



# 2021 Annual Report



# Organization

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## 2021 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.)*

Peter Crain (*Cooley LLP*)

### Board Members

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Erica Alexander (Howard University)

Chris Buchen (*Retired*)

Aaron Clarke (*Halperin Financial*)

Donna Corley (*Freddie Mac*)

Janet Goda (*Booz Allen Hamilton*)

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

Bite Me Cancer had a successful year on all fronts, including the reinstatement of our popular wine dinner despite challenges due to the pandemic.

We set up a few virtual fundraisers during the year, and we were hopeful that we could have our annual wine dinner in September.

This dinner used to be in April each year, but during 2020 we had postponed it twice and had settled on September 2020 – until it had to be cancelled. Since September is the anniversary month of the foundation, we decided to work towards holding our event in September 2021 (which gave us more time to watch Covid in hopes that we could have our event).

I celebrated my own 11<sup>th</sup> “cancerversary” in April 2021. Also in April, I began a new oral chemotherapy pill to relieve some of the side effects from the other chemo prescription. I have experienced success with this new drug, Retevmo; and I’m so grateful.

! In January, I started my first Instagram Live with Nikki and Brian “show.” Brian is a board member and a cancer survivor, diagnosed as a teenager. We had 3 shows during 2021. Brian and I shared parts of our teen cancer journeys, and we included a guest. We had some live watchers and then we replayed these from our YouTube channel and on social media.

! Our annual virtual March Madness Bracket Challenge received great support.

! We also created a new virtual fundraiser, our 5K in May. This was half virtual and half in person, which enabled people anywhere to join us, have fun and support the foundation. Many local participants joined us for an in-person 5K.

! We also held my annual birthday campaign in November/December in honor of my 29<sup>th</sup> birthday on November 20.

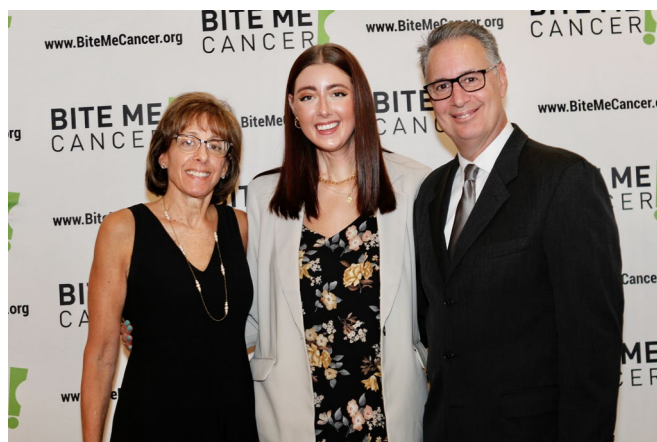
! We were able to send out 1,150 Teen Support Bags to teenagers battling all cancers during 2021. This brought our total to 9,250 since the first bag was given out in 2012!

! We were able to fund our next thyroid cancer research grant – our 9<sup>th</sup> one!

! Our board of directors managed our finances very well to ensure we could sustain given the continuing fundraising challenges in 2021.

! As of December 31, 2021, we reached \$1,224,000 in fundraising dollars since the foundation began!

To all our volunteers, sponsors, committees, board members, donors, research and hospital partners, and friends, I thank you for your support during the past 11 years!



Nikki and Parents

# 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.

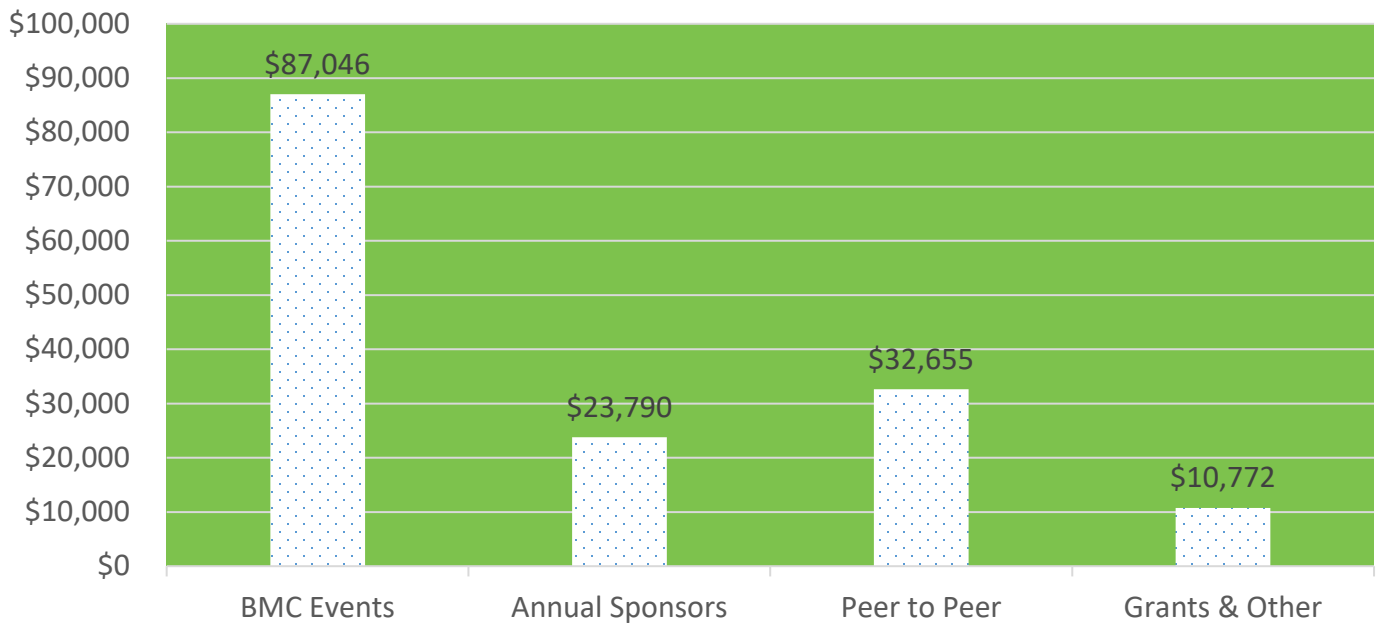
In 2015, the growth of Bite Me Cancer was too much for the Ferraro home, so a small office was found. Currently, the foundation is in a building owned by Service Source (a national nonprofit) that offers a very generous discounted rate for a small office and storeroom and the use of all conference rooms and facilities.

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

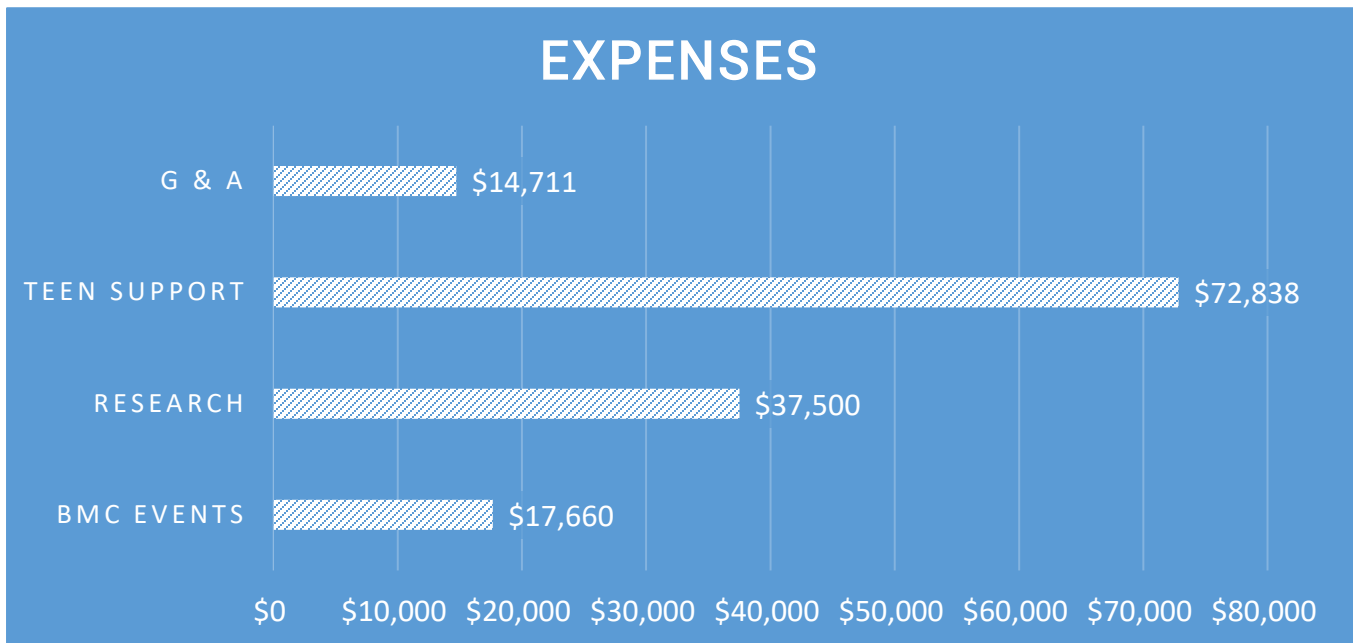
**Still an All-Volunteer Organization**

# Financials

## REVENUE



## EXPENSES



\*Research payout amount was raised in 2019 and 2020. 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 while battling cancer.

Teenagers battling cancer have unique challenges unlike younger children. They understand the seriousness of their situation. They are missing their school, their extracurriculars, their friends, and their developing independence. They want to be planning for high school, college or a job. They know their life might be shortened; and they juggle the assortment of many scans, labs, surgeries, and doctor appointments.

During 2021, we were allowed a small group of volunteers into the building to help pack and ship our bags at 4 assembly events. For 2021, we were able to send out 1,150 bags for teenagers with all cancers across the country.



### Bite Me Cancer volunteers safely assembled Teen Support Bags

From inception in June 2012 to December 2021, Bite Me Cancer has given our Teen Support Bags to 9,250 teenagers with cancer. That means 9,250 opportunities for us to help teenagers with cancer to smile, feel supported and even inspired. We reach teenagers in every state and DC!

Many of the teenagers, their families and hospital personnel have shared their positive feedback with us. During 2021, each Teen Support Bag cost us \$75.

Before Covid, we would distribute meals once/month to families battling cancer on the Pediatric/Oncology Unit of INOVA Children's Hospital. In 2021, we were able to deliver only twice late in the year. However, there was great excitement from the families and hospital staff over our Chick-Fil-A deliveries!



*"Hi, my name is Lindsay. I'm 17, and when I was 15, I was diagnosed with a very rare form of brain cancer. That was no fun, but your teen bag really helped me! I recently had my senior pic done and wore your hat! "*

*From a Child Life Specialist: "The Teen Support Bags have been greatly appreciated by the teenagers receiving them! Thanks for all your efforts in support of teens with cancer!"*

**Help us to support them!**

*"Thank you for the amazing swag bag! It was so full of cool goodies as my 13-year-old son started his scary journey. Thank you for all you do to help others!" says a mom.*

*"I'm 16 years old, and I got my Bite Me Cancer bag! I love everything in it and am super thankful for it!"*



*"I'm 14 and received your bag. I love the bag because when I have a long visit at the hospital, I can bring my stuff with me!"*

*From staff: "Your Teen Support Bag made a child's day brighter during what would be a very challenging time!"*

# Teen Cancer Awareness

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The seventh Teen Cancer Awareness Week was held the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of January 2021.

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 founded Bite Me Cancer, she felt strongly that thyroid cancer research needed to be a focus for the foundation's mission. For years, thyroid cancer had been the fastest increasing cancer, and Nikki's rare kind of thyroid cancer had no treatment options other than surgery.

In 2013, BMC became a research partner with the American Thyroid Association (ATA). ATA's grant program is for younger researchers who receive a two-year grant directly from Bite Me Cancer. We select and follow the researcher throughout the project.

We are proud to be part of this important program that directly funds new and innovative research.

In 2021, Bite Me Cancer raised enough funds (\$25,000) to fund 50% of our 9th thyroid cancer research grant. This grant will be appointed by June 2022 in partnership with ThyCa (Thyroid Cancer Survivors Association), which also contributed 50% towards this 9th thyroid cancer research grant. We partner in years where research funds are lower than expected or we are choosing to enhance funding for Teen Support Bags.

Again, our research payments go directly to the researcher for a specific Bite Me Cancer grant.

8<sup>th</sup> grant, start 7/2021:  
Dr. Eman Ali Toraih  
Tulane Univ. School of Medicine, LA

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

We were thrilled to be able to resume our Annual Wine Dinner in 2021 with 175 guests and many sponsors at Westwood Country Club in Vienna, VA.

We proudly presented our 11 honorees (10 of which would have been introduced at our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary 2020 event which had to be cancelled due to the pandemic).

Nikki gave her emotional speech that is now available on our YouTube channel. She ended with:

*"Before I ask for your help tonight, I want to leave you with a quote. A quote that got me through the scariest, most terrifying, but also most rewarding time of my life...it goes "You never know how strong you are until being strong is the only choice you have."*

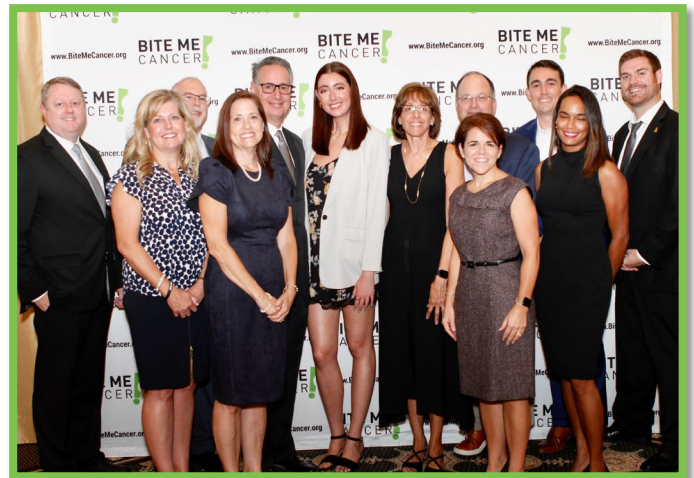
**Thank you to all who helped us raise \$87,046 at the 2021 dinner!**

**This result beat our 2019 dinner that raised \$85,000.**

Onsite that evening, we raised \$34,150 from our "live ask" and our silent auction!

We provided postcards and a QR code for guests to donate. Our "small but mighty" auction was very popular too.

Below: (l) Nikki giving her speech (r) Board of Directors



# Annual Wine Dinner Sponsors

Thank you to our 2021 dinner sponsors!

## **EMPOWER SPONSOR**

Clarke-Hook Corp.  
Cooley, LLP  
Corley Family  
Sandy Spring Bank  
Training Solutions, Inc.

## **INSPIRE SPONSORS**

Dev Technology  
Phoenix Steel Erectors  
Raley Family  
Searle Family  
United Bank

## **GRATITUDE SPONSORS**

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American Thyroid Association, BDO,  
Bisaga Family, Bonadie Trestrail Family,  
Brown Family, Buchen Family  
Lee Corey, Kathy Cox,  
Ehinger Management LLC, Karin's Custom Images,  
Christina Mai, RAELYN Marketing Promotions,  
Schmidt Family, Ventera,  
Virtual Business Virtuoso, LLC, Wine Styles South Riding

# 11<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Honorees

*(celebrated at our annual wine dinner)*

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Bite Me Cancer presented its 11 honorees for their long-term excellence in assisting the foundation with their outstanding volunteer efforts, their support of the Teen Support Program, their dedication to the thyroid cancer research grant program, their impressive assistance with fundraising efforts and their volunteer activities.

Said Nikki Ferraro: " *These special individuals, families and companies have provided us with their ongoing leadership, outreach, generosity, time and talent for many years to help our foundation grow beyond my dreams. These honorees are not family members and didn't have to get involved, especially at this amazing level of participation.*" The 2021 Bite Me Cancer Foundation honorees are:

## Individual Category

Meryl Bisaga  
Mark Searle

## Families Category

Callahan Family  
DiCesare Family  
Raley Family

## Organization Category

Cooley LLP, Custom Ink  
Exhibit Edge, Inspired Embroidery  
Karin's Custom Images, Raelyn Marketing Promotions





# Events

We offered virtual events in 2021 since we couldn't hold in-person events (other than our wine dinner in September).

First, our NCAA March Madness Bracket Challenge was able to be "played." We had an excited group competing online to receive Bite Me Cancer swag. We raised \$3,525!

Second, we had our first annual Attitude is Everything Virtual 5K in May! This was a big success. People could register and walk/run their 5K anywhere in the world. The top photo is Nikki's aunt and uncle in AZ! We also had a group walk through the Ferraro neighborhood which was fun for all! We raised \$8,079!

We also offered our annual birthday campaign in honor of Nikki's 29 birthday on November 20. The campaign ran mid-November through December and raised \$6,318!

We couldn't offer our annual 3-4 Washington Nationals tickets in a donated corporate suite given to us by The National Association of Broadcasters at Nats Park (bottom photo is from the 2019 games). We sell tickets and also invite families dealing with childhood cancer. We look forward to 2022 games!



# Annual Sponsors

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Impact: \$5,000

Brambleton Soave Real Estate

Inspire: \$2,500

Dynex Capital

KT Enterprises

Map Your Show

Training Solutions, Inc.

Support: \$1,500

Apex Home Loans

Carly Flumer

Metro Group

Morgan Stanley Wealth  
Management

The Computer Workshop

TM Associates

Tom Coughlin Jay Fund

Urban Ltd.



# Contact

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**Facebook** – [facebook.com/BMCAttitude](https://facebook.com/BMCAttitude)

**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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Bite Me Cancer Foundation is a 501(c)3 - Federal ID 27-3554181

Donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law

**BITE ME**  
CANCER!