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THE CHRONICLE OF PHILANTHROPY

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Disaster Giving Goes Mostly to Immediate Relief, Not Prevention or Long-Term Recovery

By Kay Dervishi and Yesica Balderrama

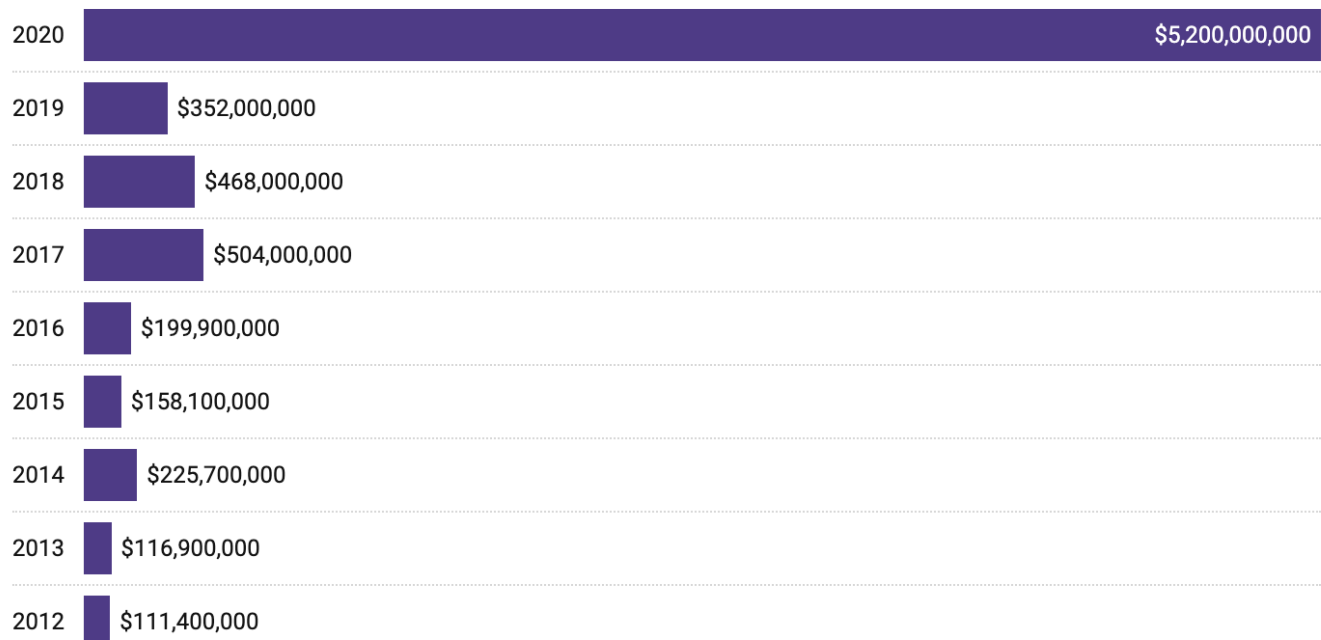
JANUARY 12, 2023

The Chronicle of Philanthropy

The Covid-19 pandemic greatly accelerated a long-running pattern in giving by foundations and charities for health and natural disasters, a new Chronicle analysis of nine years of data show.

How Much Philanthropy Has Given to Disaster Relief

Disaster philanthropy skyrocketed from the first recorded year in 2012 to the latest available data from 2020.



Highlights:

The 2020 surge of funding was attributed to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Funding in 2014 increased due to the Ebola epidemic, which was the second most funded after Covid-19.

In 2017, Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria contributed to the higher overall total for disaster funding that year.

The increase in funding after 2016 is a reflection of the Center for Disaster Philanthropy's and Candid's improved data-collection methods.

Chart: Yesica Balderrama, Data Reporter and Producer • Source: [Candid Research Reports](#) • [Get the data](#) • [Embed](#) • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

Ninety percent of the \$5.2 billion donated in 2020, the most recent year for which data is available, went to dealing with immediate disaster needs. In other years, about half of disaster grant making went to such purposes. The rest went to helping communities prepare for hurricanes, droughts, life-threatening spread of disease, and other problems as well as to recovery and rebuilding.

The amount of money foundations and charities gave in response to Covid-19 is stunning compared with the past. The 2020 figures are 15 times as much as the contributions in 2019. To be sure, grant makers aren't keeping up that pace: Preliminary figures for more recent giving show that foundations are slowing their giving considerably.

The review of data from the Center for Disaster Philanthropy and Candid, a research organization that tracks giving of all kinds, shows that the sums flowing to disasters aren't always going where they are most needed, namely for long-term recovery efforts and ensuring that communities are resilient enough to withstand the growing number of natural disasters caused by climate change.

Here are five trends revealed by the Chronicle's analysis:

The spike in Covid giving cooled quickly.

Private and community foundations, along with United Ways and other groups, gave \$5.2 billion to disaster relief in 2020 compared with \$352 million in 2019, primarily due to the urgency and the severity of the Covid-19 pandemic.

"There's nobody who wasn't affected in some way by the pandemic," says Tanya Gulliver-Garcia, director of learning and partnerships at the Center for Disaster Philanthropy. "And I think philanthropy saw that as a moment to step up and make a change and respond."

The money went to a wide variety Covid relief efforts, such as vaccine research, hunger relief, and direct cash payments to people in need.

Grace Sato, Candid's director of research, says that it is already clear that the increase in giving fueled by Covid-19 has subsided. A survey of foundations released by Candid in May found that Covid-related funding declined by 31 percent from 2020 to 2021.

Other major epidemics have led to spikes in disaster giving in the past nine years: The second highest was after the Ebola outbreak in West Africa in 2014, which attracted \$158 million.

The focus is mostly on immediate relief.

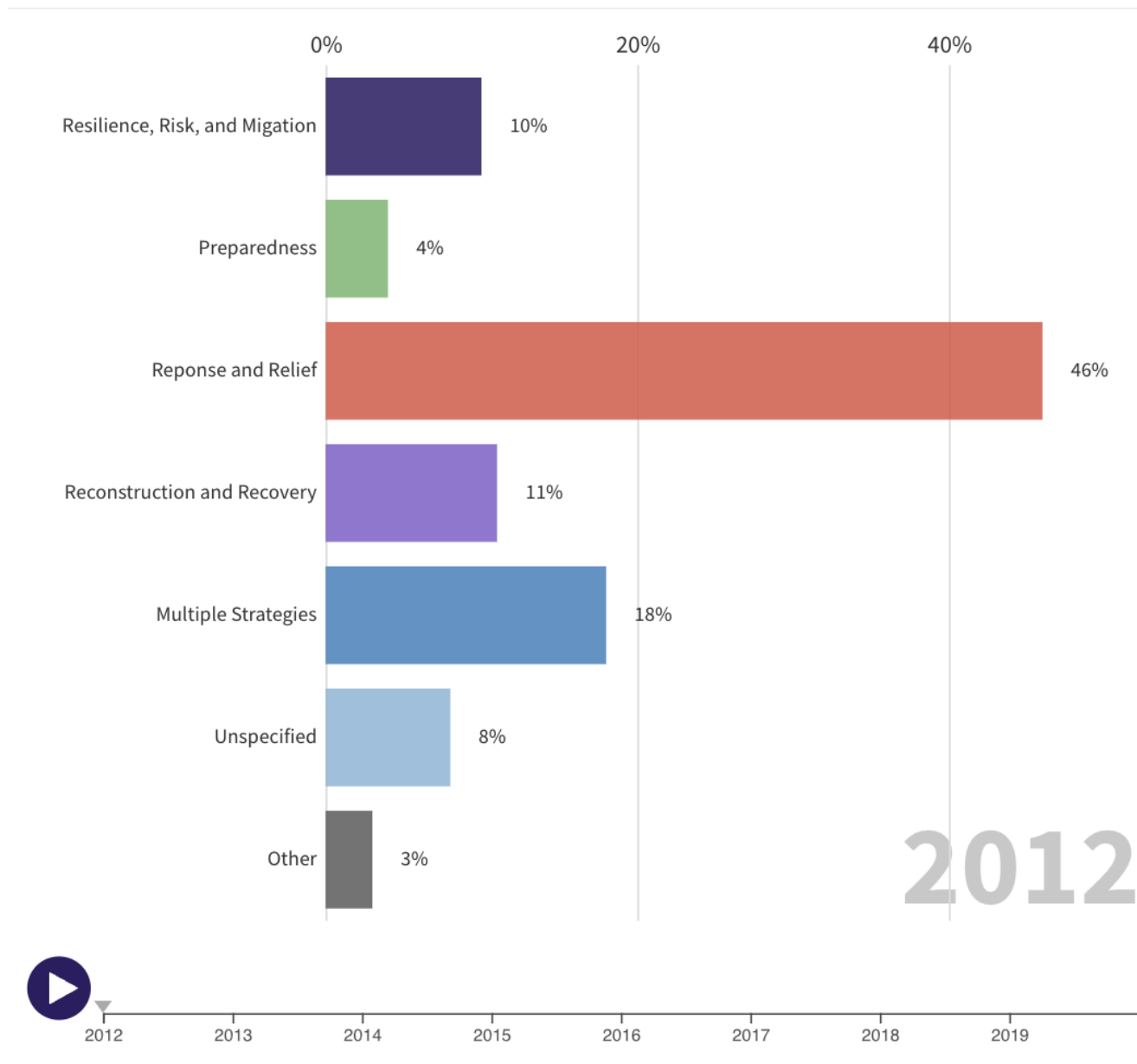
Our review of the nine years of data found that funding for immediate relief was far more abundant than for anything else, including preparing for disasters or helping communities recover and rebuild. Those efforts have consistently received about half of the giving on average in the eight years before 2020.

Gulliver-Garcia says media coverage helps fuel grant makers' and donors' interest in spending more on

Strategies Philanthropy Has Supported After Disasters

In the early years, response and relief made up about half of disaster giving.

Place cursor over year for percent value*



Source: [Candid Research Reports](#)

Chart: Yesica Balderrama, Data Reporter and Producer

response and relief. Most of the philanthropic funding for disasters is given within the first five days of a crisis and is earmarked for immediate relief, she says, so it can't be used later.

"Long-term recovery doesn't paint a dramatic picture for the 6 o'clock news," she says. "Our goal is to help funders understand they can give money now, but they should also save some money and think about what long-term investments communities are going to need."

That disparity is apparent in places like New Orleans, where she lives. “There is still damage and loss that you can trace directly back to [Hurricane] Katrina,” she says. “There’s infrastructure that hasn’t been repaired, and that’s because the focus was all in those immediate first few days.”

Providing more funding to local grassroots organizations working over the long term to rebuild communities is essential, says Sandrina da Cruz, director of disaster response at GlobalGiving, which connects donors and companies to community-led organizations.

“We need to be able to trust that community leaders are in the best position to respond to longer-term needs, and we must invest in infrastructure,” says da Cruz. “And all that hard work is happening long after a crisis has made headlines.”

Giving doesn’t keep up with climate change.

The reports over nine years show that natural disasters, particularly storms, usually received the most philanthropic funding. Philanthropic support shifted year-to-year depending on which disasters were more prevalent. Funding spiked in 2017 after Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria, which devastated communities in the United States and the Caribbean.

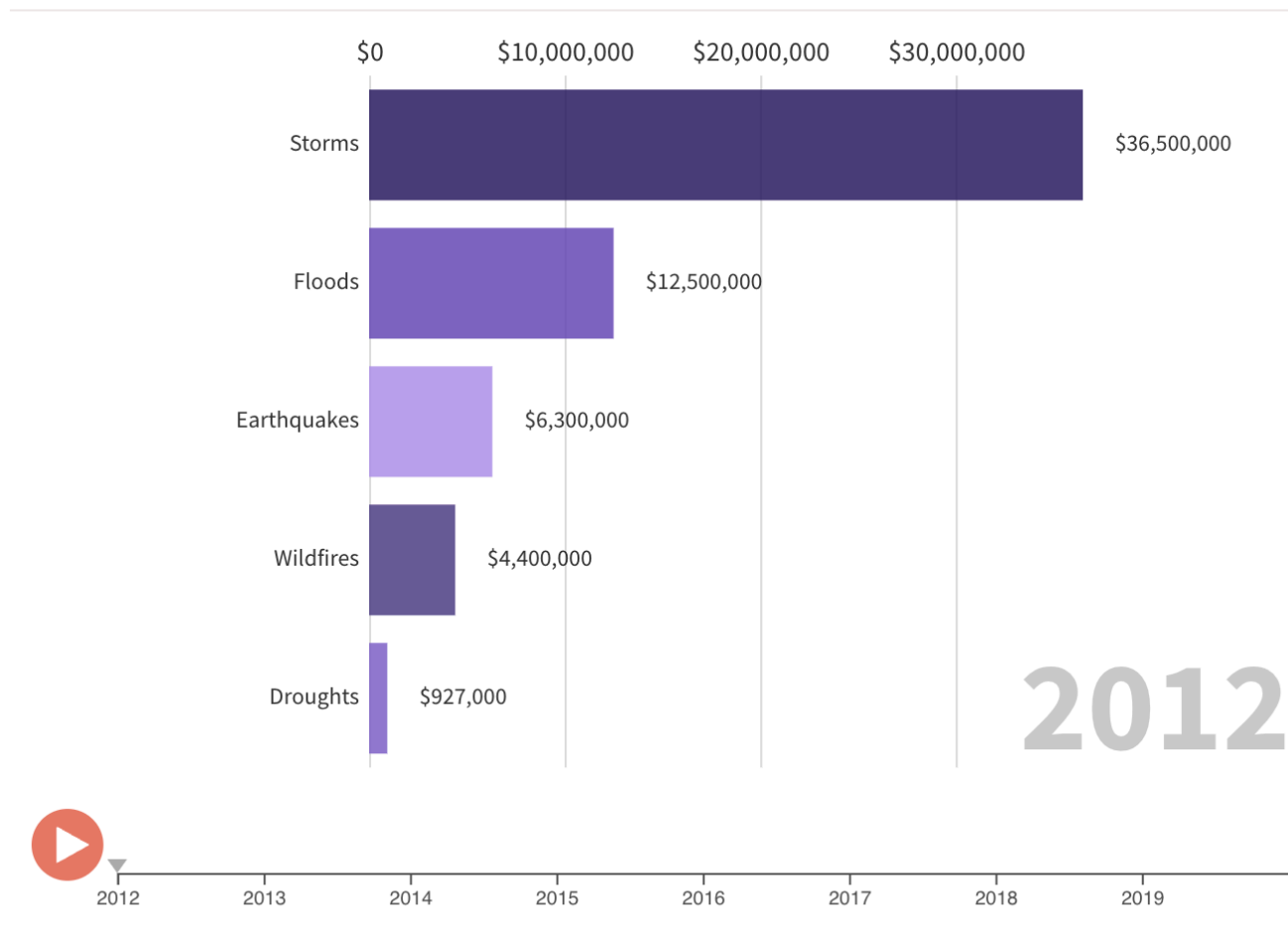
Climate change is expected to make such natural disasters, including wildfires and droughts, more common and more severe. Extreme weather events have doubled in the past decade, according to the National Centers for Environmental Information.

Beth Gazley, a professor who has researched disaster philanthropy at Indiana University, says the latest report’s findings demonstrate the need to fund planning and resiliency efforts for disasters caused by climate change. That means foundations must examine whether their funding “addresses the symptoms and not the problem itself.”

Humanitarian emergencies like refugee crises and wars, which get substantial government funds, and accidents caused by human mistakes, such as chemical spills, received the least philanthropic dollars.

Natural-Disaster Funding

Place cursor over year for funding amounts*



.Candid Research Reports • In the future more support from funders will be needed to combat natural disasters caused by climate change
Chart: Yesica Balderrama, Data Reporter and Producer

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation reigns as top donor.

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has given more to disaster relief than any other grant maker each year except in 2017 and 2018. The Howard G. Buffett Foundation took the number one spot in 2017 as it awarded two grants totaling \$38.1 million to support the removal of land mines in Colombia. And the Texas-based OneStar Foundation, which was founded in 1974 by then-Gov. Dolph Briscoe, overtook Gates in 2018 when it collected and distributed money for Hurricane Harvey relief efforts.

In 2020, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation gave six times as much as the year before. The global grant maker contributed \$485.9 million to support research into Covid-19 testing, treatments, vaccines, and other relief efforts.

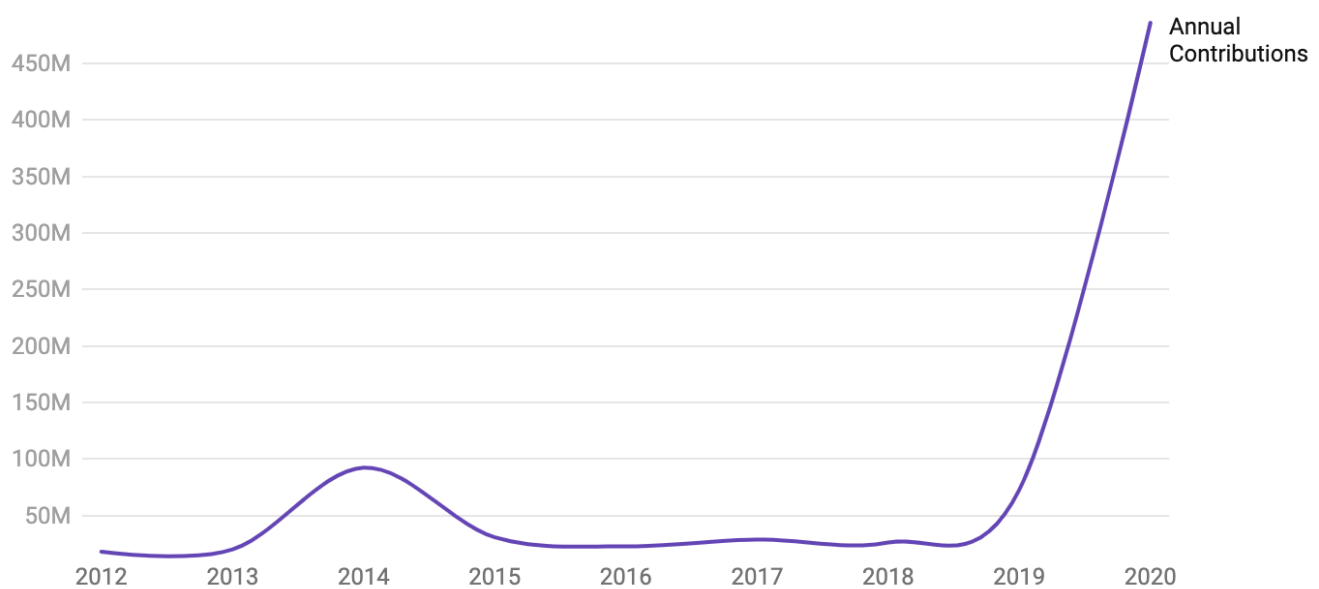
The American Red Cross, which provides support in the immediate aftermath of disasters, has regularly been a top recipient of funding from big foundations and other donors.

“An organization like the Red Cross is so well known, so connected, and has that immediate connection in people’s minds after a disaster,” says Gulliver-Garcia.

However, large aid organizations have faced criticism for their slow response to local needs. The Red

How Much the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Has Given in Disaster Philanthropy

In 2020, it gave \$485.9 million — more than any other grant maker.



The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has been the top donor every year since 2012, except for 2017 and 2018, when the Howard G. Buffett Foundation and the Texas-based OneStar Foundation gave more.

Chart: Yesica Balderrama, Data Reporter and Producer • Source: [Candid Research Reports](#) • [Get the data](#) • [Embed](#) • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

Cross, for instance, was slow to respond to Superstorm Sandy and spent large sums of money on administrative costs.

DAFs give more; corporate giving is variable.

The nine-year review shows that Americans are channeling more money from donor-advised funds to support disaster relief. DAFs allow people to get an immediate tax deduction for contributions to their accounts and then send funds to causes they care about. But there is no requirement that for the money to go to a working charity within a certain time frame.

Fidelity Charitable, which manages donor-advised funds, recorded \$7.8 million in giving to disasters such as the Ebola outbreak and the Syrian refugee crisis in 2014, the first time donor-advised fund data was provided to researchers. That amount jumped to \$60 million by 2017, largely in response to Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria. Fidelity and Vanguard Charitable reported an even more significant spike in 2020, with about \$592 million going to groups working on Covid-related issues.

The increase in giving to disaster causes comes as giving to donor-advised funds has grown sharply over the last few years..

Donor-advised funds and corporations have frequently contributed to relief for severe weather disasters during the past nine years.

Corporate giving has been more variable. It was at its highest in 2020, when \$650 million went to Covid-19 efforts, and in 2017, in response to the hurricanes.

The Center for Disaster Philanthropy and Candid used data from a variety of sources, such as the informational tax forms that foundations and charities file with the Internal Revenue Service, other government entities, and Fidelity Charitable.

The research organizations cautioned that some data for 2019 and 2020 is incomplete because of lags in reporting grants, especially the IRS's processing of informational tax forms.

Reporting for this article was underwritten by a Lilly Endowment grant to enhance public understanding of philanthropy. The Chronicle is solely responsible for the content. See more about the Chronicle, the grant, how our foundation-supported journalism works, and our gift-acceptance policy.

We welcome your thoughts and questions about this article. Please email the editors or submit a letter for publication.

Can \$100 Million Change San Francisco's Response to Homelessness? One Grant Maker Tried. Here's What Happened.

Reporting By Eden Stiffman

Data Visualization by Yesica Balderrama

FEBRUARY 10, 2023

The Chronicle of Philanthropy

San Francisco

A decade ago, Linda Lockhart moved to this city from the Northern California town of Chico on a mission to get sober.

She lived in the Salvation Army's Harbor Light Center, which provides in-patient treatment programs and transitional housing, while saving money to rent her own apartment. More than once she moved into her own place, but within a month she'd start drinking again, lose the apartment, and wind up back in a shelter or treatment facility.

Lockhart, who struggles with substance-abuse problems and disabling arthritis that prevents her from working, says she was in a vicious cycle. "I didn't know when things were going to start clicking for me."

In May of 2021, she was living at the Hotel Whitcomb, which provided temporary housing during the pandemic and was paid for with government aid. When government subsidies evaporated, Lockhart had to find another place to live. She found an apartment through a new trial housing program funded with \$8 million from Tipping Point Community, a group that attracts funds from many of Silicon Valley's wealthiest residents. The program was later expanded with city funds.

Lockhart is one of more than 375 people who have found housing throughout the city as part of the program. It takes advantage of existing rental housing around the city, while pairing residents with a case manager who helps them get services like health care or counseling. The extra assistance supports them so they're more likely to keep their new homes.

The program is one of several that received some of the more than \$100 million in donations that Tipping Point Community distributed since 2017 to help the city reduce by half the number of people who, like Lockhart, are considered chronically homeless. The goal: No more than 1,056 would be chronically homeless by 2022.

Final estimates aren't available yet, but all signs suggest the city didn't meet its target. In early 2022, the chronically homeless population remained larger than five years earlier. But that doesn't mean it was a failure.

'A Solvable Number'

When the city set the goal to reduce the number of people who are chronically homeless by half, it seemed achievable based on information about the need for housing, mental-health care, and other factors, according to Cobbs.

"It really is a solvable number if you're just looking at it mathematically," he says.

But its estimates didn't account for a pandemic and just how many more people would become homeless largely due to the severe shortage of affordable housing and a failure to build enough new housing. Officials now estimate that for every person who moves into housing through a city program, four more will become homeless. The city hasn't been able to keep up.

Tipping Point's largest grant — \$50 million — was used to build a rent-subsidized building with case managers and other services. The idea was to test an approach to building faster and at less expense than it normally takes. The 145-unit building was completed during the pandemic, and 147 residents now call it home.

How San Francisco's Homeless Population Has Changed

Tipping Point's goal was to halve chronic homelessness among individuals from 2017 to 2023. If the grant maker and its city partners had met their goal, 1,056 or fewer people would have experienced chronic homelessness in January 2023.

Note: People are considered chronically homeless if they have experienced homelessness steadily for at least a year – or had four episodes of homelessness over three years adding up to a year – while struggling with a disabling condition such as a serious mental illness, substance use disorder, or physical disability.

*Hover over chart for values



[San Francisco's Homeless Count and Survey Report 2022](#) • The top cited causes of homelessness and obstacles to obtaining permanent housing reflect challenges with housing affordability.

Chart: Yesica Balderrama, Data Reporter and Producer

What's Behind the Uneven Rates in Volunteerism: a Look at Fla. and Wyo. Point to Answers

By Kay Dervishi and Yesica Balderrama
APRIL 17, 2023

The share of Americans who volunteer their time to help charities build houses, serve food, do environmental cleanup, and much else has been on the decline nationwide but nowhere as sharply as in Florida, where only 16 percent of residents donate their free hours to local organizations, according to the latest available statistics.

That's a drop from the nearly 23 percent of residents who volunteered in 2017.

Florida's volunteer rate slumped in large part because of the pandemic, which made it especially risky for older Americans — who are among the most loyal and regular part of the volunteer population in Florida and elsewhere — to interact in public settings. The loss of those volunteers is painful for many nonprofits, which are stretched to provide needed services and programs because they face a tight job market for paid workers and increased demands for help.

"What's happening now is actually the staff is wearing multiple hats, as many nonprofit staff members do to make up for the gap of volunteers," says Sabeen Perwaiz Syed, CEO of the Florida Nonprofit Alliance, which represents charitable organizations across the state

Meanwhile, Wyoming was the only state in the country to chalk up an increase in volunteering. Nearly 40 percent of residents volunteer, according to the latest figures available, compared with slightly less than 33 percent in 2017. The growth is in part because its open spaces made it easier for volunteers to keep working safely during the pandemic, and now nonprofits are seeking to capitalize on people's growing interest in giving their time.

Those figures are part of an AmeriCorps analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data for 2017, 2019, and 2021, the latest year available.

The challenge of finding ways to attract and keep volunteers is not a new issue facing nonprofits, although it has been worsened by the pandemic.

Nathan Dietz, a researcher at the University of Maryland's Do Good Institute, says charities that didn't focus on retaining volunteers during the pandemic may find it difficult to get them back.

"There were some organizations who, during the pandemic, they just said, 'We don't know how we're going to do volunteer management or volunteer engagement, and we don't really have time to figure it

out because we have bigger problems,” Dietz said. “When people disengage from that kind of regular activity, it’s hard to re-engage them even if you’re trying to actively do that.”

Behind Wyoming’s Spike

Wyoming, known for wide-open spaces, including Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks, had fewer restrictions and closings than many states throughout Covid-19. That kept more volunteer opportunities open and minimized disruptions to volunteers’ routines.

The Jackson Hole Wildlife Foundation, a conservation nonprofit near Grand Teton National Park, relies on volunteers to collect local wildlife data and remove fencing that’s harmful to animals. The organization says more people wanted to volunteer during the pandemic than in past years.

Steve Morriss, a longtime volunteer with the foundation and other local nonprofits, says volunteer work in the outdoors was especially appealing for retirees like him during the pandemic because it allowed them to socially distance but still interact with others and do good.

The Heart of Wyoming Habitat for Humanity chapter, which relies on volunteers to build homes in Natrona County, saw an uptick in volunteering interest after re-opening its construction sites during the pandemic. Companies that previously provided financial support, in particular, began to give their employees time off to volunteer at Habitat.

The Wyoming Community Development Authority, a housing lender, is one financial supporter whose employees spent two days last year working on a Habitat construction site.

“Now it was no longer enough to make a gift, which we very much appreciate,” says Tess Mittelstadt, the nonprofit’s executive director. “But they wanted to see what that gift meant, and they wanted to see what that meant for people in our community.”

Jody Shields of the Wyoming Nonprofit Network says since the pandemic, she’s noticed increased interest from companies looking for volunteer opportunities because they allow employees both to bond with one another and to support local causes.

Mittelstadt says the organization is seeking to keep volunteerism high by providing volunteers with information about the specific families they’re helping by building houses. Habitat also invites volunteers to events celebrating completed homes.

Data suggests all the effort is paying off. Volunteers spent 57 percent more hours building new homes during the nonprofit’s last fiscal year compared with the previous year, according to Mittelstadt.

“Everybody knows somebody in our community, and everybody’s willing to lend that helping hand,” she says.

Florida's Decline

Even as the pandemic has receded, volunteerism is not rebounding in Florida, says Perwaiz Syed of the Florida Nonprofit Alliance.

"Nonprofits have had a lot of volunteers stop," she says. "They have not returned. Many of them are seniors. They're putting their health first and have not re-engaged in person."

A study of 2,300 nonprofits by the alliance found that 40 percent of nonprofits reported they needed more volunteers and 25 percent of nonprofit employees said they were feeling overworked as they took on tasks previously done by volunteers.

The Manatee Literacy Council, which provides adult literacy tutoring, employs three part-time staff members and has 60 volunteer tutors, mostly retirees, available year-round. It lost 75 percent of its volunteers during the height of the pandemic. The program was able to move some of its work online, but it still can't meet demand. The center currently has a waiting list of 100 people in need of tutoring.

To recruit more volunteers, the group sends representatives to community events to talk about its work, says Michelle Deveau McLean, the council's CEO.

She also says she is working hard to keep volunteers returning by organizing monthly meet-ups and creating a supportive environment. It continues to be a struggle.

"I'm lucky if I have five volunteers every month. We're just perpetually upside down," McLean says.

Corporate Volunteers

Other Florida nonprofits are turning more to online volunteering and enlisting companies to urge employees to volunteer.

For instance, Office Depot, based in South Florida, includes volunteerism as part of its professional development for employees. Since 2017, the company has sent workers to help charities do landscaping, paint murals, prepare meals for youths in Florida, and more.

Even as nonprofits work on a variety of ways to try to expand the number of volunteers, doing so may take time.

"I do think that Florida's numbers will increase over time as we stabilize a bit from the pandemic," Perwaiz Syed says. "I don't think you're going to see us in the top 10 because that's just not possible to go that far that quickly. But I do think it will increase a little bit."

Reporting for this article was underwritten by a Lilly Endowment grant to enhance public understanding of philanthropy. The Chronicle is solely responsible for the content.

Foundations Buoy a New Movement of Renter's Activism

Reporting By Sara Herschander

Data Visualization By Yesica Balderrama

MAY 2, 2023

The Chronicle of Philanthropy

After years of rising rents, a group of fed-up Kansas City, Mo., renters came together in 2019 to form KC Tenants, armed with an annual budget of \$30,000 and demands for a bill of rights to protect renters from rising prices, unjust evictions, and landlord abuse.

Four years and one pandemic later, KC Tenants is a nonprofit tenants union with a budget that grew almost twentyfold and a track record of advocacy victories. For instance, the group got its bill of rights enacted by the city and is working for more changes, including making sure all tenants have the right to a lawyer when facing evictions.

Tenants unions are membership-based groups that advocate for the collective rights of renters, often at the building, neighborhood, or citywide level. Many tenants unions operate similarly to labor unions by charging member dues, offering member benefits, and appointing particularly active members as tenant leaders, who may lead collective negotiations with landlords or spearhead a broader advocacy campaign.

The progress at KC Tenants comes as a growing number of foundations are working with a revitalized tenants movement to confront the nation's housing crisis. The current wave of housing organizing is the country's most significant since the 1970s, when a combination of inflation and momentum from the civil-rights movement led to rent strikes across the country and the implementation of policies like rent control.

Now rents are rising once again, and tenant organizers, who led the fight for pandemic-era eviction moratoriums, have turned their sights toward new permanent protections for tenants.

The pandemic "exposed a live wire about the lack of protections and vulnerabilities tenants face," says Jennifer Angarita, deputy director of Funders for Housing and Opportunity, a group of grant makers. After losing their jobs at the beginning of the pandemic, many tenants struggled to pay rent and would have lost their homes without eviction moratoriums.

Angarita says an increase in national grant makers' support for local tenant movements is part of a broader shift in philanthropy that prioritizes support for the people most closely affected by social issues.

In 2021, HouseUS, a national organizing fund that supports local tenants movements, launched with \$7.5 million. It received \$5.5 million from the Ford Foundation and \$2 million from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, which has since awarded another \$4 million. The fund — which supports KC Tenants, Colorado Homes for All, the Nevada Housing Justice Alliance, and others — has continued to attract money from other large foundations. It raised more than \$4 million in the past three years from grant makers such as the Oak Foundation, which has provided \$2 million, and the Melville Charitable Trust, which gave \$200,000.

“Nothing pulls people in quite like momentum,” says Kevin Simowitz, co-director of HouseUS.

The national tenants movement has helped make changes across the nation:

This year, Keep LA Housed, Inquilinos Unidos, and others won Los Angeles City Council approval for protections that require landlords to provide clear causes, like nonpayment of rent, for evictions and relocation assistance for tenants displaced by rising rents.

In New York, Housing Justice for All, a coalition of nonprofits, successfully fought for new laws and protections such as limitations on security-deposit charges and requirements to notify tenants before making certain rent increases.

The Miami Workers Center, a tenant collective, won approval for a countywide bill of rights protecting renters from housing discrimination based on prior evictions and a guarantee they’ll be notified if a building shifts ownership.

“Communities have been preparing for a moment when they can realize change, and I think we have it now,” says Meshie Knight, senior program officer at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. “I see philanthropy as being able to contribute to that reimagination of a new and more equitable future.”

Growing Momentum

During the pandemic, KC Tenants became an advocate for emergency tenant protections, including a temporary eviction moratorium in the state. The group, with a budget of nearly \$600,000 from both local and national grants, now employs seven full-time staff members, plus a cadre of tenant members who’ve led protests outside of judges’ homes, chained themselves to courthouse doors, and pursued more traditional legislative advocacy in an effort to keep renters in their homes.

“We were engaging in direct action to shut down evictions by whatever means we could find,” says Tara Raghuveer, founding director of KC Tenants. “Along the way, we started organizing neighborhood tenant unions.”

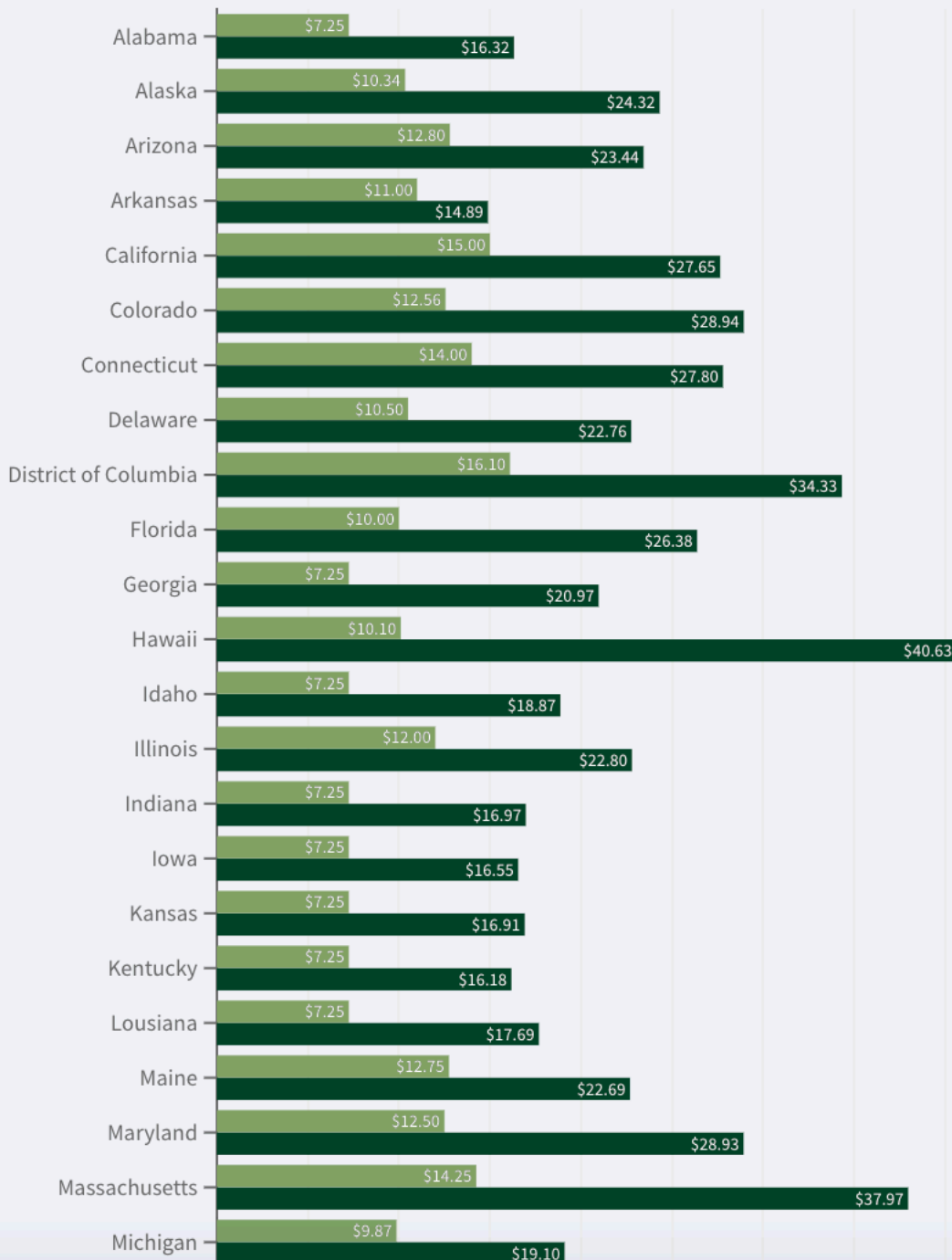
It’s that kind of nimbleness — and those victories — that convinced some foundations that tenant unions should continue their work even after the spread of Covid eased.

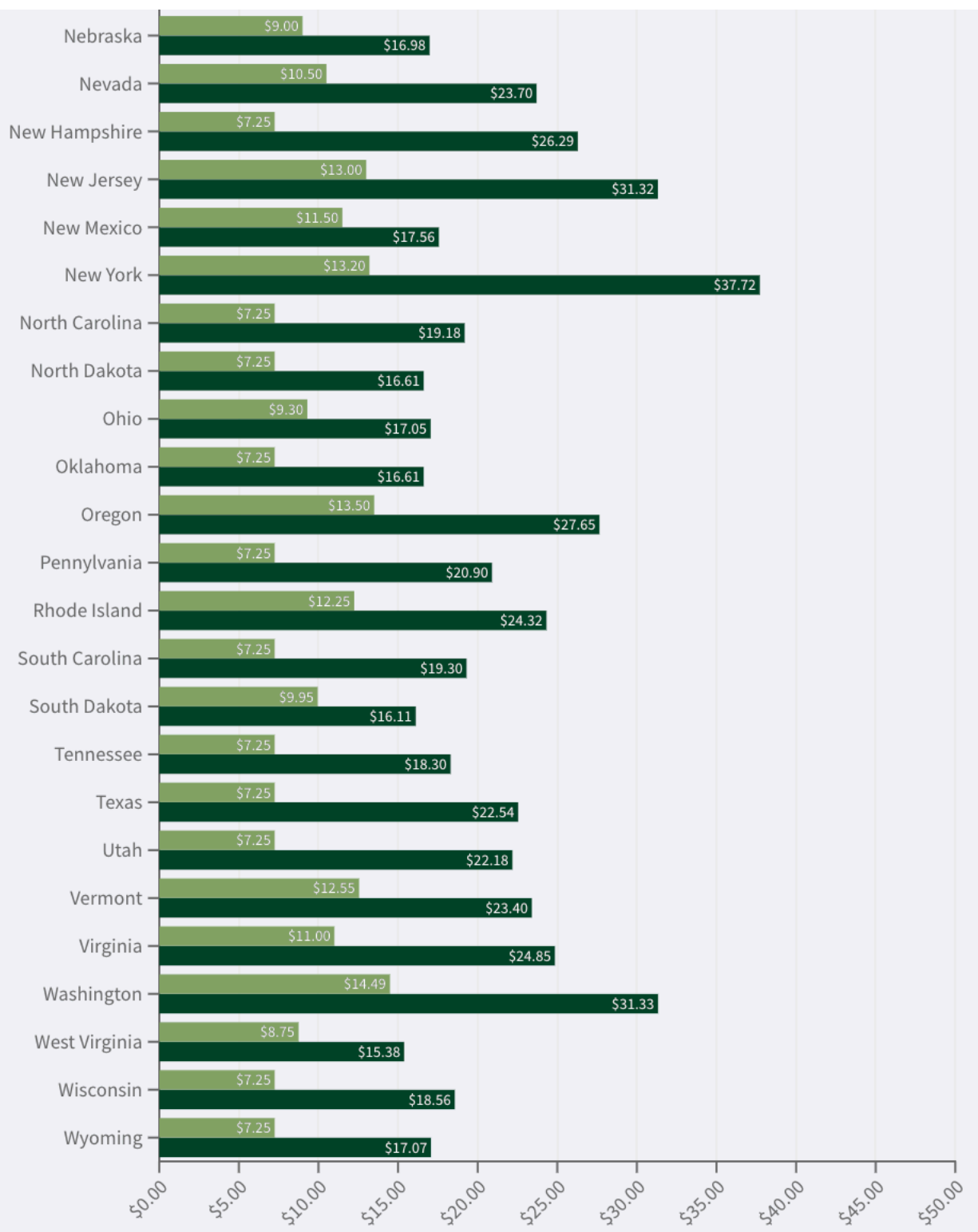
At Ford, which is among the grant makers that gives the most for housing, support for tenant groups came as part of a shift in thinking about how philanthropy can make more of a dent in dealing with the

State Hourly Wages Needed to Afford a Modest Home in the U.S.

A 2022 report from the National Low Income Housing Coalition determined the national wage needed to afford a modest (i.e., two-bedroom) home is \$25.82 per hour. This number is 3.5 times more than the current federal minimum wage, which is \$7.25 per hour.

■ State Minimum Wage ■ Hourly Wage Needed





struggles many working-class and middle-class Americans face as they seek a place to live. In the past, the fund's housing grants focused on increasing the quantity of affordable housing through land-use and development efforts. Now many of its housing grants go to organizations that advocate for tenants as part of a broader push for racial and economic justice, says Ethan Frey, program officer for civic engagement and government at Ford.

He says the foundation's restructuring emerged from the sentiment that "more work needed to be done to build political will and make more transformative changes to our housing system."

"We've been really excited about the emergence of groups like KC Tenants," he says.

Continued

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Foundation Funding for LGBTQ Advocacy: Where the Money Goes — and Where It Comes From

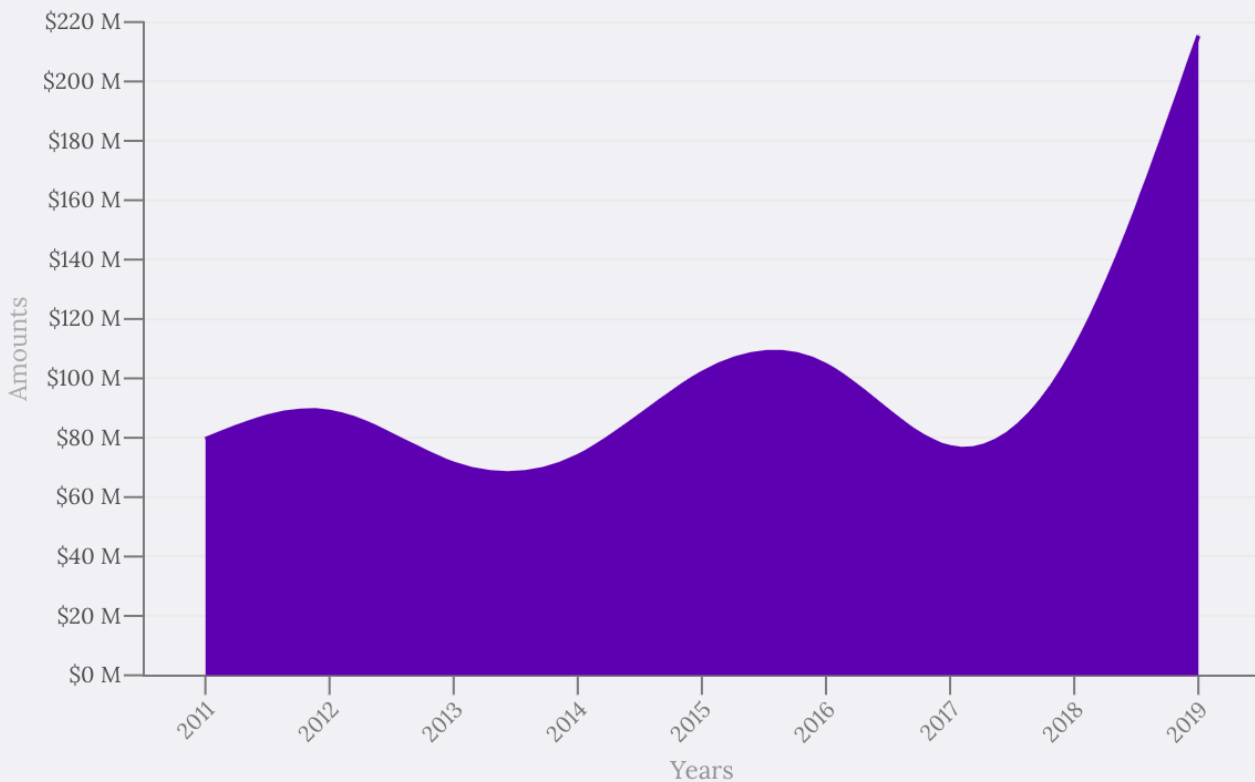
By Yesica Balderrama

JUNE 30, 2023

The Chronicle of Philanthropy

As nonprofits focused on advocating for LGBTQ+ rights have faced intensified pressures in state legislatures and beyond in recent years, they have been fortified by a burst in funding from grant makers. According to the most recent data tracked by Candid and the Human Rights Funders Network, funding from grant makers increased by 17 percent to \$215 million in 2019 compared to the year before.

Global Foundation Giving to LGBTQ+ Human Rights Issues, 2011-19



Source: [Candid and Human Rights Funders Network](#) •

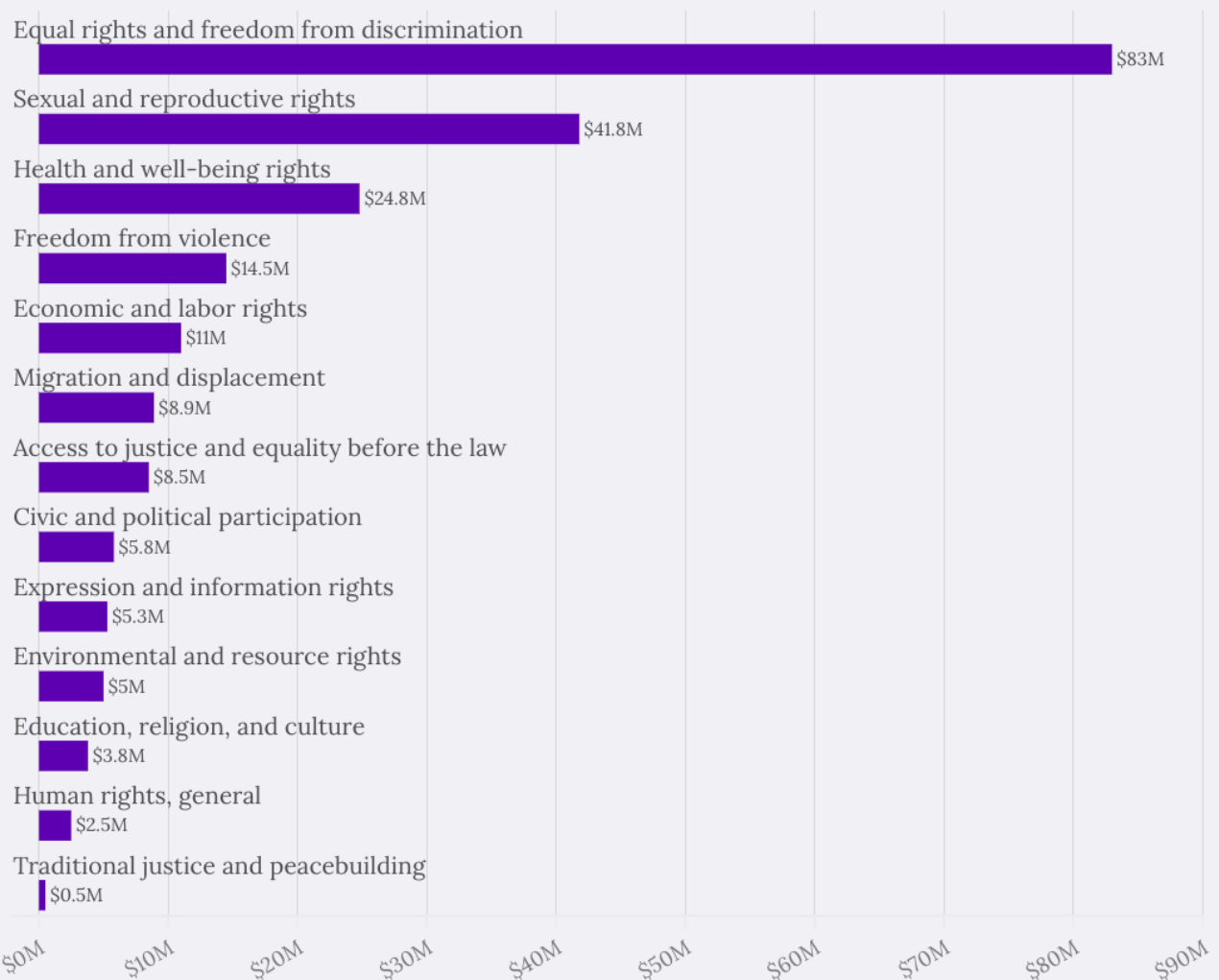
Note: This chart is based on data that foundations provided Candid and HRFN. Not all foundations provided data. The list of groups that provide data year to year are not identical.

Chart: Yesica Balderrama, data reporter and producer

Grant makers focused on LGBTQ+ human rights issues fund an array of efforts, such as work to expose abuses against people based on their sexual orientation or gender identity and advocacy for laws, policies, and practices that protect and promote equal rights.

LGBTQ+ Issues That Drew the Most Human Rights Funding From Foundations in 2019

The top three issues made up 70 percent of total LGBTQ+ human rights funding.



Source: [Candid and Human Rights Funders Network](#) •

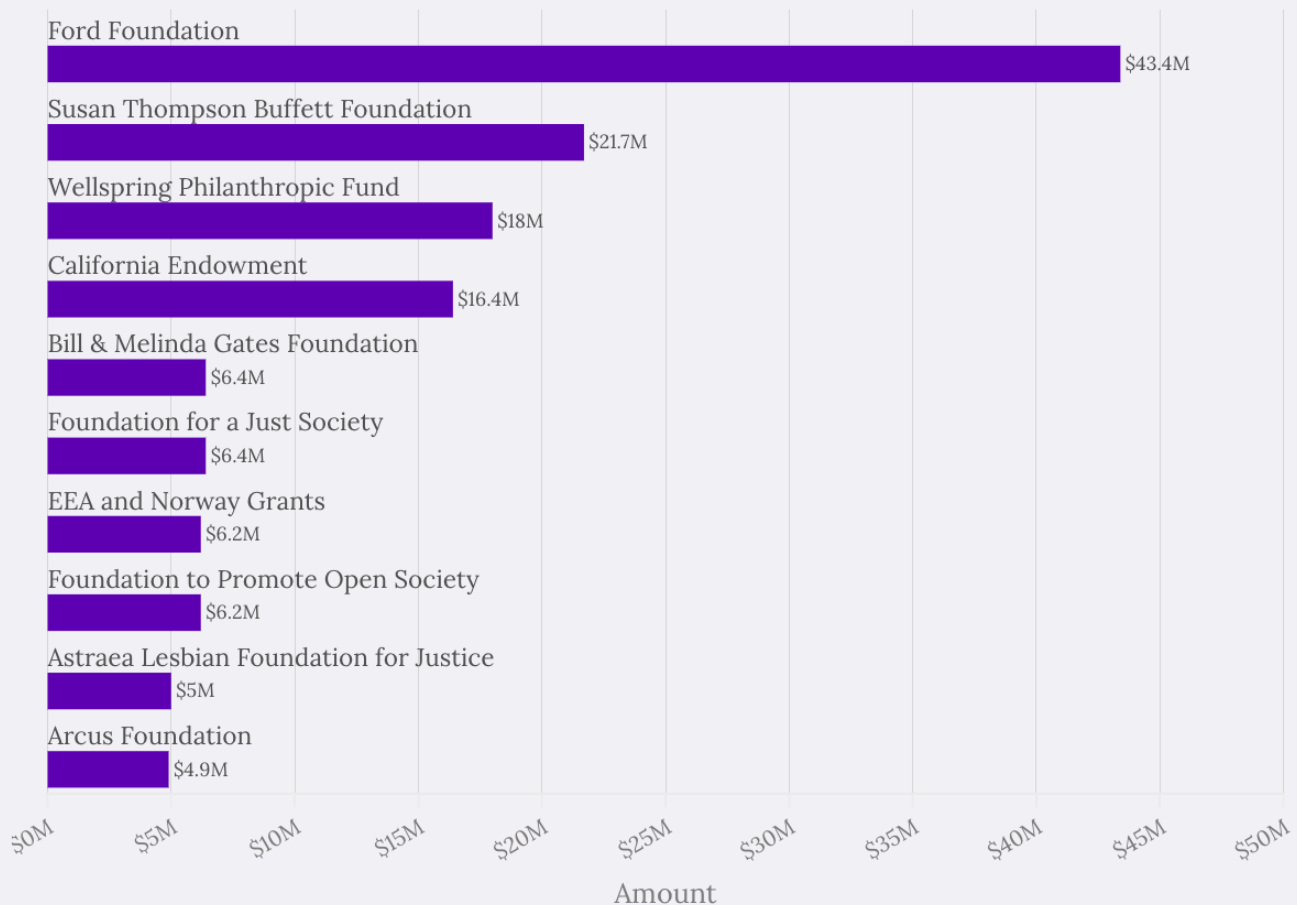
Note: This chart is based on data that foundations provided Candid and HRFN. Not all foundations provided data.

Chart: Yesica Balderrama, data reporter and producer

The top three issues addressed by LGBTQ+ human rights funding in 2019 were equality rights and freedom from discrimination, sexual and reproductive rights, and health and well-being rights, which includes access to health care and adequate and safe food and housing.

10 Foundations Worldwide That Gave the Most to Advancing LGBTQ+ Human Rights in 2019

In 2019, foundations addressed issues including equality rights and freedom from discrimination, sexual and reproductive rights, and health and well-being rights.



Source: [Candid and Human Rights Funders Network](#) •

Note: This chart is based on data that foundations provided Candid and HRFN. Not all foundations provided data.

Chart: Yesica Balderrama, data reporter and producer

Support for groups working on those issues represent 70 percent of human rights grant dollars that were earmarked to aid LGBTQ+ populations in 2019.

Among the top 10 foundations that supported LGBTQ+ human rights issues in 2019, the Ford Foundation gave the most — \$43.4 million— which was 20 percent of total human rights funding in support of LGBTQ+ populations.

(The Ford Foundation is a financial supporter of the Chronicle of Philanthropy.)

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Quick Grants From Tech Billionaires Aim to Speed Up Science Research — but Not All Scientists Approve

Reporting By Eden Stiffman

Data Visualization By Yesica Balderrama

JULY 11, 2023

The Chronicle of Philanthropy

Alameda, Calif.

In March 2020, an experiment in science philanthropy was hatched in the span of a five-minute call. Patrick Collison, the now-34-year-old billionaire CEO of the online payments company Stripe, and economist Tyler Cowen were chewing over a shared concern: Scientific progress seemed to be slowing down.

As the first pandemic lockdowns went into effect, some top scientists were in a holding pattern, waiting to hear if they could redirect their grants to Covid-related research. Collison and Cowen saw an opportunity for action. Worried that the National Institutes of Health wasn't moving quickly enough to respond to the virus, they launched Fast Grants, a pop-up grant-making effort to get emergency research dollars to virologists, coronavirus experts, and other scientists rapidly.

"We thought, let's just do this," Cowen recalls. "It was a bit like put up or shut up."

Collison and his brother and Stripe co-founder, John, contributed and along with Cowen helped raise more than \$50 million over the next year and a half. Other donors included some of the biggest names in tech: Jack Dorsey, Elon Musk, Peter Thiel. Others like Mark Zuckerberg and Priscilla Chan, and former Google CEO Eric Schmidt and his wife, Wendy, gave through their philanthropic funds.

The first round of grants went out in 48 hours, and later rounds were distributed within two weeks, a drastic difference from the hundreds of days a scientist typically waits to hear from the NIH. By January 2022, all the money had gone out the door to more than 260 Covid-related projects.

Grants of \$10,000 to \$500,000 backed early efforts to sequence new coronavirus variants to help track and prevent the spread of the disease, clinical trials for drugs that could potentially be repurposed, and a simple and reliable saliva-based Covid-19 test that received emergency FDA approval in August 2020.

Fast Grants is one of many science-improvement projects launched or backed by Silicon Valley billionaires in recent years. There's been a flurry of new activity since the pandemic began. Donors have channeled hundreds of millions of dollars into research labs and nonprofits to address what they view

as problems with how government agencies and institutional philanthropies fund science. They argue that scientists spend too much time seeking funding for grants that are too restrictive and see a clear role for philanthropy to support high-potential young scientists and risky or speculative projects often overlooked or underfunded by government agencies.

Collison, along with Vitalik Buterin, creator of the Ethereum blockchain platform, and other donors, pledged more than half a billion dollars to the Arc Institute, a new biomedical research nonprofit that wants scientists to focus on science, not chasing grants.

Collison and Skype co-founder Jaan Tallinn backed the Good Science Project, a new advocacy group that's pushing government agencies to make their science grant making more innovative and efficient.

Eric and Wendy Schmidt spun off Convergent Research, a nonprofit helping to incubate even more independent organizations to develop research tools and niche areas of science they believe might otherwise not be funded.

Both Collison and Schmidt Futures declined to disclose specific donation amounts.

While these contributions are just a drop in the bucket compared with the nearly \$50 billion the NIH spends on research each year, they've been met with both applause and ambivalence from scientists and philanthropy observers. Some are excited to see what comes from these experiments but are reserving judgment until there's more evidence of successes and failures. Others question the societal implications when science projects for the public good are driven by a handful of tech elites motivated by the "move fast and break things" ethos.

But one thing's for sure: In Silicon Valley, science philanthropy is at an inflection point.

Continued

Conversations Turn to Action

Collison, who grew up in Ireland and studied math at MIT before launching his company, has been an influential figure in bringing together science-curious entrepreneurs with scientists and staff from big foundations.

In 2018, he co-wrote an essay in the Atlantic titled "Science Is Getting Less Bang for Its Buck," arguing that the rate of scientific progress is stagnating despite an exponential increase in funding. And for several years he has hosted invitation-only gatherings at his home and around Northern California to discuss topics like science policy and opportunities to speed up innovation.

In the past few years, as many of these science-interested tech entrepreneurs became wealthier, they influenced each other to put their money where their mouths are.

Brian Nosek, executive director of the Center for Open Science, which works to increase transparency in the research process so that more studies can be reproduced, applauds the new donors for helping

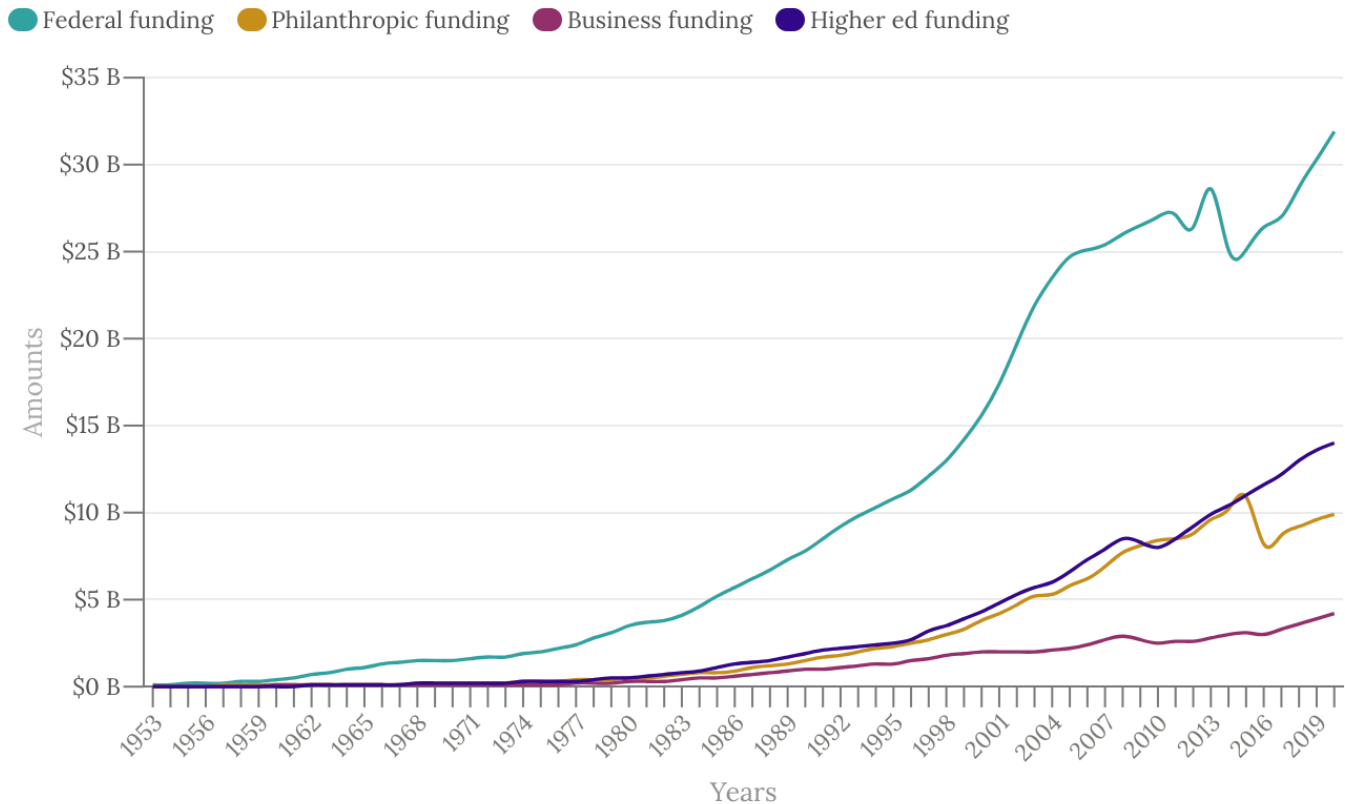
to test ways to shake up how science is funded.

“We’re limiting ourselves to things we’ve tried,” Nosek says. “There are many possible ways to decide what to fund, who to fund, how to fund them, how to track progress, and we haven’t had a culture of experimentation.”

He’s a board member of another new nonprofit, the Good Science Project, that wants to reduce the amount of federal bureaucracy scientists must wade through to secure funding. That group’s director,

Science Research Funds Increasingly Coming From Philanthropy

That money represents a rising share of basic science funding to universities and research institutes.



Source: [National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, National Patterns of R&D Resources: 2020-2021 Data Update](#)

Graph: Yesica Balderrama, data reporter and producer

Stuart Buck, previously led science grant making at Arnold Ventures. He founded the Good Science Project after a conversation with Collison. Collison and his brother, John, are its biggest benefactors, though they have not disclosed the size of their contributions.

Continued

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How Joan Kroc's Largess Changed the Salvation Army

Reporting By Lisa Napoli

Data Visualization By Yesica Balderrama

SEPTEMBER 12, 2023

The Chronicle of Philanthropy

Ward 2 in Biloxi, Miss., wasn't much of a destination before the Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Center opened 11 years ago — unless you wanted to find one of the casinos situated nearby on the Gulf of Mexico. In this, the poorest neighborhood in the city, streets are dotted with vacant lots — a reminder of the massive devastation wrought by Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

From its opening day, people have flocked from neighboring counties and states to this gleaming, 52,000 square-foot, state-of-the-art recreation palace on Division Street, constructed on an old lot across from a housing project where a high-school stadium once stood.

Before the Kroc Center opened just around the corner from his lifelong home, Robert Fountain, a Navy veteran and retired civil servant, had to drive crosstown to the more affluent west side of the city to a well-equipped gym. He signed up for a membership at the Kroc Center on the very first day. "I try to go every day for a couple of hours," he said. "It's a beautiful place."

Jeff Koonce, who became the center's member service coordinator nine years ago, loves the reaction of former residents when they return to the neighborhood. The only place for kids to play basketball in the 1980s was in a run-down city-owned structure.

"It's still mind-blowing to people when they come back," Koonce said. "They say, 'If only this has been here when I was a kid.'"

First-class recreation centers in low-income neighborhoods — dozens of them, scattered around the nation. That was the vision of Joan Kroc, billionaire philanthropist and heiress to the McDonald's fortune of her husband, Ray. When she died in 2003, she left what amounted to \$1.8 billion — roughly half her fortune — to the Salvation Army with instructions to carry out her wish.

And today, 20 years later, 26 grand, state-of-the-art Kroc centers have opened in places as varied as Ashland, Ohio; Guayama, Puerto Rico; and Quincy, Ill. Salvation Army officials say 1.2 million people belong to Kroc fitness centers, and over 3 million people annually are served through a wide variety of other programs, including job training, theatrical performances, and after-school care.

The Phoenix Kroc Center hosts a financial-literacy course and filmmaking workshop. In Boston, a culinary-arts program provides job training. Several nonprofits keep offices at the Kroc facility in

Augusta, Ga. In San Francisco, the center is attached to housing for veterans and for young people who have aged out of foster care.

One constant across the locations is the presence of a designated “Kroc Church.” Spiritual guidance is available to anyone who seeks it, said Dale Bannon, the Salvation Army’s national community relations and development director — likening it to a prayer box at a hospital.

Continued

No-Strings Gifts

Not long after, Kroc, then age 74, was diagnosed with a terminal brain tumor, and she and her small staff of advisers revved into action to prepare her final wishes. Having no formal foundation in place added a layer of complexity to the task.

Faced with about \$3 billion in assets, she compiled a list of recipients of unrestricted gifts, including the peace centers she’d created at Catholic universities Notre Dame and the University of San Diego (\$50 million each); Ronald McDonald House Charities (\$60 million), and National Public Radio (\$225 million).

The Salvation Army was named as the residual beneficiary of her estate, which included her grand compound in Fairbanks Ranch, Calif. By the time it was settled several years later, the total sum transferred to the church — the “lottery of philanthropic gifts,” Bannon said — had ballooned to \$1.8 billion from the \$1.5 billion it had originally been told it would receive. In today’s dollars, that’s the equivalent of \$2.9 billion.

And with that final dispersal of her assets, the Salvation Army was left alone to implement her wishes.

U.S. Cities That Benefited From the Salvation Army's \$1.5 Billion Surprise Gift

Joan Kroc, the McDonald's heiress, stunned the social-service charity in 2003 when she left it half of her fortune — and said the money had to be used to build community centers across the country and in Puerto Rico. Here are the 26 locations where these centers now operate.



Source: [Ray & Joan Kroc Corps Community Centers](#)
Map: Yesica Balderrama, data reporter and producer

Continued

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Latino Charitable Giving Rates Drop Sharply — but That's Not the Full Story

Reporting By Kay Dervishi

Data Visualization By Yesica Balderrama

SEPTEMBER 19, 2023

The Chronicle of Philanthropy

When informal giving is combined with traditional charitable donations, Latino people seem to be giving disproportionately more than their non-Latino counterparts.

The share of Latinos who give to established charities has dropped sharply since 2008, a new study has found. The same has been true for other Americans, but the percentage of Hispanics who give to help people in need through less formal efforts is higher than for others in the United States.

Those findings come from a study released Tuesday by Hispanics in Philanthropy, an organization that works to advance Latino giving, and the Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy.

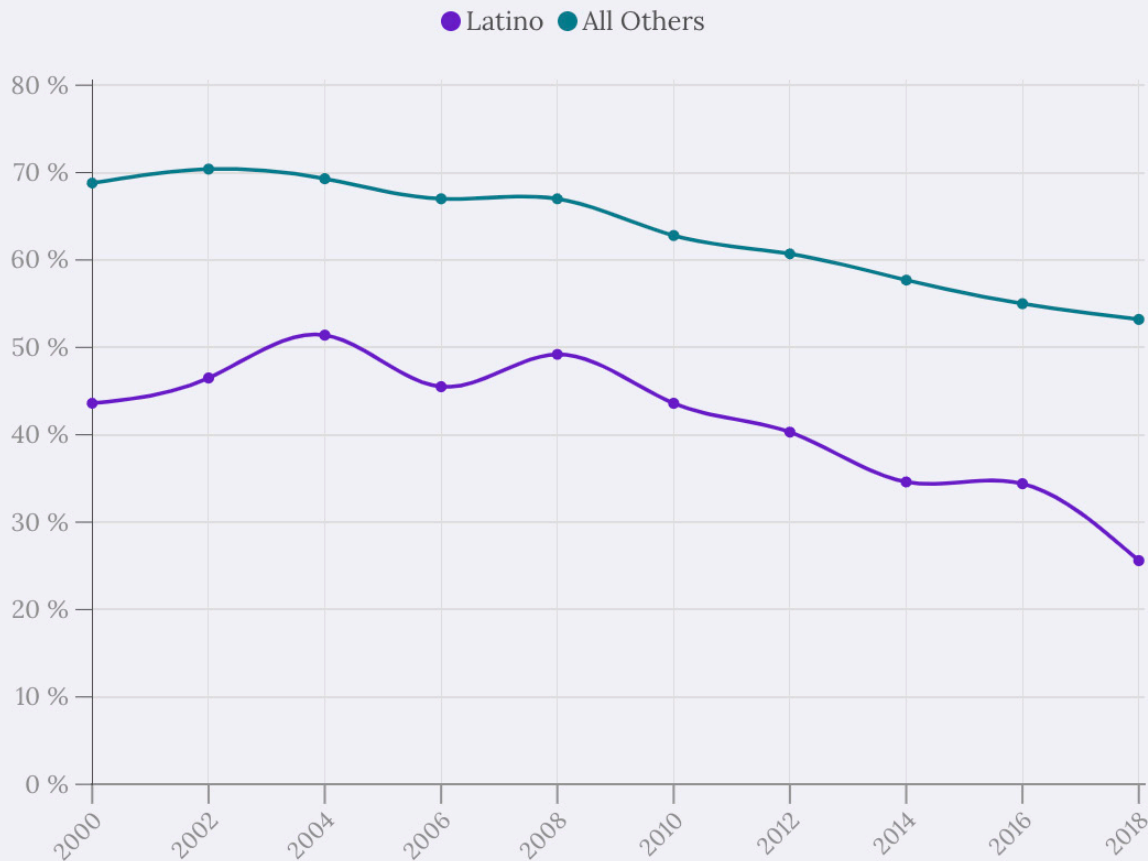
The report found that 26 percent of Latinos gave in 2018, the most recent data available, compared with 44 percent in 2008. The share of all Americans who give has also been on the decline: Only half of households gave in 2018, compared with two thirds in 2000.

One likely reason for the disparity between Latinos and other donors can be traced to the lack of economic growth for Hispanics, who are the country's second largest ethnic group.

The average income for Latino households has stayed largely flat from 2000 to 2018, according to the report. While income was also steady for other groups, most started out with higher incomes than Hispanic households.

Still, the rate of Hispanics giving to help others in informal ways, such as crowdfunding for a neighbor's medical bills, funding a relative's education, and sending money to family members in another country, are higher than those of others. Sixteen percent of Latino households gave that way, on average, from 2000 to 2018, compared with 12.6 percent of other households, the report found. (That finding excludes giving to members of the same household.)

Latino Giving Rates Dropped More Sharply Than Others



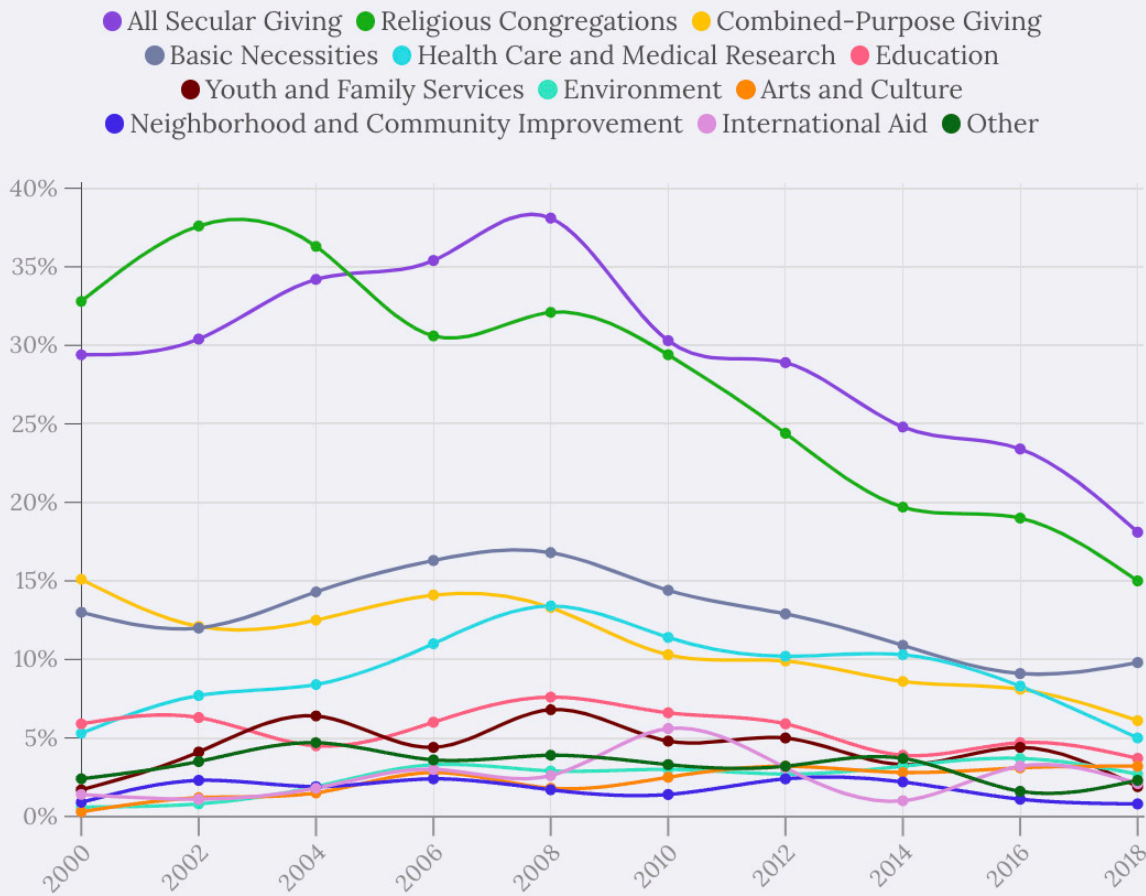
Source: PPS Data, IU Lilly Family School of Philanthropy.

Chart: Yesica Balderrama, data reporter

Una Osili, associate dean for research and international programs at the Lilly School, who worked on the report, says that when informal giving is combined with traditional charitable donations, Latino people seem to be giving disproportionately more than their non-Latino counterparts.

“We find very much that they are givers, and not only givers, but you could even say punching above their weight when you look at income and wealth and education,” she says.

Top Priorities for Latino Giving



Source: PPS Data, IU Lilly Family School of Philanthropy.

Chart: Yesica Balderrama, data reporter

Among the other findings:

Latino donors tended to give based on values and interests, particularly family and community, and their top four priority causes were: religious congregations; food, shelter, and basic necessities; health care and medical research; and education.

For high-net-worth Hispanic donors, the top priorities were education, animal rights, and health care. Giving rates differed based on immigration status: Half of Latinos born in the United States donated to charity in 2018, while 40 percent of immigrants did.

How long immigrants lived in the United States also affected giving rates: Long-established immigrants

largely gave at higher rates, especially to religious congregations, than recent immigrants. In 2018, 23 percent of established immigrants gave to religious congregations, compared with 19 percent of recent immigrants.

The report drew from several data sources, including the Lilly Family School's Philanthropy Panel Study and a Bank of America philanthropy study, which both looked at nationally representative samples. The report also included the results of focus-group conversations on Hispanic philanthropy with donors, philanthropic advisers, and nonprofit professionals.

Researchers did not include additional information about giving specifically to family members or remittances, which typically refers to money transfers to family living in a home country.

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Few People of Color Lead in Art Museums. Can Philanthropy Change That?

Reporting By Kay Dervishi

Data Visualization By Yesica Balderrama

SEPTEMBER 28, 2023

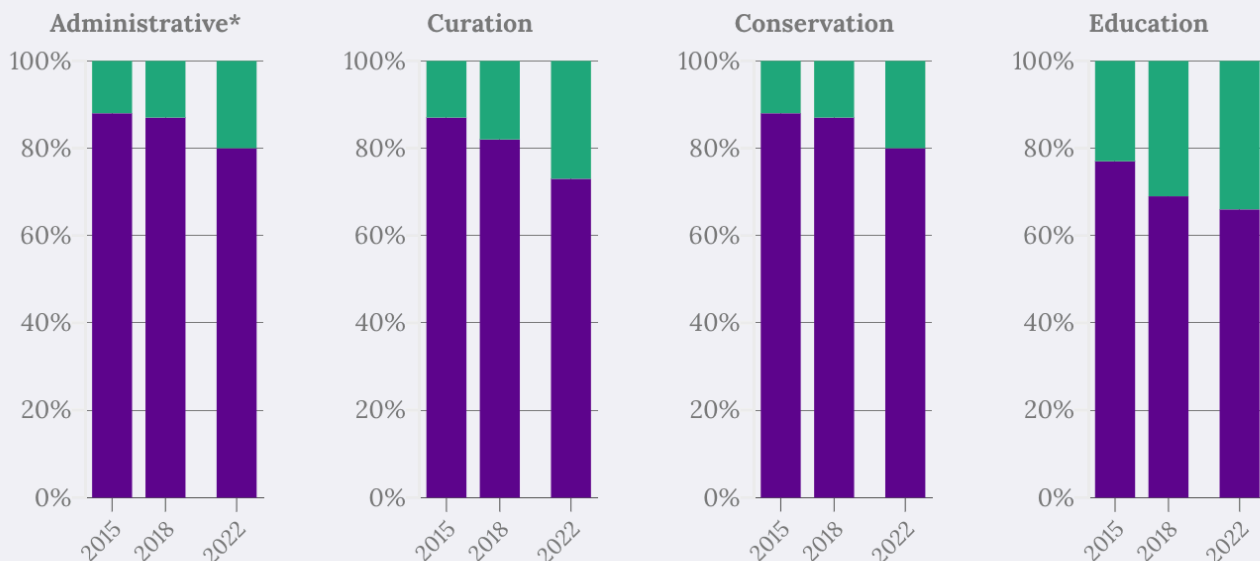
The Chronicle of Philanthropy

At American art museums, a movement to increase racial diversity — among staff and leaders — has been gaining slow but steady results, due in part to prominent philanthropies supporting the effort.

How Diversity in Museum Leadership Has Changed

Art museums have made strides in hiring people of color over the past eight years, yet 80 percent of administrators and conservation staff were white as of 2022.

White Staff Staff of Color



Source: [Mellon Foundation Art Museum Staff Demographic Survey 2022](#) •

Note: *Administrative roles include chief executives, chief finance officers, chief technology officers, and directors.

Note: Data were gathered from 328 North American museums that employ more than 30,000 people.

Chart: Yesica Balderrama, data reporter

Since 2015, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and research firm Ithaka S+R have conducted three surveys to determine the racial composition of staff members at art museums. The reports have drawn attention to a work force that, in the words of Elizabeth Alexander, Mellon's president, fails to "reflect the demographics of our richly diverse country."

The latest survey, from 2022, revealed that people of color now account for 36 percent of overall museum staff up from 27 percent in 2015, and found that over 40 percent of new staff and hires are people of color. But the survey, which assembled data from 328 North American museums with more than 30,000 employees, also found that 80 percent of some key roles — such as director roles and those in conservation — are held by white people and that the percentage of Black and Indigenous staff hasn't changed over the past eight years.

In May, these findings inspired the Mellon Foundation, along with three other grant makers — the Alice L. Walton Foundation, the Ford Foundation, and Pilot House Philanthropy — to award more than \$11 million over five years to 19 museums to increase diversity in leadership roles. Each grant maker contributed about \$3 million to the new effort.

"Museum leaders — from curators to board members — play a key role in determining the art on display in these cultural institutions," stated the news release announcing the Leadership in Art Museums Initiative. "A 2019 study found that only 1.2 percent of works in all major U.S. museums were created by Black artists, with 9 percent for Asian artists and only 2.8 percent for Hispanic and Latinx artists."

The Leadership in Art Museums Initiative builds on lessons from past philanthropic efforts. Concerned that previous internships and fellowship programs for people of color didn't make a enough of a difference, the grant makers are enabling museums to create new permanent positions for curators, conservators, art educators, collection managers, and other top roles.

"That's really what guided us in thinking about making this about permanent, full-time positions," says Rocío Aranda-Alvarado, a senior program officer at the Ford Foundation. "We wanted professionals of color who have the experience and expertise to be in decision-making power."

Most museums will receive grants of \$650,000 to support new positions for five years, covering salary and professional development as well as acquisition and exhibition of artwork.

For example, the St. Louis Art Museum in Missouri aims to hire a collections manager and a collections fellow to oversee the museum's 35,000-plus objects and display lesser-known items. And the Wing Luke Museum in Seattle will hire a curator to build partnerships with local hospitals, clinics, and nonprofits as well as an HR professional.

Diane Mallow, the head of registration at the St. Louis Art Museum, says collections roles haven't been filled by people of color as much as have other museum positions.

"White women are predominantly the demographic that has historically been in collections management," she says. "So it's great to have an opportunity to really diversify the people working there and give them that opportunity."

What Happened to Big — and Local — Corporate Giving?

Reporting By Eden Stiffman

Data Visualizations By Yesica Balderrama

OCTOBER 3, 2023

The Chronicle of Philanthropy

Caterpillar is both the world's largest manufacturer of construction equipment and a company that illustrates the shifting trends in corporate philanthropy.

In 1952, Caterpillar established its corporate foundation in East Peoria, Ill., channeling its giving to local efforts around its headquarters, like a firehouse and local chapters of the United Way, the American Red Cross, and Junior Achievement. Starting in the 1970s, the foundation expanded its scope to charities in other U.S. cities and towns where Caterpillar had built offices and plants.

Then, in the decades that followed, the Caterpillar Foundation aligned its philanthropic priorities with its parent company's increasingly international business goals, supporting groups focused on STEM education, disaster relief, and sustainable infrastructure projects, with much of the grant money going abroad.

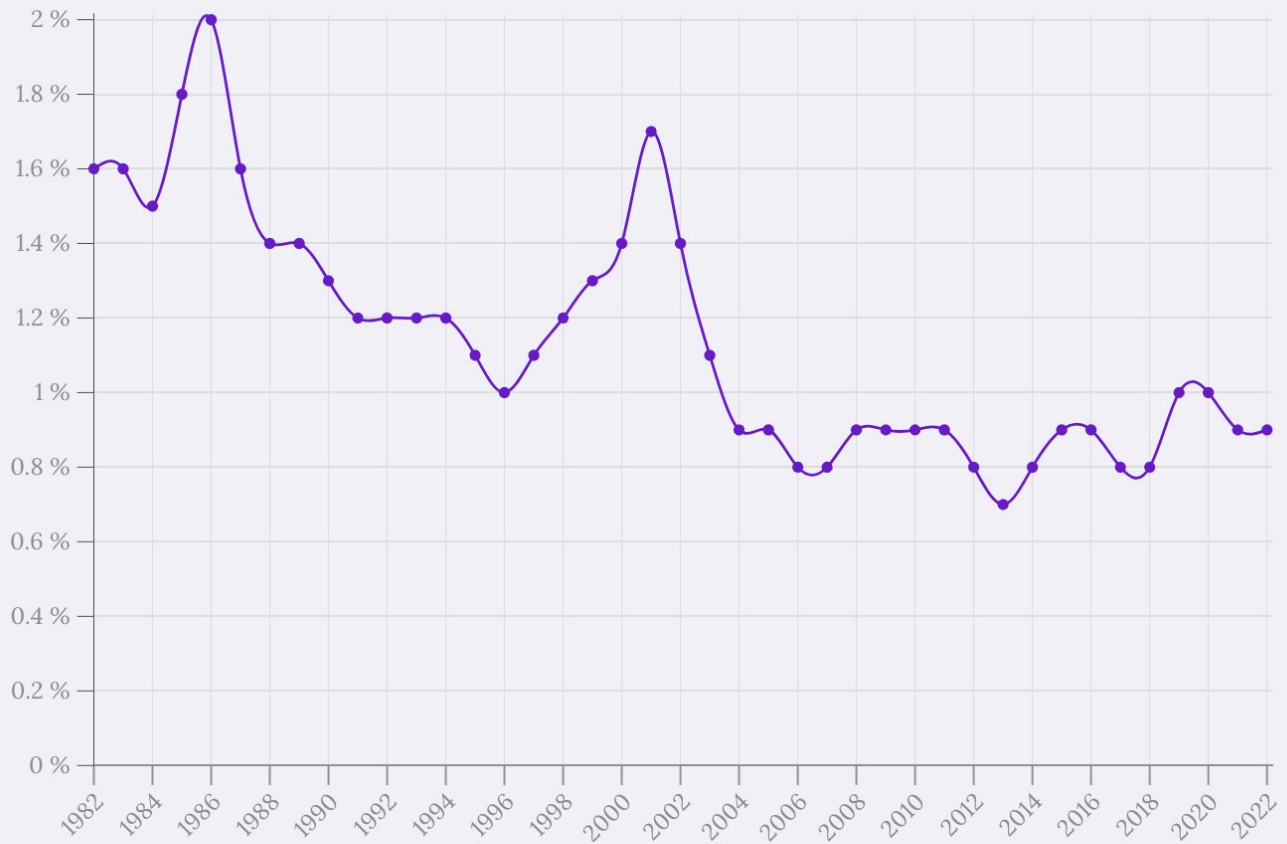
Caterpillar also moved. Twice. In 2017, it left Peoria, its home for more than 90 years, for Deerfield, Ill. Five years later, the company announced plans to relocate again, joining a slew of other corporations moving their headquarters to tax-friendly Texas.

Although Caterpillar continues to give to Peoria nonprofits — it remains one of the largest employers in Peoria and the state as a whole — many of those groups are turning not to the company itself but to a different source for gifts: Caterpillar employees.

In 2020, Jada Hoerr, chief resource officer of the Peoria's Midwest Food Bank, learned that Caterpillar Foundation grants to support her organization's food-relief work would sunset over the next three years. But what might have been a blow to the nonprofit was mitigated by a countervailing shift: That same year, Caterpillar expanded its employee matching-gift program, enabling employees and retirees to contribute up to \$10,000 annually to their favorite charities for total gifts of \$20,000. Last year alone, the company gave \$21.1 million in matching contributions.

Indeed, that is what concerns Hoerr about Caterpillar's departure: the C-suite charitable contributions. Most of Caterpillar's 230 corporate employees will relocate to the new Irving headquarters in the Dallas-Fort Worth area over the next few years, and following that may come a falloff in philanthropic gifts.

Corporations Are Donating a Smaller Share of Pretax Profits



Source: "Giving USA"

Chart: Yesica Balderrama, data reporter

"It's less about dollars from the company and more about the high-income earners that are personally contributing when a company relocates," she says.

Corporate philanthropy today is at a crossroads. While corporate contributions have increased in inflation-adjusted dollars over the past few decades, totaling \$29.5 billion in 2022, companies are donating a smaller share of pretax profits — down by half since 1982. Although corporate giving remains a relatively small slice of overall philanthropy — just 6 percent of donations last year came from businesses — for the nonprofits that do receive their support, it can be a meaningful part of their revenues.

Grant Makers Add Students' Mental Health to Priorities

By Yesica Balderrama

SEPTEMBER 29, 2023

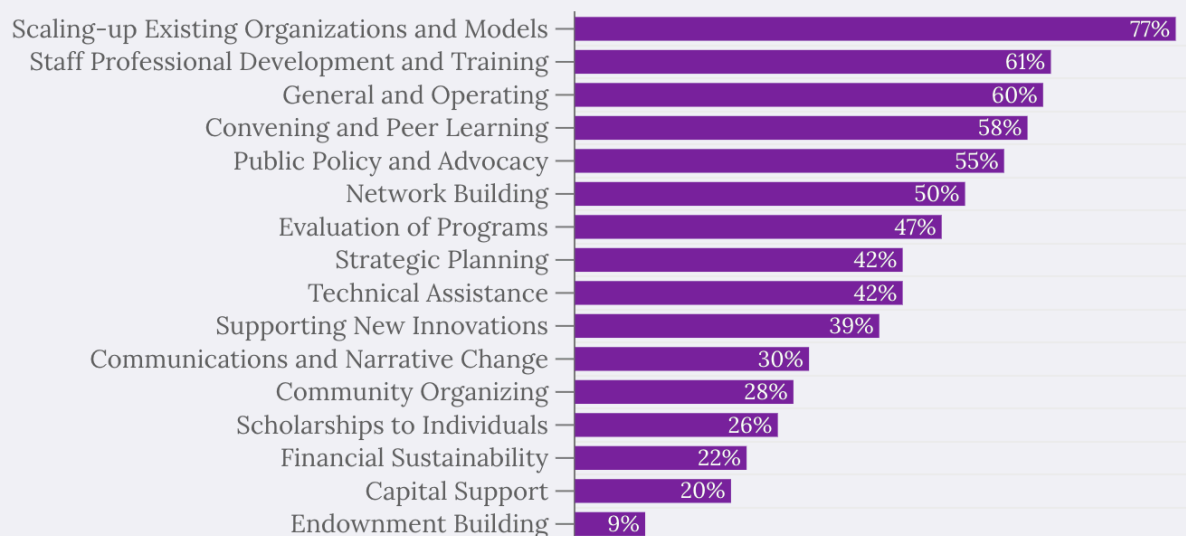
The Chronicle of Philanthropy

Amid growing concerns about a mental-health crisis sweeping the nation's schoolchildren that the U.S. surgeon general has called "unprecedented," education grant makers may be increasingly changing the way they aid young people.

A survey of 142 foundations by Grantmakers for Education in late 2022 and early 2023 shows:

Grant Makers Invest in Wide-Ranging List of Education Priorities

■ Share of Respondents



Source: [Grantmakers for Education](#)

Chart: Yesica Balderrama, data reporter

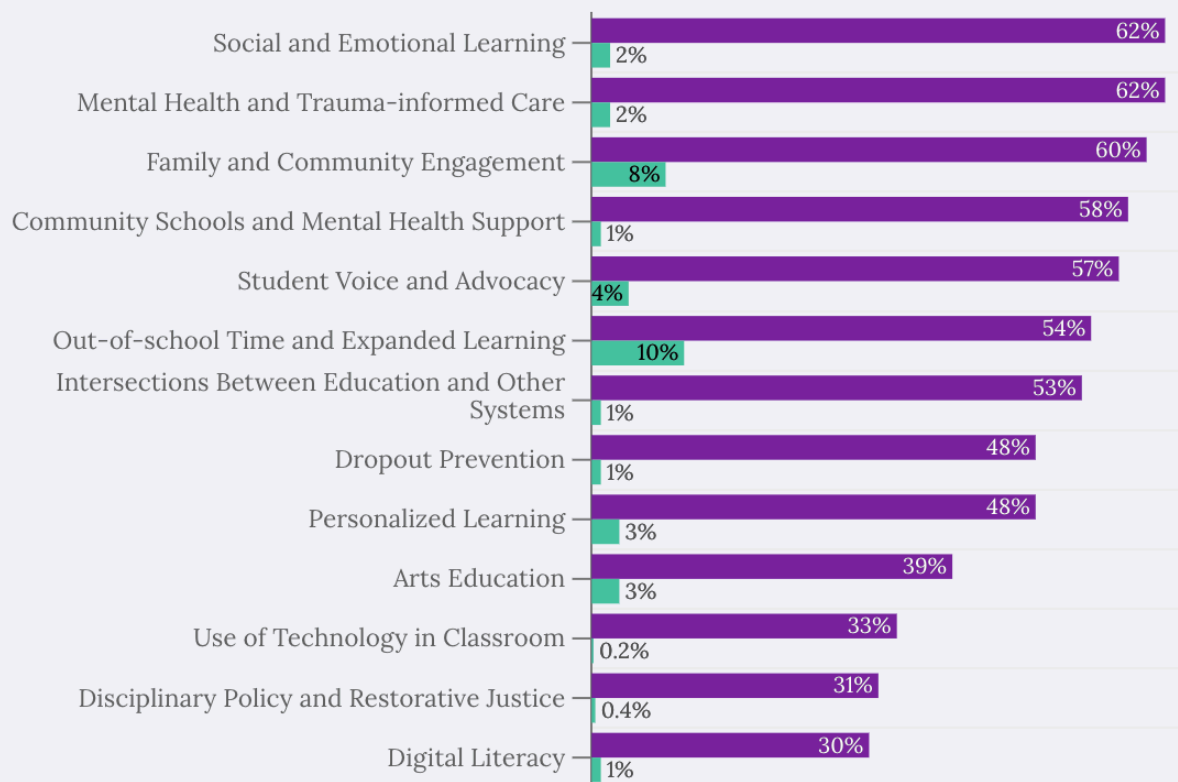
-62 percent of grant makers are providing support to nonprofits, schools and other groups that help children learn important coping and social skills. These types of grants commanded support from one-third of grant makers in 2018.

- 62 percent are providing support for mental-health care that is tailored to help people who have faced significant struggles in their lives.

The Covid pandemic spurred schools to collaborate with community groups to provide food and services not only to children but to their families as well, according to the report. Many others are offering “wrap-around” support by helping and engaging with students outside of school buildings.

Students' Mental Health and Well-Being Are Focus for Grant Makers

■ Respondents ■ Share of grant dollars



Source: [Grantmakers for Education](#)

Chart: Yesica Balderrama, data reporter

 A Flourish chart

One grant maker said in the survey that “the hours after school, on weekends, and during the summer are critical times for growth, learning, and change.”

While different foundations responded in each year of the survey, Grantmakers for Education said the size of the foundations was comparable enough to provide solid comparisons. Still, the survey size was too small to say the trend is true across all grant makers.

Among the other issues commanding a significant share of foundation attention:

- Helping educational institutions grow or expand (77 percent)
- Supporting professional development and training for teachers, school leaders, and other education professionals (61 percent)
- Providing support for public policy and advocacy (55 percent)

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It Started With Friends Helping a Friend. Now a Group Helps Thousands

By Yesica Balderrama

OCTOBER 3, 2023

The Chronicle of Philanthropy

Rudy Garcia-Tolson, a five-time Paralympic swimming medalist, was born with a rare birth defect, and his legs were amputated when he was 5 years old. He is one of more than 44,000 people who have been helped by the Challenged Athletes Foundation, which provided him with leg prosthetics.

The nonprofit was founded in 1994 by friends — Bob Babbitt, Jeffrey Essakow, and Rick Kozlowski — who raised money for another friend who had lost his leg in a motorcycle accident.

“Sport is therapeutic, and it gives people the mind-set that they can still be successful,” Babbitt says. “We help eliminate that spiraling depression that people can go through.”

The foundation provides grants to people with physical disabilities, primarily helping pay for adaptive sports equipment, providing training, assisting with sports competition expenses, and other services to help people stay fit. It also organizes clinics to teach people how to use their adaptive equipment.

Kristine Entwistle, CEO of the foundation, says the equipment needed to compete as athletes or for noncompetitors to stay active often costs thousands of dollars. For instance, running prosthetics can cost \$15,000, according to Entwistle. The equipment costs are not usually covered by health insurance.

Garcia-Tolson says participating in adaptive sports — competitive or recreational sports for people with disabilities — has made a huge difference in his life, helping boost his spirits.

“The top benefit is for my mental head space and how confident I am,” he said.

About one in four adults in the United States has a disability, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Research from the CDC shows that staying active helps people with disabilities reduce the impact of chronic diseases.

This year the foundation, based in California, gave the most it’s ever given — \$7 million to 3,996 individuals. Over the years, it has raised almost \$160 million. Private donors who gave to CAF include the Craig H. Neilsen and David C. Copley foundations, and corporate sponsors include Toyota, Smoothie King, and Nike.

Entwistle says the nonprofit has been able to increase the number of grants provided each year. “If we can provide more adaptive sports equipment, then it’s more people who have gotten activity into their life,” she says.

The foundation also provided essential aid during the Covid-19 pandemic when many people with disabilities had to stay home. It provided home-delivered fitness kits and videos to show how to use the equipment.

Kym Eisner, executive director of the Neilsen Foundation, said she was impressed with how the athletic foundation stepped up to help. “CAF found a creative way to serve their athletes, keeping everyone active and safe during a very scary time.”

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***A version of this article appeared in the October 3, 2023, issue.
We welcome your thoughts and questions about this article. Please email the editors or submit a letter for publication.***

Does Alternative Meat Need Philanthropy to Take It Beyond?

Reporting By Eden Stiffman

Data Visualization By Yesica Balderrama

OCTOBER 16, 2023

The Chronicle of Philanthropy

SAN FRANCISCO

In 2016, the farm-animal protection nonprofit Mercy for Animals set aside \$540,000 to help launch a new organization with a novel focus: the development of alternative food products that could beat animal agriculture at its own game.

The founding CEO of the new nonprofit, the Good Food Institute, was Bruce Friedrich, a former PETA vice president who in the late 1990s and 2000s was responsible for in-your-face activist campaigns like McCruelty and Murder King, which highlighted the treatment of animals on the menu at fast food chains.

But Friedrich wasn't convinced that those efforts to raise awareness had done much to change consumer behavior. He saw potential in young companies like Impossible Foods and Beyond Meat, which promised new choices for meat eaters through plant-based foods that would mimic the taste and texture of the real thing without the environmental harms. So he shifted to a market-focused approach to change the way we eat.

"Trying to convince the world to eat less or no meat has tremendous value, but it hasn't changed the upward trajectory of industrial animal-meat production and consumption," says Friedrich, who is now the organization's president.

Good Food Institute was built as a think tank and advocacy organization that could jump-start an entire food category that includes both plant-based meat, dairy, and egg substitutes — as well as cultured or lab-grown products that use real animal cells to grow meat or seafood in a lab setting.

It's a vision of the future of food that philanthropy has helped shape from the ground up. Standard-bearers of the effective altruism movement, like Facebook co-founder Dustin Moskovitz and his wife, Cari Tuna, have supported the cause as a way to reduce harm to animals on factory farms through their Open Philanthropy Project. More recently, climate-focused grant makers like the Bezos Earth Fund are exploring the role alternative proteins could play in reducing the environmental impact of animal agriculture, which accounts for at least 15 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions.

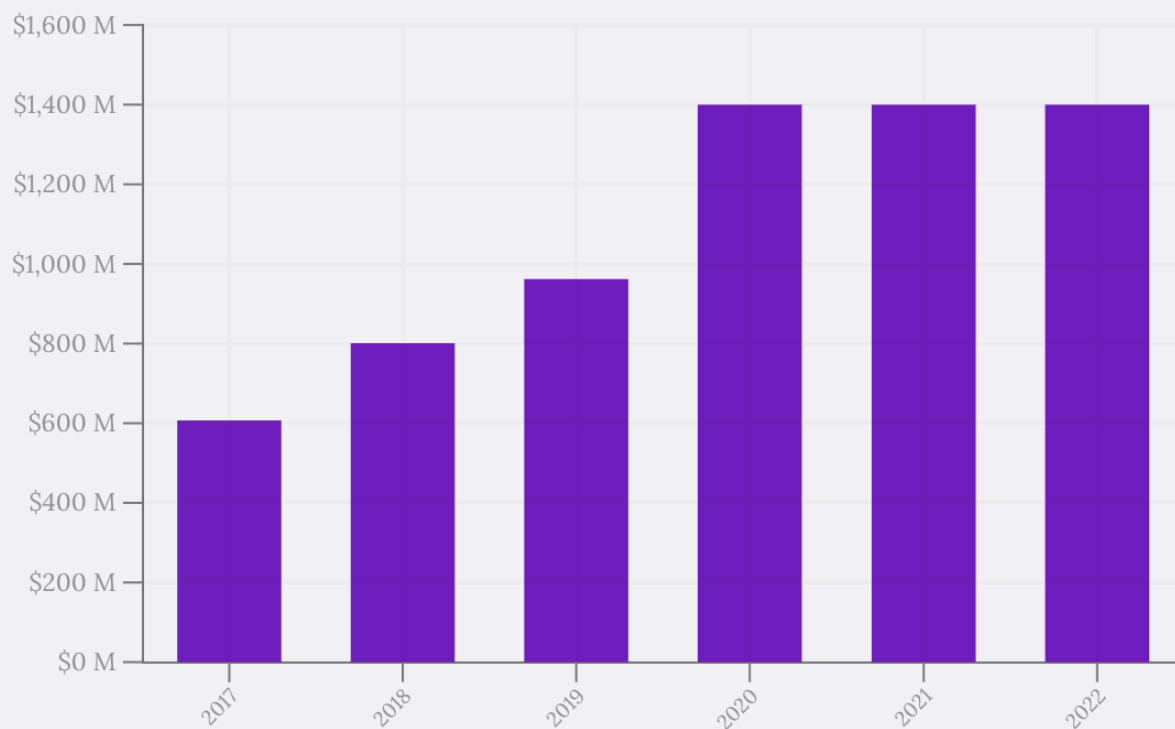
Advocates draw parallels between alternative meat and renewable-energy technology, saying that dollars from governments, along with philanthropy, are critical if these food products are to ever become more than a niche product.

“If we leave this to the tender mercies of the private sector, we’re not going to have very many products, and it’s going to take a really long time,” Friedrich says.

Good Food Institute and the products it evangelizes have also faced backlash. The meat industry has pushed laws to try to handicap alternative-protein companies by restricting the use of terms like “milk” or “meat” on food labels, even as the biggest meat companies enter the industry themselves.

Plant-Based Meat Sales Have Leveled Off

U.S. retail sales doubled from 2017 to 2020 but have since flattened.



Data source for 2018–2022: Good Food Institute and Plant Based Foods Association commissioned data from SPINS., Data source for 2017: Plant Based Foods Association commissioned data from Nielsen.

Chart: Yesica Balderrama, data reporter

At the same time, some advocates for plant-based diets argue that highly processed biotech foods may be a stop-gap measure but not the answer to climate challenges. Even within the alternative-meat research world, some scientists are skeptical that products like lab-grown fillets can ever be produced at a cost and scale to make a dent in the world's growing appetite for meat.

At a recent Good Food Institute gathering, as alt-meat boosters and entrepreneurs mingled over faux-chicken Caesar salads and plant-based beef jerky, there was recognition that future success isn't inevitable.

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Grant Seekers May Benefit as Wealthy People Put More Money Into Their Foundations

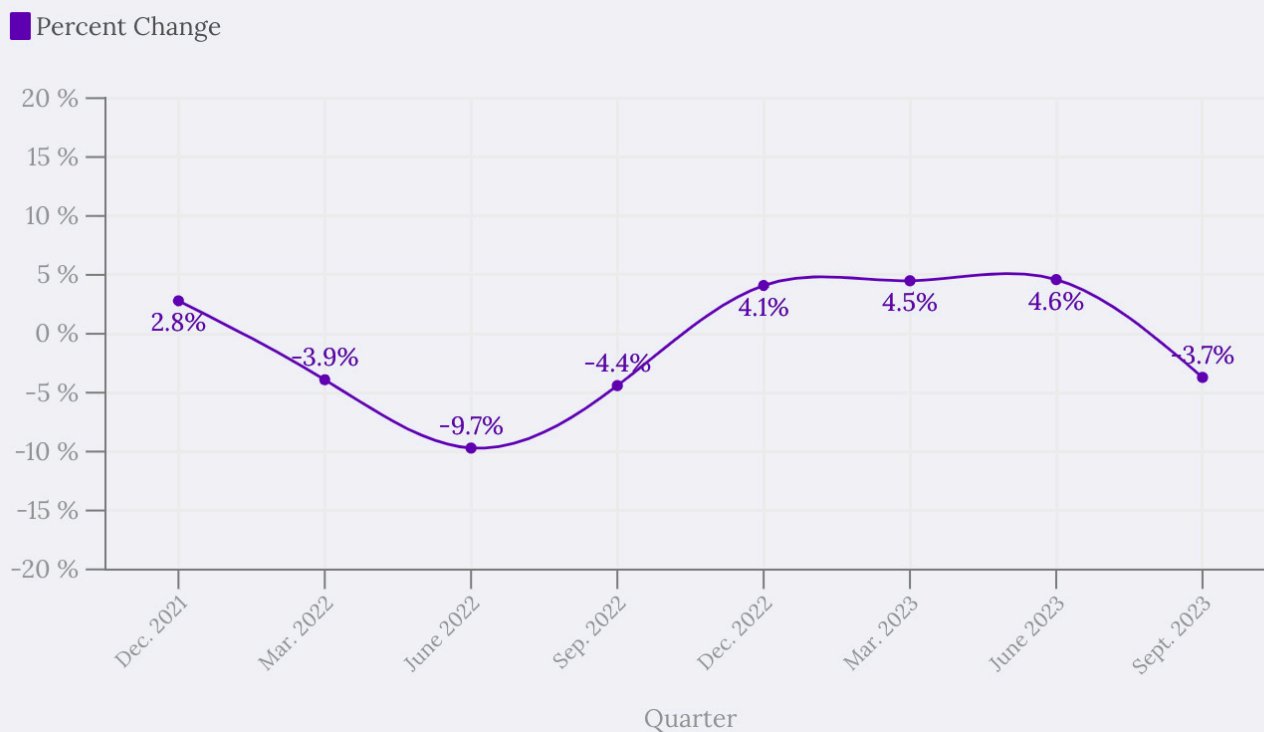
By Yesica Balderrama

OCTOBER 23, 2023

The Chronicle of Philanthropy

Foundation giving is likely to rise by 2 percent this year, to \$95 billion, according to a new estimate by FoundationMark, an organization that examines tax filings and other data to provide a quarterly forecast about the state of grant making.

Foundation Assets Fall \$50 Billion in the First Three Quarters of 2023



Source: [FoundationMark](#) •

Note: The data is based on projections.

Chart: Yesica Balderrama, data reporter

Foundation endowment values dropped nearly 4 percent in the last quarter due to the slippage of stock and bond markets. While that hurt, overall asset gains for endowments were about 5 percent for the year — and that means foundations are unlikely to cut back total giving in 2023.

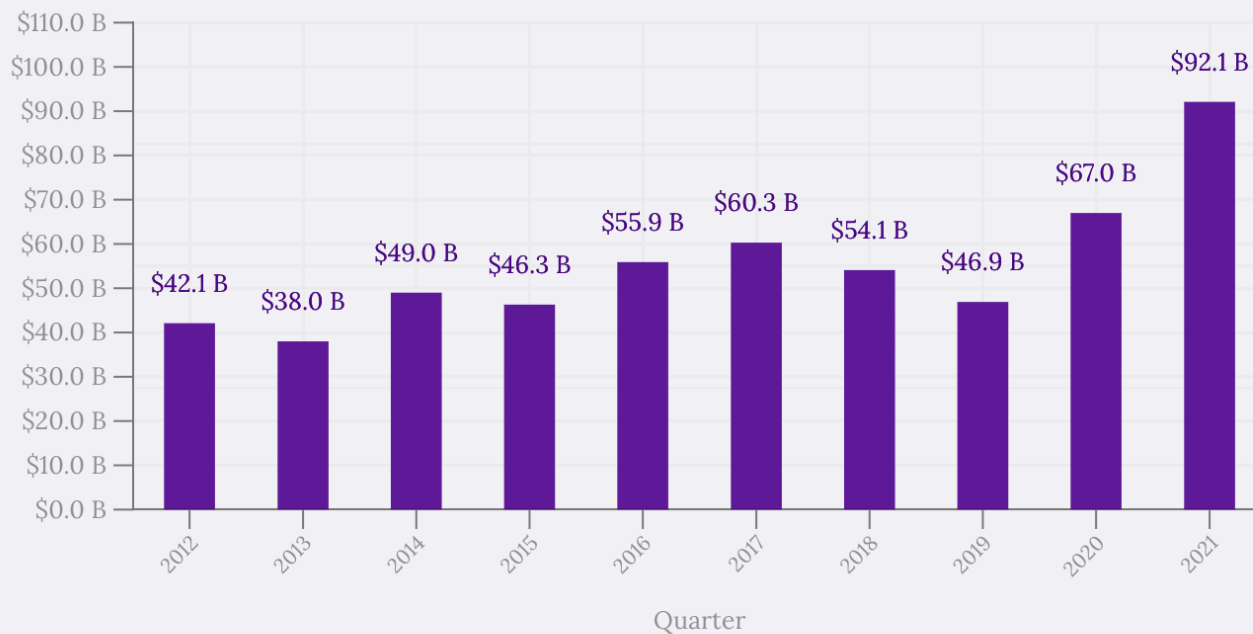
Making the situation far brighter: FoundationMark uncovered a surge in giving to foundations that will help make up for some of the challenges caused in the markets, according to John Seitz, the organization's head. Newly updated Internal Revenue Service records show that in 2020 and 2021, wealthy donors sharply increased the sums they sent to their foundations.

Donors poured \$92 billion into foundations in 2021 and \$67 billion in 2020. That's much higher than in the previous eight years, when contributions ranged from \$40 billion to \$60 billion a year. That has a powerful impact on giving: Most foundations set their giving rates based on the value of their assets over the previous three years.

Here's a look at what FoundationMark's latest research shows:

Foundation Assets Are Buoyed as Donors Give Big to Their Philanthropies

■ Contributions



Source: [FoundationMark](#) •

Note: The data is based on projections.

Chart: Yesica Balderrama, data reporter

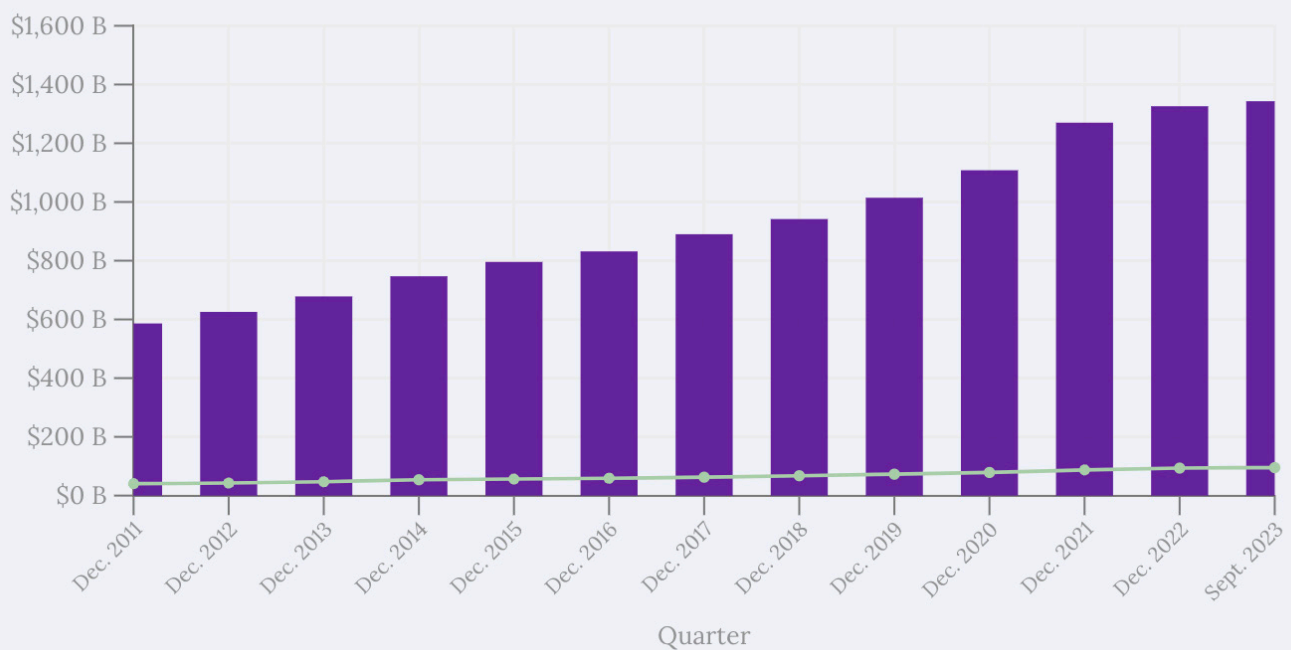
Major U.S. and international stock indices declined by an estimated 3 percent to 4 percent during the last quarter. Meanwhile bonds remained flat.

For foundation assets, that meant that a substantial chunk of the 4.6 percent gain in the second quarter was erased.

As donors poured more money into their foundations in 2020 and 2021 — increasing their donations by many billions over previous years — total foundation assets have swelled from \$1.25 trillion to \$1.32 trillion.

How Much Foundation Giving is Expected to Increase in 2023

■ Giving (in billions) ■ 3-Year Rolling Average Assets



Source: [FoundationMark](#) •

Note: The data is based on projections.

Chart: Yesica Balderrama, data reporter

Foundations typically base their giving on the average total of their assets over the previous three years, so the combination of new money pouring in and investment gains bodes well for grant making. Foundations are required by law to distribute at least 5 percent of their net assets, on average, every year.

FoundationMark develops estimates of current assets and giving levels by examining foundation tax filings and other information about how they invest to develop the projections shown here.

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