

Award: The Golden Bedpan Award
Recipient: Big Pharma
Presenter: Adani Sanchez

Good evening everyone! Now it's time for the Golden Bedpan Disservice award! This award goes to those that fight against the health and welfare of their community which in this case is all of Merika! This year we are recognizing Big Pharma, they're in good company as past recipients include former Gov. Rauner, Rodney Davis, and the IL EPA so you know it's only the best of the worst that we recognize. Some other people, who will go unnamed, could win this award every year for the past 2 years... But that is too obvious.

A couple years back, Martin Shkreli, the Pharma Bro, was up for this award for his blatant disregard for the lives of others. He didn't even bother pretending that his money grab was anything else. But today we honor the entirety of his ilk, even the ones who don't look quite so sleazy. The executives, the administrators, and other decision makers that support the ransack of families across the nation in the name of pharmaceuticals.

The Sackler family, who runs Purdue Pharma, has gained some notoriety due to the 2,000 lawsuits brought against them related to their role in the opioid epidemic by marketing OxyContin in "creative ways" *ahem* *illegal* ways. They also played with the idea of developing addiction treatment medication since treatment for opioid addiction and the sale of opioids are "naturally linked" (they really said that, it's from internal correspondence!). The same company that pushed for doctors to prescribe higher doses of OxyContin and lied about how addictive the drug was, now wanted to profit from the devastation they had wreaked. They wanted to continue getting money from the very same people who they called "reckless criminals" and blamed for misusing their drug-- they were only moderately better at hiding their complete disregard for other humans.

Another evildoer in the world of pharmaceuticals is Eli Lilly! You may have heard of them but if you haven't you've definitely heard of the medication that they manufacture. Insulin is manufactured by 3 major companies and Eli Lilly is the top one in the US. They're set to control the majority of the insulin supply within a few years, and combined, these 3 companies control about 90% of the market. Not only have they fixed prices to an exaggerated amount but they've also made sure that no biosimilar drug gets created. They've closed the door to sharing this life saving medication (which diabetics MUST have to survive) in order to keep their BILLIONS!

But they are not alone in their unabashed quest to maintain skyrocketing profits. Purdue and the other drug companies must give credit to their supportive partners. Distributors like McKesson and Rochester really made this win possible. Through their relationships with pharmacies they helped them circumvent limits for drug volume and avoid regulatory audits. Even when the distributors knew that some of the doctors might be engaged in criminal over-prescribing, they continued to ship to these pharmacies and keep the DEA in the dark.

Many of you may ask-- how do they sleep at night? Well, it's actually pretty easy when your ears are full of money! The Government Accountability Office estimates that the drug industry is worth over \$750 Billion. And everyone involved gets a piece of that, from the unethical doctors who accepted bribes to over-prescribe, to the distributors who managed to hide millions of opioids from the DEA, and all the way up to the chair of the drug company board.

But the chickens are coming home to roost. Several states now have built criminal cases against these players and just yesterday the feds found Insys founder, John Kapoor, guilty of a racketeering conspiracy. And racketeering charges might sound weird, but it makes the most sense-- Big Pharma is effectively a very organized crime syndicate and it's about time that they were held accountable. Criminal charges are just one part of the solution. We must also dismantle the avenues by which Big Pharma has hijacked the healthcare system.

So thanks to all of you for being here and supporting the work that we do in support of legislation that diminishes the power of our Golden Bedpan Award Winners!