



2019 Annual Report

**HERE'S WHAT YOU
SUPPORTED IN 2019.**





JOSEPH WEILGUS

Founder and
Chairman of the Board

**WHITNEY NAMM
POLLACK**

Executive Director



June 2020

DEAR FRIENDS,

These past months have put a spotlight on the difficult work the health care community faces every day and, like you, we've been doing everything we can to support these heroes. One of the most brutal aspects of COVID-19 has been the isolation it requires. We at Project Sunshine know how important human connection is: for more than twenty years, our thousands of volunteers have brought the healing powers of play and joy into countless medical facilities around the globe. As we face an uncertain future, we hope you will join us in celebrating the helpers, the good work that has already been done, and the commitment we're making to bring sunshine to the days and months ahead.

Here are some of the key areas in which we focused our efforts to continue to improve and expand our services in 2019:

INNOVATION

Under the direction of a newly-assembled leadership team, we kicked off a rigorous, research-based initiative to evaluate the effectiveness of our programs and ensure we are meeting or exceeding our hospital partners' needs. We conducted site visits and surveyed medical specialists at partner facilities to build closer relationships and better understand patient needs. We introduced a wider range of activity kits and programs that engage patients developmentally, physically and mentally.

EXPANSION

In 2019, we served more than 195,000 patients and families, a 10% increase from the previous year. We partnered with employees from over 100 companies and counted more than 19,000 trained volunteers

around the globe. In Kenya alone, Project Sunshine reached nearly 29,000 children and families, more than ever before.

AWARENESS

Awareness of Project Sunshine also continued to increase both nationally and internationally. We were featured on CNN's Morning Express show as one of five nonprofit whose work was featured around the holiday season, and we were profiled among an esteemed group of the top 100 philanthropic organizations by *C-Suite Quarterly* magazine.

FUTURE IMPACT

In more than 20 years of working with medical centers, care providers, patients, and their families, we have helped our partners to shape and enrich the world of pediatric care. Our vision is to inspire a new norm, in which all young lives disrupted by illness have consistent and meaningful opportunities for creative expression, socialization, intellectual stimulation and sensory integration—aspects of care that are essential to children's health and well-being.

None of this work is possible without your help, and we look forward to your continued support as we continue to grow our impact. Project Sunshine is bringing fun, happiness and human connections into emergency departments, medical centers and hospitals rooms around the world. From babies and toddlers to teenage patients, we focus on the one thing they all have in common: being a child. We encourage you to volunteer with us to experience the power that laughter and joy can have, even in the most serious of settings. Thank you again for helping us make a difference.



ABOUT PROJECT SUNSHINE

Project Sunshine harnesses the healing power of play and activities to help children and their families manage childhood medical challenges.

We do this through an international network of volunteers who bring joy to children. Project Sunshine engages volunteers through **Community Chapters**, **College Chapters**, **Corporate Partnerships** and **Kids & Family Service** opportunities. Volunteers provide support in two ways: in-hospital volunteering interacting directly with pediatric patients, and assembling Activity Kits that are used by hospitals to support children and their families.



2019 IMPACT

195,000+

Children and Families Served

100,000+

Activity Kits Delivered

19,000+

Trained Volunteers

10%

Growth in Children and Families Served over 2018

350+

Hospital Partnerships in the U.S., Canada, China, Israel & Kenya


175+

Cities Globally



PATIENTS & FAMILIES

For over 20 years, hundreds of thousands of children and their families have experienced the healing power of play as they navigate childhood medical challenges.



I was so
happy to know
there are people
who are happy
to help me.

ROSA DIAZ

Mother of three children,
including asthma patient Alex
New York, NY



The first time Rosa Diaz brought her son Alex to the emergency department he was just a few months old and gasping for breath. Medical staff swarmed her baby and then he was being taken away from her, fitted with a mask, tubes and lines and machines appearing almost out of nowhere and all but consuming her baby.

Now, nearly thirteen years later, Rosa is still traumatized by that memory. “I felt so helpless,” she says, “my baby could barely breathe, and I didn’t know how to help him.” After Alex was stabilized and breathing normally again, a social worker told Rosa about the East Harlem Asthma Center for Excellence where she began attending workshops to learn how to manage her son’s asthma. It’s also where Rosa was first introduced to Project Sunshine.

“I was so happy to know there are people who are happy to help me,” she says. Alex’s asthma is now well controlled, though he still has occasional episodes. Thanks to the workshops they’ve attended at East Harlem Asthma Center, Rosa is confident Alex can manage his own care. Project Sunshine’s volunteers are key to that—“When it’s arts and crafts day, I make it my business to be there,” Rosa says, beaming. “The kids just love it so much—it’s de-stressing for them. They get to make slime and volcanoes and lava lamps, and they learn so much, too—Alex got a diploma after completing a course of asthma lessons!”

Rosa’s important takeaway from her experience with the Asthma Center and Project Sunshine: the empowerment she feels that comes from knowing how to advocate for herself and her son to ensure he gets the care he needs.




Suleiman Walter lives with his mother on the outskirts of Mombasa. He struggled with frequent bouts of severe diarrhea from drinking untreated water and had endured several life-threatening cases of malaria. Suleiman is like many young people living in Kenya who lack basic knowledge of proper hygiene and disease prevention. That's where Project Sunshine's outreach and prevention program, in partnership with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and a grant from the Gilead Foundation, came in.

During an initial home visit, Project Sunshine community health workers, Samu Kanyoko and Mercy Wanjiru, discovered Suleiman had stopped taking his HIV medications. At first, Suleiman resisted participating in the program. As Samu and Mercy walked Suleiman and his mother through an interactive demonstration on how germs are spread, Suleiman realized that neither he, nor his mother, really knew how to effectively remove germs.

Samu and Mercy continued their monthly visits, bringing medicine and supplies like soap, chlorine and bed nets. Suleiman became more open to their instruction and asked questions about living with HIV. They taught Suleiman and his mother how to properly tuck the ends of the bed net under his mattress — something they hadn't done before. In the weeks and months after, Suleima noticed a drop in mosquito bites on his body, as well as a decrease in illnesses.

Nine months after their initial home visit, Suleiman is taking his medications consistently and is much healthier. Suleiman credits the home lessons — particularly the question in one of the games in the curriculum that asks, "Can I stop taking my medicine when I start to feel better?" — with changing his life. He now understands the importance of taking his medicine daily, and he knows how to take simple steps to avoid illnesses that can be fatal to him.



Can I stop
taking my
medicine when
I start to feel
better?

SULEIMAN WALTER

Patient

Mombasa, Kenya

HOSPITAL PARTNERS

Project Sunshine partners with over 350 medical facilities around the world. Project Sunshine provides support to these partners by engaging volunteers to interact with pediatric patients and providing Activity Kits that can be utilized by hospital staff to engage and bring joy to children and families.



Project Sunshine makes a world of difference in the life of a child –it transforms a hospital into a space where a child feels comforted and hopeful.

KELLY PINTARICH

Child Life Specialist
Honorhealth Deer Valley Medical Center
Deer Valley, AZ



Kelly Pintarich has seen first-hand the positive impact Project Sunshine has on children in the emergency room, as well as on children receiving long-term care in the hospital. As a Child Life Specialist, Kelly describes Project Sunshine as a necessity for the overall well-being of a child by replacing fear and anxiety with hope, joy and a vital diversion with therapeutic play. Project Sunshine, she says, “enables children to view the hospital as something different than just a scary place and creates a more child-friendly environment.”

Kelly was introduced to Project Sunshine at New York-Presbyterian Morgan Stanley Children’s Hospital, where volunteers and creative activity kits were a constant in the pediatric wing. When Kelly moved and started working at Honorhealth Deer Valley Medical Center in Arizona, she contacted Project Sunshine to partner with her new workplace. Kelly describes Project Sunshine as a game changer and the activity kits as her “go-to resource.” Kelly uses a variety of the activity kits available for different ages and situations and notes that one of the children’s favorites are the puppets they decorate with stickers and markers.

According to Kelly, “the activity kits are such an integral part of the work I do — they help calm, distract, and comfort children in times of distress.” Project Sunshine is the perfect way to help the children she works with to focus less on the fact they are in an unfamiliar place facing medical issues and instead affords them an opportunity to be kids — something essential to every child’s growth, recovery and well-being.



Years ago, Diana Tustin discovered her calling after she volunteered with a Child Life Specialist while helping to care for her ill brother's young children. Now she is a Child Life Specialist herself, employed at Michael Garron Hospital in Toronto, Canada, where she helps "children, youth and families understand, manage and cope with their experiences and feelings through play, education and support."

Diana is always brainstorming new ways to improve the hospital experience so children can cultivate "confidence, strength, courage, hope and bravery." Discovering Surgi Dolls sparked Diana's initial attraction to Project Sunshine. After researching and getting excited about all of the organization's programs, she feels "a sense of relief that more children may have play opportunities when Project Sunshine is present." She adds, "helping children find their superpowers is one of the most rewarding aspects of my job."

And it's not just the children that benefit from Diana and Project Sunshine's contributions. "The Caring for the Caregiver program offered by Project Sunshine has probably had the biggest impact on my work," Diana says. Together, they respond and tend to the stress and well-being of parents and caregivers as well.

ABOUT SURGI DOLLS

Surgi Dolls are gingerbread person-shaped cloth dolls sewn by Project Sunshine volunteers. Child Life Specialists and other medical staff use the dolls to walk pediatric patients through what to expect from an upcoming procedure. By providing children a developmentally-appropriate way to understand their treatment, Surgi Dolls can help decrease their anxiety and increase their coping skills. The patients can also decorate, personalize, and use the dolls as a means of comfort.

Visit ProjectSunshine.org/what-we-do/medicalpartners to find out more about becoming a medical partner.

My experience has been that Project Sunshine volunteers are always highly trained, meet expectations, and are professional and friendly: all necessary traits to a successful program.

DIANA TUSTIN

Child Life Specialist
Michael Garron Hospital
Toronto, Canada



COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS

Community volunteers work directly with patients and caregivers at local medical facilities, providing fun and interactive programs.



When I
volunteer with
Project Sunshine,
I get the greatest
reward: a sense
of purpose and
the ability to
give back.

SHERRI RUSHING

Community Chapter Leader
Atlanta, GA



Sherri Rushing has been a Project Sunshine volunteer for more than fifteen years. Sherri's initial connection to Project Sunshine was pure chance: she was corporate volunteer liaison with United Healthcare (UHC) and was asked to take responsibility for coordinating UHC employee volunteers with Project Sunshine's volunteer opportunities.

Right from the beginning, Sherri was galvanized by Project Sunshine's ability to "help kids enjoy being kids, regardless of the health challenges they may face." After leaving UHC, Sherri continued to volunteer with Project Sunshine, becoming a Community Chapter Leader in her hometown of Atlanta, Georgia. Today, Sherri brings Project Sunshine volunteer programs to patients and their families in hospitals in her community.

Sherri recently spent time coaxing a particularly quiet patient out of her shell, finally getting her to laugh and engage with the other volunteers. For those few hours, that young girl wasn't just a patient anymore: she was a kid, too. The power of experiences like these are why Sherri describes her work with Project Sunshine as one of the best life decisions she's made.

In fifteen years of doing this work, Sherri has learned a lot. "Expect to make a difference in a child's life," she tells potential volunteers, "but be open to the child making a huge impact on your life as well."

At 80 years young, Shmuel Tuval, a retired businessman who served 22 years in the Israeli military, is Project Sunshine's oldest volunteer. These days though, it's the joyful reaction he sees in the children he serves that fills him with deep pride. "I see that mainly through the children's reactions: They run to me to be hugged, call my name and ask to sit next to me while in class or during outdoor time."

Two years ago, Shmuel was referred to Project Sunshine by the volunteer coordinator at the Tel Hashomer hospital. Shmuel volunteers at the Autistic kindergarten for students with special needs in the Tel Hashomer medical center. He reads to the children, plays games with them and helps them focus during teacher-led circle time. During recess, Shmuel encourages socially-distant children to join in games. "There is a lot of responsibility, especially with those children who are more self-confident, and very active."

Shmuel isn't just a cherished familiar face to the children, he is also beloved by his fellow volunteers and a regular face at social gatherings organized by the local Project Sunshine chapter. "My life has become fuller. This volunteering opportunity certainly contributes to me as well: life is more satisfying." He adds, "it also affected my connection with my children and grandchildren, deepening our relationships."

Visit ProjectSunshine.org/volunteers/community to learn how to become a volunteer in your local community.

Go the extra mile and volunteer – loving children is the essence of life: it adds vitality, satisfaction and great pleasure.


SHMUEL TUVAL

Community Volunteer
Tel Hashomer Medical Center
Tel Aviv, Israel

COLLEGE VOLUNTEERS

College chapters provide opportunities for students to fundraise and volunteer in their local school communities.





Nothing
makes me
happier than
making these
children smile
and laugh.

CAROLINE JONES

College Chapter Leader
University of Washington
Seattle, Washington



Throughout high school, Caroline volunteered at her local hospital and with other programs that worked with children. At the University of Washington's student activities fair, she learned about Project Sunshine and how the organization combined both her interests. Soon after, she was inspired to become a College Chapter Leader.

Caroline manages most of the administration work, but also plans and assembles arts and craft projects and leads direct-service events. "Working with these kids brings me joy and warmth," she says, "any in-hospital event is easily the highlight of my day."

Caroline remembers a little boy in particular who was having difficulty connecting with the volunteers who didn't know much about superheroes or video games. So when the opportunity presented itself for Caroline's chapter to partner with a fraternity, she jumped at the chance. The boy and a fraternity member were "inseparable," and he finally had someone who could understand his references. "I'm happy to provide an outlet for self-expression in an environment where kids don't have a lot of choices," Caroline remarks.

Caroline also volunteers with Rotaract, with a focus on equitable food access and environmental issues. "Volunteering with Project Sunshine has made me realize that I want my future work to have a direct impact on people." She has always been interested in medical or graduate school for a career in research, and now she is considering joining AmeriCorps after graduation.



When Ziyue Jiang, a chief intern at Xiehe Hospital in Beijing, China, describes her typical day volunteering with Project Sunshine, it's clear she wears many hats. "I am responsible for coordinating seven chapters, chapter leaders and sometimes all volunteers." Ziyue adds, "Each hospital or rehabilitation center has different requirements." In other words, "every day is filled with new experiences and learning."

Project Sunshine China's most active volunteer corps are social work students, like Ziyue, from China Women's University who gain valuable hands-on medical experience with pediatric patients while delivering Project Sunshine's programs at partner medical facilities. Chief interns are third-year students who are elected by their peers after serving for a full year as volunteers, and they demonstrate mastery of their academic training in a medical setting.

For Ziyue, working with Project Sunshine meant gaining valuable professional experience as a social worker while engaging in volunteer work that is personally fulfilling. "My weekends are more fun to be with the children, more meaningful than spending every weekend bored, and it also improved my professional skills in social work."

Visit ProjectSunshine.org/volunteers/college to learn how you can join an existing college chapter or start a new chapter at your college.

After only one
volunteer
session, I felt that
my weekends
were more fun
with the children.

ZIYUE JIANG

Volunteer
Beijing, China





CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS

Project Sunshine offers corporations hands-on volunteer opportunities that inspire their employees to serve their local communities while encouraging team bonding.



Project
Sunshine made
it really easy for us
as a company to
get involved and
to get as many people
involved as possible.

BRIANNA GONZALEZ

Vice President, Business Development
and Social Responsibility, LabFinder
New York, NY



Brianna Gonzalez has a passion for social entrepreneurship and a belief that the nonprofit and for-profit sectors can work together for the greater good. “Sometimes people tell me my ideas are too big or they can’t be done,” Brianna admits, but that doesn’t stop her.

After joining LabFinder in June 2018, Brianna put that philosophy into action, connecting LabFinder with Project Sunshine to create a partnership that benefits everyone involved. “Creating win-win situations is really important to me,” she says, “because that’s what makes partnerships work over the long term.”

When LabFinder’s leadership set a target of increasing the number of medical appointments scheduled through their proprietary platform, Brianna saw an opportunity. She pitched an initiative called Quarter Per Order—for every appointment booked, LabFinder would donate \$0.25 to Project Sunshine and each time LabFinder reached 10,000 appointments, employees would participate in a day of service, volunteering in a medical center or assembling activity kits.

When asked about the best part of the work she has done to bring LabFinder and Project Sunshine together, Brianna doesn’t hesitate: “Getting to see kids being kids. Their smiles are the best possible reward.”

Visit ProjectSunshine.org/volunteers/corporate to find out how your company can make a difference.

KIDS & FAMILY VOLUNTEERING

Our Kids for Kids program engages those younger than 18 who want to spread joy to pediatric patients. In 2019, our Kids for Kids volunteers raised over \$10,000 for Project Sunshine through peer-to-peer fundraising initiatives and assembled 5,000 Activity Kits.

Our newly-formed Family Service Initiative is a meaningful way for families to engage in service together. Since it launched in 2019, the program has logged an impressive 184 volunteer hours.



“I wanted to be a pediatrician when I was young,” recalls Kim Krinsky, “but I’m terrible with blood.” A serendipitous email from childhood friend and Project Sunshine’s Executive Director, Whitney Namm Pollack, set the wheels in motion for Kim and her family to volunteer through Project Sunshine’s new Family Service Initiative.

While Kim launched her own leadership development and executive coaching business, she knew she wanted to find a way to continue her interest in medicine. “I was looking for ways to become more involved in the healthcare world. I have always had a passion for finding ways to take the fear out of medical experiences, especially for children: doctors and hospitals can be terrifying!”

Kim was thrilled to find that Project Sunshine gave her a way to be involved in children’s healthcare while also introducing her twelve-year-old daughter Eve to volunteering. The Family Service program provides organized and ongoing opportunities for families to engage in service together through hands-on events, including activity kit assembly at local hospitals, piloting and offering feedback on play-based activities, and decorating pediatric units.

Kim has a special appreciation for the way Project Sunshine’s programs “help parents who are often exhausted and overwhelmed.” She’s also been glad to introduce Project Sunshine to some of her corporate clients, noting that Project Sunshine’s opportunities for companies “are great—very easy and fun.” Any advice for prospective volunteers? “Sign up!” Kim says, “and bring kids. The programs are well-organized and just amazing.”

Visit ProjectSunshine.org/volunteers/kidsandfamilies to learn more about volunteering opportunities.

It’s an easy and fun way to get kids involved in giving back!

KIM KRINSKY

Family Service Initiative Volunteer
and Project Sunshine Donor
New York, NY



2019 HIGHLIGHTS

CNN'S MORNING EXPRESS

Project Sunshine was featured on CNN's Morning Express with Robin Meade in December, 2019. Project Sunshine was one of five charities CNN profiled during the holiday season. The "Giving Express" segment gave viewers a glimpse at the connection between volunteers and patients and rallied others to volunteer with our organization.

To view the CNN coverage, visit ProjectSunshine.org/CNN



Custom mural
created by Overall
Murals in NYC

Overall Murals along with Kinetic Worldwide and Project Sunshine came together to bring to life an intricate hand-painted mural at the corner of Kenmare and Mott Streets in the heart of New York City. Unveiled in September 2019, the mural celebrates 20 years of service and helped raise over \$50,000 for Project Sunshine.





Celebrating 20 Years

Project Sunshine celebrated “20 Years of Sunshine” at our 2019 Benefit honoring Joel Fleishman, Professor of Law and Public Policy and Director of the Center for Strategic Philanthropy and Civil Society at Duke University and the former President of Atlantic Philanthropies, for his invaluable support and guidance. The event featured remarks by Darren Walker, President of the Ford Foundation, and David Lauren, Vice Chairman & Chief Innovation Officer, Ralph Lauren Corporation, and raised over \$1,000,000 to support Project Sunshine’s programs.



PROJECT SUNSHINE SHINES AT NYC FASHION WEEK EVENT


Model Devon Windsor appeared along with special guests Miss Universe Catriona Gray and Miss USA Sarah Rose Summers as well as many volunteers and supporters at Project Sunshine’s New York City fashion week charity event at Vacluse, which benefited the patients and families of Project Sunshine.

GOLF CLASSIC

The 2019 Project Sunshine Golf Classic was held at the Century Country Club on October 15, 2019. This year’s event was sponsored by NFP and honored Vernon Evenson for his commitment and dedication to Project Sunshine.

Visit ProjectSunshine.org/ps2019 to watch our 2019 highlights video.



A portrait of Bernie M. Rosof, M.D., a man with glasses and a suit, smiling. The portrait is set against a yellow circular background. There are some blue lines and a blue circle on the page.

Restoring childhood within the hospital environment, restoring the fun that children can have with their family, was enough for me to want to participate.

BERNIE M. ROSOF, M.D.

CEO, Quality in Healthcare Advisory Group, LLC
Project Sunshine Board Member
New York, NY

"It started with a sneeze," recalls Bernie Rosof about his introduction to Project Sunshine. During a dinner with friends years ago, Bernie sneezed and a person at a nearby table said, "gesundheit." That person was Joe Weilgus. "I thanked him for being concerned about my sneeze and we began a little conversation that interested both of us. We exchanged emails and from there it's a Project Sunshine story."

What began as a chance encounter has forged a lasting connection. With his nearly three-decade-long background as a medical professional and hospital administrator, Bernie was naturally drawn to the work of Project Sunshine. "I think the value as a medical professional and somebody who spends time within hospitals is recognizing that we can't do everything in terms of providing for the needs of patients and their families. It's extremely satisfying to us as professionals and hospital administrators to have volunteers such as Project Sunshine come in and provide that ray of sunshine."

Bernie's passion and enthusiasm for Project Sunshine has inspired his granddaughter, who was involved with the formation of the Duke University college chapter when she was an undergraduate student.

As a Project Sunshine board member, Bernie leads the Program Committee as it forges new ways to enhance the organization's programmatic offerings. This means looking at activities that touch every aspect of the Project Sunshine community — not just the pediatric patients and their families — but the volunteers, nurses, hospital leadership, and pediatric departments, and getting the word out among these constituents "so that they know more about the Project Sunshine programs and that they are fully supported in their own hospital environment."

Bernie also sees the value of the volunteer experience for budding medical professionals. Project Sunshine's college volunteers who are considering careers in medicine or business get insight into a future medical career. "What's better than a college volunteer, when he or she goes out into the business world, the medical world, maintaining their activities with Project Sunshine. Their early experiences are incredible."

2019 DONORS

SUNSHINE
(\$100,000+)

American Express Foundation
Charitable Lead Annuity Trust under the
Will of Louis Feil
Genentech
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Tylis Family Foundation

SUNLIGHT
(\$50,000-\$99,999)

Blackstone Charitable Foundation
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and Fred Wilpon Family Foundation

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NERA Economic Consulting
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O’Melveny & Myers LLP
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Adrienne and Bernie Rosof
Ryan Specialty Care, LLC
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Anonymous

SUNBEAM
(\$5,000-\$9,999)

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Away Travel
AXA Insurance Co.
Bank of America Merrill Lynch
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Berro Family Foundation
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Sara Bloom
Bloomingdale’s
Bristol-Myers Squibb
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C Suite Resources
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Capital One
Captivate, LLC
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CFA Institute



Jessica and Dr. Huifeng Chang
The Leon H. Charney Foundation Inc.
Chappaqua Children's Book Festival
Justin Chhabra
Children's Specialized Hospital Foundation
Michael Choy
Jennifer Cohen
Collibra
ConceiveAbilities
The Congregational Church of Easton
Claudia Cordano
Corre Partners Management LLC
Crescent Capital Group LP
CVS Health
CVS Health Foundation
Jessica Dadigan
The Gloria & Sidney Danzinger Foundation Inc.
Archie Gottesman and Gary DeBode
Debra and Claudio Del Vecchio
Janet and Frank DellaFera
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DLA Piper
Paula Dolan
Dornam Foundation
Glenn and Kelly Drew
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Ezra Elyahou
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If we have spelled your name incorrectly or you would like to be listed differently, please email info@projectsunshine.org.



FINANCIAL SUMMARY

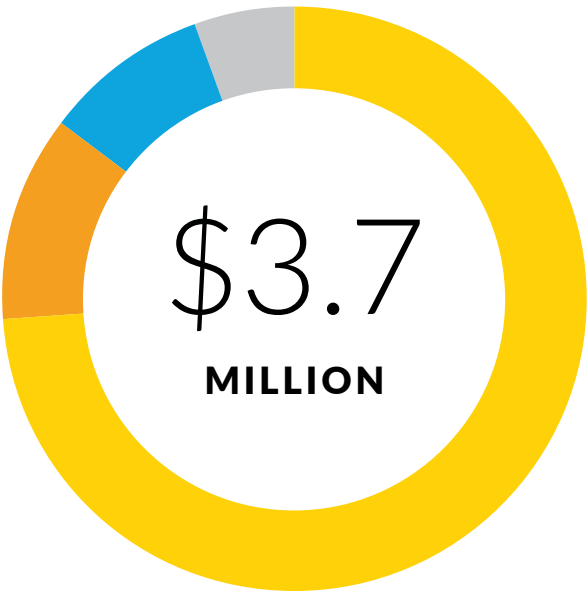
Fiscal Year 2019*

Support & Revenue



- Contributions 65.5%
- Fundraising Events (net of expenses) 34.25%
- Other 0.25%

Expense & Reserve Allocations



- Program 74%
- Management & General 11.5%
- Fundraising 9%
- Contribution to Reserve 5.5%

*Unaudited financials. Official audited financials will be available in August 2020.

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