HIGHLIGHTS OF FOUNDATION YEARBOOK

Estimated foundation giving down in 2009 and flat in 2010; modest growth may return in 2011

Giving by this country’s more than 75,000 grantmaking foundations fell by an estimated 8.4 percent to $42.9 billion in 2009—a roughly $3.9 billion decline from the prior year’s record high. This followed a more than 17 percent drop in foundation assets in 2008. Among factors helping to moderate the overall decline in giving were the decision of a significant number of funders to reduce their operating expenses and/or use their endowments to shore up their giving during the crisis; increased giving by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; continuing gifts and bequests from donors into new and existing foundations; and the practice of asset-averaging by some foundations, which reduces the impact on giving of year-to-year fluctuations in asset values.

The Foundation Center estimates that foundation assets rebounded slightly in 2009, rising 3.3 percent to $583.4 billion, and that giving will remain flat in 2010. As the economic recovery falters, the outlook beyond 2010 remains unclear, but there continues to be potential for modest positive growth in 2011 foundation giving.

Effect of Inflation on Foundation Giving, 1999 to 2009


1Constant 1999 dollars based on annual average Consumer Price Index, all urban consumers, as reported by the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, as of April 2010.
FOUNDATION GIVING IN 2009 AND 2010

- Giving fell 8.4 percent to an estimated $42.9 billion in 2009
- Adjusted for modest deflation, foundation giving in 2009 posted an estimated 8.1 percent real-dollar reduction
- Foundation giving in 2010 is expected to remain flat
- Assets rose by 3.3 percent to an estimated $583.4 billion in 2009

FOUNDATION GROWTH, GIVING, AND ASSETS THROUGH 2008

- Number of grantmaking foundations exceeded 75,000
- Actual number of foundations increased by 408—compared to a peak gain of nearly 6,400 in 2000
- Giving by the nation’s grantmaking foundations grew 5.4 percent to $46.8 billion
- Giving by the 25 largest funders jumped just over 15 percent to $9.8 billion
- Assets of all active U.S. foundations fell 17.2 percent to $565 billion—the largest decline tracked by the Foundation Center
- For the 25 largest foundations, assets decreased 21.9 percent
- Gifts into foundations totaled $39.6 billion, down 15.6 percent from the prior year
- Number of foundations receiving gifts and bequests of at least $5 million decreased from 1,234 to 1,051
TRENDS BY REGION AND STATE IN 2008

Regions:
- The South experienced the fastest rate of growth in the number of foundations
- The Northeast continued to lead in terms of total number of foundations
- The West experienced the fastest growth in giving
- All four regions showed asset losses, with the Northeast registering the largest decrease in assets

States:
- Thirty-six states plus the District of Columbia posted an increase in foundation giving
- South Dakota showed the fastest rate of growth in giving; Washington State led in actual grant dollar gains
- New York foundations reported the largest amount of giving overall
- Delaware ranked first based on giving per capita due to its small population and the presence of one of the largest pharmaceutical operating foundations
- Arkansas was the only state to post asset gains; Idaho topped all states in actual asset dollar losses


Grantmaking Foundations by State, 1975 and 2008


1Percent change based on current dollars.
GIVING AND GROWTH OF INDEPENDENT, CORPORATE, AND COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS IN 2008

- Giving by independent foundations rose 5 percent in 2008
- Independent foundation assets decreased 19.2 percent in the latest year, following a 10.8 percent rise in 2007
- Corporate foundation giving rose 3.9 percent in 2008
- Corporate foundation assets dropped 7.2 percent in 2008, after an 11.1 percent increase in 2007
- Giving by community foundations rose 3.3 percent in 2008, following a 13.5 percent gain in 2007

For more information on this report, published in October 2010, contact Reina Mukai, at (212) 807-2485 or rkm@foundationcenter.org.

“Highlights of Foundation Yearbook” can be downloaded at foundationcenter.org.

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