Reveal empowers the public through investigative journalism and groundbreaking storytelling to spark action, improve lives and protect our democracy.
In early March, we redeployed our newsroom to cover the coronavirus. What we found:

- States being hit the hardest by the pandemic are being left behind by the Paycheck Protection Program. We analyzed 1.6 million Small Business Administration loans and found that small businesses in states that President Donald Trump won in 2016 received a disproportionate amount of the program’s funding compared with those where Hillary Clinton won. Citing our work, more than two dozen members of Congress, led by California Rep. Jackie Speier, are calling for a Government Accountability Office investigation of the loan program.

- Under Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, California created a massive medical reserve – with acute care beds, ventilators and N95 masks – and then let it collapse during Gov. Jerry Brown’s administration. Published in partnership with the Los Angeles Times, the story led to 15 op-eds in other California news outlets and was cited by local and national publications.

- The Department of Veterans Affairs was rationing protective gear for its health care workers. Eight members of Congress wrote a letter to Vice President Mike Pence demanding change in the wake of our reporting.

2020 Awards include:
Pulitzer Prize finalist, Peabody Award finalist, three Edward R. Murrow Awards, Hillman Prize, Investigative Reporters and Editors Award, Scripps Howard Award finalist, National Headliner Awards
2020 highlights

• In a census year, with hundreds of billions of community funding riding on an accurate count of the population, we investigated how the Census Bureau is building a vast list of undocumented immigrants, whether that list would be secure and what it might be used for. And we drilled into the technological snafus hampering the census count, from a last-minute switch in software to an ineffective and buggy app that dozens of census workers complained to us about.

• From problems with vote-by-mail systems to voter suppression, we worked in collaboration with our local partners throughout the country to examine the potential for chaos in the 2020 elections in crucial swing states on our episode “Whose vote will count?”

• The same day that Reveal and ABC News published an expose into the 2017 murder of American journalist Halla Barakat and her mother, activist Orouba Barakat, the United Nations’ investigator who determined that Saudi Arabia was behind the killing of Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi announced she would be taking up the case.

• Inspired by our “Homewreckers” reporting, California passed a law to stop corporate landlords from gobbling up California real estate during the COVID-19 pandemic like they did during the Great Recession. Under the bill, if a home or small apartment building is lost to foreclosure, tenants, nonprofits, land trusts and local government will have 45 days to match any bid from a speculator.

• In “Reproducing racism,” Reveal covered the impact of racism on maternal health and shared some of the grim history of medical research conducted on enslaved women, the legacy of which remains firmly rooted in medicine to this day. We reported on a commonly used calculator that physicians use to determine if a woman is a candidate for a vaginal birth after a cesarean. When the calculator was developed in the 1930s, racism was integrated into the tool and as a result, for decades, Black and Latinx women may have been advised to have C-sections they didn’t need. Partly as a result of our reporting, the calculator is being revised to take race and ethnicity out of the equation.
2020 Highlights Continued:

• We exposed how unborn babies’ hearts are at risk from a dangerous chemical in our story “The tell-tale hearts.” Our extensive investigation revealed how the Trump administration bowed to chemical companies’ 20-year efforts to debunk the solid science linking the dangerous chemical TCE to fetal heart defects. The Environmental Protection Agency’s Science Advisory Committee on Chemicals cited our reporting when it demanded that “the EPA must investigate allegations that it downplayed research showing a cancer-causing solvent could damage the hearts of babies exposed in the womb.” Also spurred by our investigation, the New York state Senate and Assembly passed a bill that bans TCE and is awaiting Gov. Andrew Cuomo’s review.

• We reported on disproportionately high rates of worker injuries at Amazon warehouses. To launch our ongoing reporting on worker safety at Amazon, we created an Amazon employee crowdsourcing campaign to gather internal injury logs for fulfillment centers across the country. After the first story broke and appeared in The Atlantic, on the PBS NewsHour and on Reveal, 13 members of Congress, including Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) and Rep. Ilhan Omar (D-Minn.), pressed the Department of Labor to investigate Amazon's labor practices; the House Education and Labor Committee held hearings; and Indiana Commissioner of Labor Rick Ruble resigned his position.

• In February, our first documentary series aired on the Oxygen network. “The Witnesses,” based on five years of reporting, investigates a sexual abuse cover-up by the Jehovah’s Witnesses. Almost immediately after airing, Pennsylvania's attorney general opened a grand jury investigation into the allegations from our story.

• Our first podcast serial project, “American Rehab,” exposed how a treatment for drug addiction has turned tens of thousands of people into an unpaid shadow workforce. It’s part of our ongoing “All Work, No Pay.” investigation, which led to a federal judge ruling that a drug rehab program and the company of an Arkansas senator are together responsible for more than $1.1 million in back wages and damages to 172 program participants. More lawsuits are pending.

Our partners include:

Illustration credits from top: Michael Schiller, Molly Mendoza, Anthony Zinonos, Erin K. Wilson