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Johnson Center Data Brief

November 2012

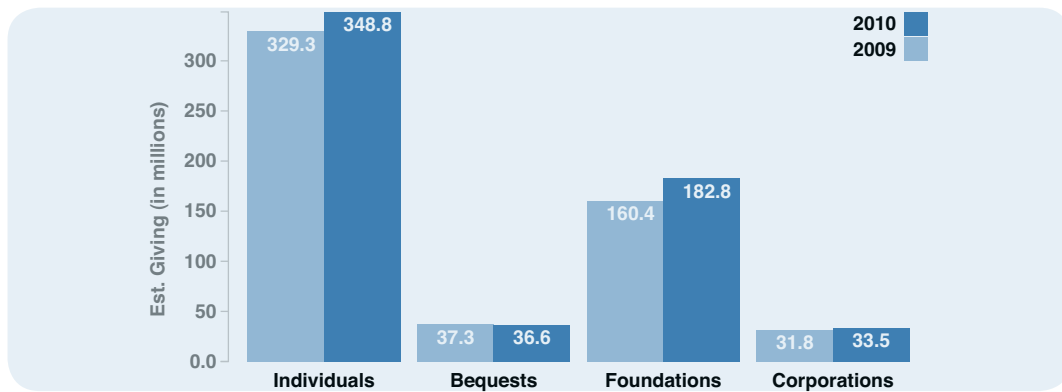
Estimate of Charitable Giving in Kent County, Mich., for 2010

Each year, the Johnson Center for Philanthropy estimates the total amount of charitable giving in Kent County, Michigan, using multiple sources of data from the most recent year for which adequate data is available. The estimate given in this data brief is for the year 2010, and separate estimates are given for the amount donated from four sources: individuals, bequests/estates, foundations, and corporations.

- In 2010, we estimate that donors of all types located in Kent County gave a total of \$601,658,407.
- Of this \$601.66 million, individuals gave the majority (58%) and foundations contributed a significant portion (30.4%).



The figure below shows the changes between 2009 and 2010 in estimated giving from each type of donor in Kent County.



- Total estimated giving in Kent County increased by \$42.9 million from 2009 to 2010. This 7.7 percent yearly increase was significantly larger than the increase reported for the rest of the U.S. (4.5%), according to *Giving USA*.
- From 2009 to 2010, giving by foundations in Kent County increased at the highest rate (14%), while corporate giving increased slightly (5.3%).

The table below compares the estimated giving from each type of donor in Kent County in 2010 with the estimated giving from those types in the United States as a whole, as reported in *Giving USA*.

Donor Type	Kent County Estimated Giving (in millions)	U.S. Estimated Giving (in billions)	Kent County Percent of Estimated Total	U.S. Percent of Estimated Total
Individuals	\$ 348.78	\$ 209.64	58.0%	73.1%
Bequests	36.55	21.76	6.1%	7.6%
Foundations	182.82	40.95	30.4%	14.3%
Corporations	33.50	14.56	5.6%	5.1%
TOTAL	\$ 601.66	\$ 286.91	100.0%	100.0%

- The percentage of total estimated charitable giving coming from foundations is much higher in Kent County (30.4%) than across the U.S. (14.3%), and the percentage coming from individuals is lower in Kent County than in the U.S. overall.
- One possible explanation for this difference is the fact that Kent County has a considerably higher level of foundation assets than other parts of the country, not that individuals in Kent County are less generous. Our estimate is that Kent County has at least double the amount of foundation assets per capita than the U.S. as a whole per capita.

Notes on Estimation Methods

- Estimating the amount of charitable giving in a given community is very difficult because of the diverse ways that people give and the lack of precise data on giving that is specified by region. However, calculating such estimates can help communities and their leaders understand the scale of their philanthropic contributions, track them over time, and use them for planning or other purposes. Our estimations here are meant to provide the raw numbers rather than to give our interpretation of what causes these numbers.
- The most respected estimate of total giving across the U.S. is provided each year in the publication *Giving USA*. We adapted that method as closely as possible to estimate charitable giving in Kent County. Note that, like other giving estimates, the one here is likely an underestimation of actual total charitable giving, because of individuals who do not report their full giving, the amounts given “in kind,” and other factors.
- These figures estimate giving by donors *located in* Kent County, but some of that giving is distributed *outside* of Kent County.
- Figures for individual giving include estimates of both itemized and non-itemized deductions. Giving for itemized deductions was estimated by multiplying total itemized deductions for Michigan filers, as reported in 2009 and 2010 income tax returns, by .06 (Kent County’s share of the Michigan population). The estimate for non-itemizers was calculated using the average giving (nationally) per household, based on the number of households in Kent County (2010 Census data). Bequest giving is based on the number of deaths of people over age 50 in Kent County multiplied by the size of the average bequest (from R. James data).
- Data for the foundation grantmaking total comes from the Foundation Center and includes only those foundations classified as independent, community, or operating. Several large public charities such as medical research and hospital foundations, arts organization trusts, and federated giving institutions are not included, following the *Giving USA* method of tracking those contributions when the initial philanthropic gift is made.
- Corporate giving includes corporate foundations listed in Foundation Center data, as well as an estimate of other giving by corporations using data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis on the GDP of the Grand Rapids/Wyoming MSA.

Estimates prepared by the Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy at Grand Valley State University, with the assistance of Melissa S. Brown and Associates.

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