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**CHARITABLE DONORS GIVE MORE WHEN ASKED PERSONALLY**  
**Research by Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University Confirms**  
**Impact of Fundraising Strategy on Gift Size**

CHICAGO—Donors to charitable organizations give more when they are asked in person and when someone they know makes the request, a new study commissioned by Chicago-based consulting firm Campbell & Company and conducted by the Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University finds.

The study, *Significant Gifts: Where Donors Direct Their Largest Gifts and Why*, which is based on a national sample of more than 8,300 donors, confirms what nonprofit organization fundraisers have often observed: people give to people, and especially to people they know. The study examined characteristics of and factors influencing a donor household's single largest gift.

Donors who were asked to give in person by someone they knew donated 19 percent more (\$987) to secular (non-religious) charities, when compared with telephone, mail or email requests from someone they knew (\$799). For religious organizations, when the donor was asked in person by someone he or she knew, the average donation was 42 percent higher (\$2,904) than when someone the donor knew made the request using a different tactic (\$1,698).

"Volunteers sometimes are reluctant to ask their own friends for donations, but this research confirms that donors are even more willing to give when someone they know asks them personally," said Edith H. Falk, chair and CEO of Campbell & Company. "By using the best practices of actively requesting support and involving volunteers the donors know, nonprofits can raise even more money."

*Significant Gifts* is believed to be the first nationally representative study of donors' largest gifts, helping nonprofits to better understand the factors that impact where donors choose to direct their most significant contributions.

"A typical household's largest gift constituted approximately 65 percent of the household's total giving in 2006," said Patrick M. Rooney, executive director of the Center on Philanthropy. "If nonprofits hope to receive donors' most significant gifts, they must build strong personal relationships, acknowledge gifts in accordance with the donor's wishes, and communicate in ways that build long-term donor loyalty."

The study also found a relationship between gift amounts and the level of recognition donors received. Although greater levels of recognition do not necessarily motivate donors to make larger gifts, donors who reported receiving substantial recognition for their contributions made larger gifts (\$1,132) than those receiving minimal (\$926) or moderate (\$851) recognition.

**More....**

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Additionally, donors who received token gifts as recognition had the second lowest average gift. “This finding is particularly interesting because it speaks to the way donors perceive the value of their giving,” said Campbell & Company President Peter Fissinger. “With token recognition, donors may see their contributions as transactions, but donors who receive more personal recognition better understand how their gift impacts an organization’s work. That moves them away from transactional giving to larger philanthropic contributions.”

Among other findings from the study:

- The average largest gift amount for donor households was \$1,098. Among all donors, 43 percent directed their largest contributions to religious organizations, and 57 percent to secular charities. Although a lower number of gifts went to religious organizations, a greater share of the total dollars from donors’ largest gifts (79 percent) went to religious organizations, which includes donations to congregations for relief work and other community programs.
- For higher-income households (income of \$150,000 or more), the average largest gift of \$2,486 was more than twice the overall average. Among these higher-income donors, a greater share of the number of the largest gifts and of the dollar amount of these gifts went to educational, health, and arts and cultural organizations than was the case in the general population.
- Members of the general population were more likely to select providing for the basic needs of the very poor as their main motivation for giving than any other reason. Among higher-income households (those with incomes of \$150,000 or more), the most common motivation was the belief that those with more should help those with less.

This study used data collected from a nationally representative sample. Respondents participated through a web-facilitated survey that was fielded by Knowledge Networks in March 2007. Approximately 10,000 individuals responded to the survey, and more than 8,300 reported their largest gift. To request a copy of the full results, please e-mail [study@campbellcompany.com](mailto:study@campbellcompany.com) or visit [www.campbellcompany.com](http://www.campbellcompany.com) or [www.philanthropy.iupui.edu](http://www.philanthropy.iupui.edu).

### **About Campbell & Company**

Campbell & Company is a national consulting firm offering advancement planning, fundraising, marketing communications and talent management for nonprofit organizations in education, health and medicine, arts and culture, environment, social service and professional societies.

Through more than 30 years and thousands of engagements, Campbell & Company has helped nonprofit organizations anticipate and manage the challenges of the philanthropic marketplace. Campbell & Company’s offices are located in Chicago, Boston, Cleveland, Los Angeles, Portland, the San Francisco Bay Area and Washington, DC. For more information, please call 877-957-0000 toll-free, e-mail [info@campbellcompany.com](mailto:info@campbellcompany.com) or visit [www.campbellcompany.com](http://www.campbellcompany.com)

### **About the Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University.**

The Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University is a leading academic center dedicated to increasing the understanding of philanthropy and improving its practice through research, teaching, training and public affairs programs in philanthropy, fundraising, and management of nonprofit organizations. A part of the Indiana University School of Liberal Arts at Indiana University – Purdue University at Indianapolis (IUPUI), the Center operates programs on the IUPUI and IU Bloomington campuses. To learn more please contact the Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University at 317-274-4200 or visit [www.philanthropy.iupui.edu](http://www.philanthropy.iupui.edu).

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