Nonprofit Ethical Case:

Too Much Brotherly Love: Vaccines Misused By Philly Fighting COVID

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NPA 601: NONPROFIT ETHICAL LEADERSHIP
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Prof. Marco Tavanti. Ph.D.
Volunteers Fighting COVID-19 in Philadelphia

We are on a mission to test all Philadelphians and flood Philadelphia with reusable PPE.

"Let us be remembered as being part of the fight against this pandemic."
Summary

- Philly Fighting Covid (PFC) started as a nonprofit in April 2020, making PPE for essential workers at the beginning of the pandemic. It was founded by 22 year old Andrei Doroshin.
- A few months later PFC began running Covid testing sites and were able to test 20,000 Philadelphia residents. Eventually moving on to vaccinations with much fanfare and support from the city.
- Quickly had many ethical issues and three weeks after opening they shut down
- Key players: City of Philadelphia government officials, Andrei Doroshin; CEO of PFC, Dr. Thomas Farley, Dr. Caroline Johnson.
- This case looks at the unethical behavior of PFC executives. We look at why this NPO was picked and failed in its overall mission, how this affects the third sector and how to prevent such issues in the future.

Are you ready to JOIN THE FIGHT?
**PHILLY FIGHTING COVID**

**March 2020**
Andrei Doroshin and his group of friends begin 3D printing face shields for essential workers.

**April 2020**
PFC becomes a 501c4 whose mission is to provide ppe for essential workers. Reportedly 5000 face shields are made and donated.

**May 2020**
PFC Begins Covid testing Philadelphia residents. Reportedly 20,000 people are tested in 7 months.

**June 2020**
Doroshin meets with 15 of the nonprofit’s employees to unveil their vaccine distribution plan where he shared how the operation can be scaled and monetized.

**October 2020**
PFC becomes 501C3.

**December 2020**
PFC becomes a for profit company called Vax Populi.

**January 2021**
Jan 8, 2021 Doroshin gets a deal with the Philadelphia Department of Public Health and Mayor Jim Kenney’s administration

**WHYY began investigating the organization and its founder.**

Jan 23, 2021 Doroshin is seen taking vaccines home with him. Something he adamantly denies.

Jan 25, 2021 the city cuts ties with PFC.

Jan 28, 2021 Doroshin admits that he took vaccines home with him and he vaccinated his girlfriend.

Jan 30, 2021 Dr. Caroline Johnson, the city’s acting deputy health commissioner, steps down

PFC shuts down.
Accomplishments:
- PFC tested 20,000 Philadelphia residents.
- PFC 3D printed 5k face shields for essential workers.
- PFC vaccinated about 6,900 people in Philadelphia.

Failures:
- PFC was not a good steward of the government’s resources.
- PFC lacked transparency when they became a for-profit company in an effort to monetize the free vaccines they received from the City of Philadelphia.
- PFC failed to provide accurate demographic information on the clients they were able to vaccinate and blamed it on a glitch in the system.
- PFC has failed to take accountability for their wrongdoings and has not apologized.
- Vaccines were taken off-site by PFC’s CEO.
- PFC failed to put a privacy clause in their policies leading to distrust amongst community members who fear their private information will be sold.
Compliance

- PFC “Threw out the Playbook”
- Lied to get vaccines and funding
- Did go through application process
- Focused on marketing not mission
- No transparency or accountability
  - data
  - doses
  - financials
  - processes
  - testing
  - shutdown
“WE ARE JUST FREAKING GRAD STUDENTS!”

Executive Team

+ Andrei Doroshin | CEO
- Dr. Karol Osipowicz | Chief Science Officer
- Carson Elias | CTO
Individual Responsibility

Dear Donor,

I am reaching out because you believed in us when we were out there trying to help Philadelphians through this pandemic.

But first, there is an apology. There were some minor administrative decisions that were the fodder that was needed for competitors and other groups that did not share our interests to shut us down and personally discredit me and my team. Philadelphians were the ones most hurt in this and we are devastated about it. I will get back to you, but for the time being, I will be focusing my attention on money owed and recovering the good of our names.

Thank you for your concern and your support.

Andrei

Board members
Andrei Doroshin - Chair
Victor Shugart - Treasurer
Cutler Whitely - Secretary
Joseph Michalowicz
Emily Dieli
Andy Lehman
Lucas Baltisberger
Johnathan Lawless

OpenlyBlack @msnlwebber • Jan 30
Nah... People gotta resign over #PhillyFyreFest. Can’t be any “we could have done better”... Yeah, you could have given the contract to the Black doctors who knew what they were doing instead of the white child who didn’t!

#Philly FightingCovid #COVID19
Organizational Responsibility

I started to stop volunteering as much when I saw they went from non profit to a for profit. They would always brag about how rich they were getting, not just the CEO but the entire team working to vaccinate. The lies saying they didn’t know #PhillyFightingCovid

4:54 PM · Jan 26, 2021 · Twitter for iPhone
1 Retweet 3 Likes

@Annabelle_alrez · Jan 26
Replies to @Annabelle_alrez
Is false because I heard just like they did. They spoke about this at team meetings. All of them were getting super rich from vaccines and luckily I was not asked to join them for their vaccine clinic.

@Annabelle_alrez · Jan 26
But not only did they drop testing and hurt tons of people, they dropped volunteers who dedicated time and effort without so much of an email. I was promised to get a vaccine as a healthcare worker on site

@Annabelle_alrez · Jan 26
And never got one but social media who was not testing had gotten them. I was promised to on their website and nothing happened. Once again glad the truth comes out. The entire team knew!

Katrina Lipinsky @Katweeta · Jan 26
As an RN who volunteered to give vaccines for them I feel super about my complicity in this mess. I was there Saturday - Andrei Doroshin, the CEO at Philly Fighting COVID, took home a ziplock bag-full of vaccines. Stuffed them in his bag and left with them.
Systemic Responsibility

Lack of faith in the third sector’s competence and ability to address and solve challenges in communities.

Lack of trust in the city’s Covid response being safe and secure for the public.

Lack of faith in the government being non-bias, equitable, and efficient.
SO WHAT COULD PHILLY POSSIBLY HAVE SEEN IN THE INEXPERIENCED ANDREI DOROSHIN THAT CONVINCED THEM TO PARTNER WITH PFC INSTEAD OF A REPUTABLE ORGANIZATION LIKE THE BLACK DOCTORS COVID-19 CONSORTIUM? I WOULD ARGUE THAT THEY MERELY SAW WHITENESS.

By Rasheed Ajamu

Philadelphia Public Health • 3h
Replying to @PHLPublicHealth
We are currently developing plans to shift future vaccine allocations to other providers & working to schedule new clinics to ensure that people who were vaccinated at PFC’s clinics at the Convention Center can get their second dose. (2/6)

colin campbell • @collnericcamp • Feb 8
@PhillyFighting is the next Theranos. #phillyfightingcovid #CorruptionPandemic #CORRUPTION

Alexandre • @AChaussson • Jan 30
Replying to @MaxMMarin
For corporations to benefit communities they need to be governed by the people in that community, not megalomaniacs or a minority of board members/executives. It’s not a revolutionary idea; it’s called #democracy #phillyfightingcovid #covid19

Christine Call (she/her) • @christineeccall • Jan 28
Update: @DrexelUniv issued an internal statement that they are not affiliated w/ #PhillyFightingCovid. This misses the mark. What about taking action to show they oppose the harm that PFC caused? E.g., consequences to Drexel-affiliated PFC leaders & giving back to the community

@DiversityInc • @DiversityInc • Jan 28
Philly continues to struggle with #COVID19, facing a vaccine shortage and a high death rate for its Black residents. But that hasn’t deterred AndreiDoroshin, CEO of #PhillyFightingCovid from prioritizing vaccinations for his friends.
Stakeholders Analysis
Remedies

• PFC should never have been able to run sites.
• Philly put all of its eggs in one basket.
• New approval process.
• Community involvement.
• Leaders must issue a public apology and begin working with the public to gain trust.
• Create a culture where employees and volunteers are encouraged and supported to report any ethical wrongdoings.
• Officials must visit sites and ensure they are being operated correctly.

City Council passes bill to reform vaccine transparency after Philly Fighting COVID scandal

The bill requires the city to notify Council after finalizing contracts for groups to hold clinics using vaccines provided by the city, and to regularly publish details about vaccine providers.

However, as we have discussed, I am disappointed by what has transpired with the organization Philly Fighting COVID (PFC). I know you share my concerns on how these events can cast a shadow on what is the most important project facing our city -- vaccination. -Mayor Kenney
Reflection questions

1. Whose responsibility, in your opinion, was it to overseeing the distribution of the vaccines?

2. How can the city ensure this never happens again without negatively affecting the nonprofit sector?

3. Do you believe the race of the population being served had anything to do with PFC’s disregard? Did race have anything to do with the city of Philadelphia allowing inexperienced business school students to undertake such a huge operation? Why or why not?

4. If you were in Andrei Duroshin’s shoes, would you have taken the vaccines and given them to your family and friends or let them expire?

5. Should nonprofits move towards more business-like approaches in funding and structure?
References


References continued


