

Ice Bucket Challenge: Less Than 27% Of Donations Fund Research & Cures



by **Anthony Gucciardi**

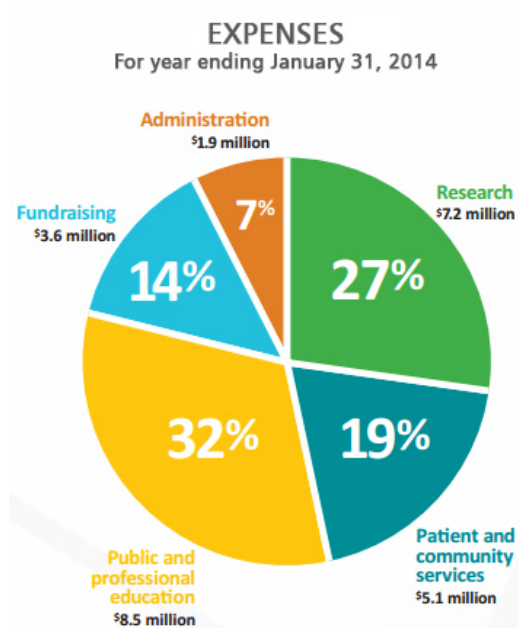
As a huge proponent of serious charitable organizations, it always is disturbing to see trends such as Kony 2012 and various Susan G. Komen for the Cure initiatives take the social media atmosphere by storm. From the ultimate backlash against the celebrity-driven Kony fraud to the embarrassment of the KFC 'Buckets for the Cure' campaign backed by Susan G. Komen, I was immediately hoping that the infamous new 'ice bucket challenge' would in fact be an exception to the series of misled social media fundraising campaigns.

As soon as the ALS Association published its official numbers and my contacts within the investigative community confirmed the worst, however, it was apparent that once again we have been shoveling (or dumping in this case by the bucket-load) our hard earned funds into an organization that only uses about 27% of its financing to actually fuel research 'for the cure' which just so happens to be based on pumping up the bloated pharmaceutical industry.

But don't just take my word for it.

\$95 Million Later: Only 27% Of Donations Actually Help 'Research The Cure'

Reaching [over 94 million](#) in donations at the time of writing this article, thanks primarily due to the viral ice bucket challenge marketing campaign, you may be surprised to see the admitted breakdown of the company's donated resources. You may be even more surprised to see the income breakdown within this non-profit that prides itself in helping 'find the cure' for ALS - now the most common among the five motor neuron diseases. From the company's own records, we [find the following cost breakdown](#) for the year ending in January of 2014:



Research, as you can clearly see, sits at only 27% of the organization's overall expenditures. Fundraising (marketing), stands at around half at 14%, and **1.9 million in administration** (7%) was spent on their roster of highly paid non-profit executives. In fact, we even have the salary figures for each executive, including the ALS Association CEO's six figure total:

Jane H. Gilbert ? President and CEO ?\$339,475.00

- Daniel M. Reznikov ? Chief Financial Officer ? \$201,260.00
- Steve Gibson ? Chief Public Policy Officer ? \$182,862.00
- Kimberly Maginnis -Chief of Care Services Officer ? \$160,646.00
- Lance Slaughter -Chief Chapter Relations and Development Officer ? \$152,692.00
- Michelle Keegan ? Chief Development Officer ? \$178,744.00
- John Applegate ? Association Finance Officer ? \$118,726.00
- David Moses ? Director of Planned Giving ? \$112,509.00
- Carrie Munk ? Chief Communications and Marketing Officer ? \$142,875.00
- Patrick Wildman ? Director of Public Policy ? \$112,358.00
- Kathi Kromer ? Director of State Advocacy ? \$110,661.00

And let's be clear: I am a huge proponent of prosperity and business expansion. When it comes to private business and commerce, it benefits us all to see growing numbers among a company and its members. This, however, is not the case for a 'non-profit' organization that is based around the concept of 'searching for the cure' and 'funding research' as its primary goal. Especially when this organization is being funded with close to 100 million dollars through a viral social media campaign in which it appears **no one truly took the time to investigate the very company they are shoveling their assets into.**

But as [our friend Sayer Ji](#) of GreenMedInfo points out in his breakdown of the ice bucket phenomenon, even the smaller portions spent on 'research' for ALS are actually going towards pharmaceutical interventions and the pharmaceutical industry at large. There is simply no room to spend even a single percent of the \$100 million in an effort to educate you about the reality that numerous studies available through the United States National Library of Medicine have **demonstrated the natural preventative effects of key substances like:**

Vitamin E: Shown by research to exhibit a whopping 50-60% decreased risk of developing ALS [when taken](#) alongside powerful polyunsaturated fatty acids.

Vitamin B12: Demonstrated by scientific study to be highly beneficial in the aid and understanding of ALS. In fact, [PubMed research](#) specifically reveals the integral usage of vitamin B12 in ALS research:

?To develop a symptomatic treatment for amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, we compared the effects of ultrahigh-dose and low-dose (25 and 0.5 mg/day, intramuscularly, for 14 days) methylcobalamin on averaged compound muscle action potential amplitudes (CMAPs) in a double-blind trial. No significant changes in CMAP amplitude were found in 12 patients who had the low-dose treatment at either 2 or 4 weeks after start of treatment. By contrast, 12 patients assigned to the ultrahigh-dose group demonstrated a significant increase at 4 weeks. This method may provide a clinically useful measure to improve or retard muscle wasting, if a larger extended trial fulfills its promise.?

And the list goes on. But what's even more important to consider is the lack of information **regarding the actual cause of ALS**, which may be even more valuable to many sufferers. Looking to the research we find an extensive list of culprits that can be identified and reduced, including:

Pesticides: Not mentioned by the ALS Association, a number of studies [have drawn](#) links between ALS and pesticide exposure.

Lead: Often contaminating the food supply and foreign products, 4 studies have demonstrated a relationship [between lead](#) and ALS at large.

Statin Drugs: You may already be well aware of the dangers surrounding statin drugs, in which case this may not surprise you. ALS has been [identified as a](#) possible side effect of these drugs that aim to reduce cholesterol.

The Bottom Line: Spread Information, Give to Trusted Charities

Amid all of the social media madness when it comes to charitable organizations like Susan G. Komen and now the ALS Association, it remains true that the key element necessary for real change is the spread of information. And when financial abilities allow for it, supporting real charities with a proven track record of directly supporting its stated goals with the bulk of its financial power.

As a major believer in supporting real charities, I always am searching for real organizations that follow these principals. Earlier this year, I found out about a Washington native named Ben Charles whose charity had been shut down by beauracratc government officials ? even going as far as to threaten Ben with arrest for feeding the homeless on the streets of Olympia. Concerned about this issue, I further reached out to Ben back in early December of 2013, documenting the [government crackdown on his initiatives](#) and others.

Later that month, I gave another church that was targeted by the government for handing out turkeys on Thanksgiving a \$1,000 donation in order to purchase additional food items (specifically turkey) and distribute it among those who needed it in the area ? a proverbial middle finger to the bureaucratic park rangers and officers who sought to shut them down. This was also done as an initiative to drive others to do the same.

Now, amid yet another social media donation campaign that has led to almost 100 million going 'towards the cure', I am inspired (and want to inspire others) to give to a charity that really gives directly to the people it seeks to serve. **That's why I am giving \$2,000 to Ben Charles and his grassroots 'Crazy Faith' food program in Olympia, Washington in order to help feed hundreds of homeless individuals on the streets with healthful food items.**

With this donation, 100% is to be used in order to purchase high quality foods to feed those in need ? and educate them on how to better their lifestyle with wholesome foods.

Whether or not you have the funds available to support your local communities, what's even more important is the spread of information. **If everyone donating to the ALS Association actually took the time to share key articles such as those highlighting the dangers of ALS-linked toxic substances, or those discussing the power of natural alternatives to ALS treatment, millions would be helped within hours.**

No matter what the next social media fad becomes, always remember that it is your voice that propels change and life-saving differences.

This post originally appeared at [Natural Soicety](#)