years old. Thank you for the awesome support bag! I'm dealing with my 2<sup>nd</sup> battle with cancer, and I appreciate your Bite Me Cancer bag to help me!"*

*"My daughter didn't smile once in the hospital for 3 months until she received your bag!"*

# Awareness

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The sixth Teen Cancer Awareness Week was held the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of January 2020.

Bite Me Cancer is proud to have successfully achieved an annual Teen Cancer Awareness Week across the Commonwealth of Virginia during the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of January each year that began in 2014. Delegate Tom Rust and Delegate Ken Plum helped achieve a unanimous vote of the entire Virginia House of Delegates in 2013 to make this happen. This awareness week serves as a positive force for Virginia teen cancer patients. (Photo below is from 2013.)

Bite Me Cancer continues to spread awareness to the specific challenges of teenagers who battle cancer. Teenagers dealing with cancer have many unique challenges: they understand the seriousness of cancer and the possibility of death, the loss of friendships, the missing of school and activities, the increased need for parents, the loss of independence, the question around getting through middle school, high school or college, and even more.



# Research

Our grants make a positive impact in fighting thyroid cancer.

When Nikki formed Bite Me Cancer, she felt strongly that thyroid cancer research needed to be a focus for the foundation since it had been the fastest increasing cancer for many years and that her rare kind of thyroid cancer had no treatment options other than surgery. In 2013, Bite Me Cancer was able to be an Alliance for Patient Education Member of the American Thyroid Association (ATA) and become a partner in their thyroid cancer research program. ATA's grant program is for younger researchers who

receive a two-year grant if their proposals are accepted after extensive reviews. Bite Me Cancer is proud to be part of this important program that funds new and innovative research.

In 2020, Bite Me Cancer raised enough funds (\$25,000) to fund 50% of our 8th thyroid cancer research grant. This grant will be appointed by June 2021 and will be in partnership with ThyCa (Thyroid Cancer Survivors Association) as they also contributed 50%. We partner in years where funds are lower than expected.

## Grants:

7<sup>th</sup> grant, start 7/2020:  
Dr. Cristina Montero-Conde, PhD  
Spanish National Cancer Research Center, Madrid, Spain

6<sup>th</sup> grant, start 7/2019:  
Dr. Anthanasios Bikas, PhD  
Georgetown Univ/MedStar, DC

5<sup>th</sup> grant, start 7/2018:  
Dr. Wayne Miles, PhD  
The Ohio State University Medical Center, OH

4<sup>th</sup> grant, start 7/2017:  
Dr. Yu Qin  
MD Anderson Cancer Center, TX

3<sup>rd</sup> grant, start 7/2016:  
Dr. Irene Min  
Weill Cornell Medicine, NY

2<sup>nd</sup> grant, start 7/2015:  
Dr. Laura Boucai  
Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, NY

1<sup>st</sup> grant, start 7/2014:  
Dr. Ramona Dadu  
MD Anderson Cancer Center, TX

# Annual Wine Dinner

*(was cancelled due to Covid)*

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Bite Me Cancer had planned on a large celebration in 2020 because it was the foundation's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary and was also Nikki's 10<sup>th</sup> "cancerversary."

10 honorees were chosen and would have been introduced to the crowd for their support and outstanding efforts to Bite Me Cancer over the 10 years. They will be honored at our next dinner.

Since many of the dinner sponsors and individuals had already purchased their tables/tickets, they were very generous to give their funds to Bite Me Cancer to use towards the 2020 goals with their intention to repurchase again once the dinner can be held.

**Originally scheduled for April 2020, and then postponed until October 2020. Eventually the event was cancelled for 2020.**

We received \$29,500 from those sponsors and ticket purchasers. The 2019 dinner raised \$85,000; and we had hoped to raise \$100,000 in 2020.

(photo from 2019 event)



# Annual Wine Dinner Sponsors

Thank you to these sponsors who let us keep their 2020 dinner sponsorship donation without us holding our dinner event!

## Gold Sponsor

Bank of America  
Clarke-Hook Corp.  
Training Solutions, Inc.

## Silver Sponsors

Cooley LLP  
Phoenix Steel Erectors  
Raley Family  
Sandy Spring Bank  
United Bank

## Bronze Sponsors

Mary Agee  
BDO  
Corley Family  
Crain Family  
Ehinger Family  
Firschein Family  
Interstate  
Karin's Custom Images  
Bobbie Kilberg  
Raelyn Marketing Promotions  
Schmidt Family

# 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Party

*(was cancelled due to Covid)*

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September 2020 would have been our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, but it was cancelled due to the Covid-19 safety precautions.

These photos are from the 2018 and 2019 events, where we brought many supporters together. We raised a good deal of money; and the celebration included music, raffles, food, drinks, sponsors, Nikki's speech and more!

The 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary party would have taken place once again at the Arlington Rooftop Bar & Grill in Arlington, VA. Over \$7,500 was raised in 2019.



# Events

In 2020, there was very little that could take place due to Covid. We did enjoy a donated suite to a Washington Capitals hockey game in mid-February before the lockdown (middle photo). We sold tickets and even had a family of a teen with cancer attend to celebrate her 13<sup>th</sup> birthday with her twin sister!

We were not able to enjoy a donated corporate suite given to us by The National Association of Broadcasters for 3 Washington Nationals games like in 2019 (top and bottom photos). We usually sell tickets to supporters and invite some families who have teen children dealing with cancer.

In-person 3rd party events are also strong segment of the fundraising opportunities for Bite Me Cancer. We are so grateful for all the help to raise funds! There are 2 kinds of events:

- 3<sup>rd</sup> party events held by other organizations, retail outlets, restaurants
- Individuals who run their own fundraising campaign (for their birthday, a race, in honor of someone, etc.)

In 2020, some individuals raised funds through Facebook birthday campaigns, raising \$3,400!



# Annual Sponsors

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## Impact: \$5,000

Brambleton Soave Real Estate

## Inspire: \$2,500

KT Enterprises  
Training Solutions, Inc.

## Support: \$1,500

Apex Home Loans  
Dynex Capital  
Metro Group  
TM Associates  
Tom Coughlin Jay Fund  
Urban Ltd.  
Ventera



# Contact

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**Twitter** - [@bitemecancerorg](https://twitter.com/bitemecancerorg)

**Instagram** - [@bitemecancer](https://www.instagram.com/bitemecancer)

**YouTube** - [youtube.com/bitemecancerorg](https://youtube.com/bitemecancerorg)

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Donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law

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CANCER!