growing a community
Executive Summary of the 2000 Giving and Volunteering Study

THE DENVER FOUNDATION
75 YEARS OF COMMUNITY PHILANTHROPY 1925-2000
Established as a community foundation in 1925, The Denver Foundation works to improve the quality of life in Metro Denver through philanthropy, leadership and community. Thousands of individuals and businesses have donated to the Foundation for the betterment of the community.

Through the last 75 years, The Denver Foundation has grown from a small collection of trust money to an endowment totaling more than $190 million. The Foundation and its donors give grants to hundreds of nonprofit organizations totaling millions of dollars annually. In 1999, the Foundation invested $11 million in organizations devoted to the arts, education, civic issues, health, and human services throughout the six-county metropolitan Denver area: Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Denver, Douglas, and Jefferson counties.

To celebrate its 75th anniversary, the Foundation conducted a community research study with Market Perceptions Inc. on philanthropic behaviors in the six-county metro area. The goal for the 2000 Giving and Volunteering Study is "To provide valuable and useable information on giving and volunteering that will encourage and improve community philanthropy."

By surveying a statistically significant number of Metro Denver residents about their household giving patterns, the study collected information about what motivates giving, as well as potential barriers to donating. The study also helps better define the giving behaviors of prevalent metro area market segments.

This study is the first metro-wide assessment of charitable behavior in more than 10 years and will serve as a benchmark to help measure Denver’s philanthropic progress in the future.
Metro Denver residents give generously, but there is room for improvement

Metro Denver residents continue to have a strong commitment to philanthropy as revealed by the 2000 Giving and Volunteering Study:

- Three-fourths of area residents, 76%, agree everyone should support charitable organizations financially or by volunteering.
- Nine-out-of-ten, 90%, gave something to charity in the last year, ranging from financial donations to donated goods.
- Time spent volunteering increased to 15.3 hours a month in 2000, up from 11.2 hours a month in 1989, a 37% increase.

Denver’s generous spirit does not always mean we give more

While these encouraging attitudes make philanthropy appear strong in Denver, the community’s expressed support is not directly translating into heightened charitable behavior. Despite a 16% rise in median incomes in Metro Denver since 19891, residents are giving at nearly the same level as they were more than a decade ago:

- According to data collected in 1986, a period of economic recession, metro area residents gave average yearly contributions of $900 a year. In 2000, an average yearly donation still hovers around $1000, both in Metro Denver and nationally.
- Nearly half of all residents, 43%, donate $500 or less each year.

Incomes rising faster than contributions

There are indications that donations have not kept pace with income growth:

- In 2000, Metro Denver residents gave approximately the same portion of their annual incomes, 2.5%, as in 1989, 2.6%2.
- The median household income in the Metro area has risen 16% during this time period, but in proportion to income, the amount considered a “large” donation—$1,000—has stayed the same.

When considering Metro Denver’s strong economy, which is often rated among the top five nationally, the area has the opportunity to be a leader in philanthropy, rather than simply average.

Other economic factors indicate that although Denver is leading the nation in prosperity, wealth is not reaching those most in need. The gap continues to widen between the “haves” and the “have nots.” Continued poverty, a lack of affordable housing and challenges in public education suggest that not everyone is benefiting from the good economy and that philanthropic giving and volunteering are needed more than ever before.

Opportunity to Grow

- Donations by Metro area residents have increased since 1989. However, they have not seen the same increases as household incomes.
- While all Metro residents, especially the most influential, expect business to give, the level of corporate giving remains the least of any source of funds for nonprofit organizations3:
  - Individuals = 75.6%
  - Bequests = 8.2%
  - Foundations = 10.4%
  - Businesses = 5.8%

1 US Census
2 Metro Denver GIVES survey, 1989
3 National averages from The Independent Sector
4 From a study conducted in 1989 and this year’s 2000 Giving and Volunteering in Metro Denver study
5 US Census

6 2000 Giving USA, a study by the American Association of Fund Raising Council Trust for Philanthropy.
In the 2000 Giving and Volunteering Study:

- 95% of Metro Denver residents said that Colorado’s businesses should be active in supporting charitable causes.

A five-year trend of increasing public expectations for corporate giving has been observed in a national study conducted by Cone/Roper. The population segment coined as “Influential Americans,” (people most likely to be socially or politically active, hold prominent leadership positions and shape public opinion) reports a desire for more information about companies’ charitable activities.

- 94% of Influential Americans said they held a more positive image of companies that support a community cause.
- 68% of Influentials said they would be more likely to pay for a product associated with a good cause.
- Among the general population, 90% of workers whose companies support a cause felt proud of their company’s values versus 56% of those whose companies are not committed to a cause.

The importance of this trend is mirrored in a recent survey of Denver’s influential community members that shows how local Influentials are persuaded, either positively or negatively, by how a business acts regarding support of community causes.

- 95% of Denver opinion leaders said it is important for Denver’s businesses to be involved in giving back to the community.

Recognizing the positive social impact businesses committed to philanthropy have on Metro Denver, The Denver Foundation recently helped launch the Denver chapter of Social Venture Partners, a group of young entrepreneurs and executives who study social issues and donate money and professional expertise to nonprofit organizations. Likewise, businesses and business leaders have established charitable funds within the Foundation.

8 Identified by Roper Starch Worldwide, influentials represent approximately 10% of the adult population and are a critical segment to track for forecasting future behavior among communities and the entire country.
To help understand Metro Denver’s philanthropic landscape, the 2000 Giving and Volunteering Study recorded where residents are giving and volunteering. Percentages for contributions, or gifts, include cash donations, donated goods, purchasing tickets and other fundraising items.

The most popular cause for contributions in Metro Denver is helping people who are in need, such as the poor, hungry or homeless:

- 78% of those who made charitable donations last year included helping the needy in their contributions.

At the other end of the giving spectrum, arts and cultural organizations in the community received the least number of gifts:

- 29% of residents who gave last year supported arts and cultural organizations.

Causes Metro Denver Residents Support

To understand where Denverites are giving and volunteering, here is a look at the causes residents are supporting:

Between 57% and 78% of those who gave last year supported the following causes:

- Helping people in need such as the poor, hungry or homeless.
- Helping fight illness and disease.
- Supporting a church, synagogue, mosque or religious institution.
- Helping people who have disabilities.
- Supporting schools, colleges or other educational institutions.

Between 47% and 54% of those who gave last year supported the following causes:

- Encouraging child and youth development.
- Helping the elderly.
- Supporting community resources such as zoos, libraries or parks.
- Supporting religious-based charities.
- Supporting broad-based funds such as the United Way.

Between 29% and 40% of those who gave last year supported the following causes:

- Helping victims of a natural disaster.
- Protecting the environment and animal welfare.
- Helping victims of crime or abuse.
- Preventing drug and alcohol abuse.
- Supporting arts and cultural organizations.

WHICH GARDENS ARE GROWING?
In addition to caring deeply about a particular cause, Metro residents were most motivated or discouraged depending on their level of trust. Trust is often based on the education or information one has about an organization.

Motivations for Giving
Finding Your Green Thumb

People who donate and volunteer say they are most motivated when they give to an organization they trust, when they understand where their money goes and when they believe in the cause they are supporting:

- Of Metro Denver residents surveyed, 82% found it important when contributing to know that “It is an organization I can trust.”
- 78% wanted to know that “The organization is well-managed and effective.”
- 77% were motivated when “The organization provides me with a clear understanding of the services and programs my money will support.”

Barriers to Giving
Why the Garden Won’t Grow

If 76% of Metro Denver residents agree that every person should support charity, what stands in the way of more donations and larger gifts?

- The greatest number of residents, 87%, said they don’t give more because they think, “some charities have high administrative costs.”
- 52%, “Don’t know what they (the charitable organization) did with my last gift.”
- 35%, “Don’t know enough about charities.”

Key Attribute of Givers

Volunteerism, religious involvement and a family culture favoring philanthropy are all key attributes of those who were most likely to give:

- Among those who give to charity, 61% also reported volunteering. Conversely, those who do not give are less likely to volunteer; only 44% of non-givers reported volunteering.
- 40% of residents who rated religion as “very important” donated more than $1,000 to charity in the last year compared to only 22% who rated religion as less important in their lives.
- Among those who give, 44% reported that a family history of giving was important, as opposed to only 33% among those who don’t give.
- People who have lived in the Denver Metro area three years or less show a lower rate of giving to charity, 82%, compared to 92% of those who have lived here more than 50 years.
- Those residing in the area 11 to 25 years show the highest rate of volunteerism at 68%.
The 2000 Giving and Volunteering Study shows that trust in an organization is a key driver of giving. The nonprofit community must continue to build trust with the public to help foster the growth of our philanthropic community and increasing donations.

Metro Denver has seen tremendous prosperity in recent years. Our course of action is to ensure philanthropy keeps pace with the growing economy. Our community can be a national leader in charitable giving.

The Denver Foundation encourages new residents, especially those who have moved here in the last five years, to reach out to the nonprofit community. Nonprofits can show them how to get involved and develop a larger philanthropic circle.

Giving is good for business, and people view businesses more favorably if they give. In fact, the survey shows that 95% of Metro Denver residents say Colorado’s businesses should be active in supporting charitable causes.

The Denver Foundation encourages all Metro Denver residents to learn more about causes they support and organizations that speak to their passions.

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**Tips For Giving and Volunteering:**

1. Research. Learn about the causes or issues important to you.

2. Be a proactive giver. Plan an annual giving and volunteering strategy in advance and determine how your gifts will be used most effectively.

3. Budget for giving. Plan giving into your budget just as you would other financial obligations.

4. Be an informed giver. Don’t be afraid to ask questions when you are asked to give.

5. Keep the right records. Save canceled checks for small donations and get receipts for large donations to confirm tax-deductible contributions.

6. Ask to see the organization’s annual report.

— The Independent Sector.
SOWING OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH

The 2000 Giving and Volunteering Study identified five unique composite groups based on attitudes and behaviors surrounding charitable giving. Profiles of these groups provide knowledge and information that will help Denver's philanthropic community better identify unique differences within the broad market of Metro Denver residents and communicate with each more effectively based upon their preferences. These groups are composites and are not intended to reflect individual behavior among Metro Denver residents.

Daisies are Baby Boomers and the most likely to donate and to volunteer. They champion "big picture" causes such as the environment, education and culture - global causes that reach beyond their immediate surroundings and community. Daisies are the most educated of all groups. They make their giving decisions with their spouse. Religion is often an important part of their lives. They end up giving the most in dollars.

WHERE DO DAISIES DONATE AND VOLUNTEER?

• I'm the most likely of all groups to donate.
• I'm the most likely of all groups to volunteer.
• I have the most education.
• I donate almost the most - $750 or more each year.
• I support a wide range of causes, including schools and the environment.
• I champion more global, big-picture causes that reach beyond my immediate community.

POSSIBLE MESSAGES FOR DAISIES:

• Local efforts that are being made to address national and international causes.
• Helping those in need is important regardless of where they live.
• To simplify our giving, we sometimes give to broad-based funds that support a number of causes, like United Way or community foundations.

MOTIVATIONS OR BARRIERS REGARDING GIVING?

MOTIVATIONS:

• I support causes I believe in and don't restrict that support to my local community.
• I look for well-managed organizations.
• I respond to mass media appeals for help.

BARRIERS:

• I'm spread too thinly. I feel that I already support too many causes.

WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO MAKE DAISIES FLOURISH?

• Reach me successfully via mass media, mail or even the Internet.
• Make personal requests.
Like the Daisies, Sunflowers are Baby Boomers who are generally older than 45 years and younger than Roses (65 or older). Religion is a very important part of their lives and forms the focal point of their philanthropic behavior. Philanthropy and charity were an important part of how Sunflowers grew up, so they do a lot of volunteering and donate about $250 per year. They are married with children and tend to make giving decisions with their spouse. They have the largest size household of all groups. They often live in the suburbs.

**WHERE DO SUNFLOWERS DONATE AND VOLUNTEER?**
- I give about $250 each year.
- I’m very likely to volunteer.
- Charitable behavior was an important part of how I was raised.

**WHAT ARE THE MOTIVATIONS OR BARRIERS FOR SUNFLOWERS WITH REGARDS TO THEIR GIVING?**

**MOTIVATIONS:**
- I focus on supporting causes that are close to home so my contribution stays in my community.
- I prefer to help someone I know directly through a known, familiar organization, especially my church.

**BARRIERS:**
- I do not respond to requests from unfamiliar organizations.

**WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO MAKE SUNFLOWERS FLOURISH?**
- Reach me in my immediate community through church bulletins or direct mail from a familiar organization.

**POSSIBLE MESSAGES FOR SUNFLOWERS**
- Help the local community.
- Foster family tradition and values in future generations.
- A culture of doing “good” is an integral part of successful local and religious communities.

Roses tend to be retired, more than 65-years-old, and mostly female. They are often single. While they could have accumulated assets, their incomes are often fixed and lower than the national average. They make giving decisions alone. Because of their age, they’re not as involved in charities as when they were younger. When they do give, they give generously.

**WHERE DO ROSES DONATE AND VOLUNTEER?**
- I don’t do as much as I used to because of my age and income.
- Approximately one fourth of us no longer donate and about one third no longer volunteer.
- When I do give, I give generously—$1,000 or more a year.

**WHAT ARE THE MOTIVATIONS OR BARRIERS FOR ROSES WITH REGARDS TO THEIR GIVING?**

**MOTIVATIONS:**
- I’m like an older generation of the Daisies (Baby Boomers).
- I tend to support the same broad base of causes as the Daisies.
- I’m also likely to respond to mass media appeals.

**BARRIERS:**
- I’m less likely to focus on my immediate community.

**WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO MAKE ROSES FLOURISH?**
- Reach me via direct mail, news stories, personal requests, donations of goods and tickets for sale.

**POSSIBLE MESSAGES FOR ROSES**
- I’m interested in causes that help my generation—illness, disease, the elderly and crime abatement.
- I’m a potential candidate to volunteer—make it easy for me to give my time and recognize me for volunteering.
Tulips are also well educated, but rarely donate to charitable causes. They’re younger than Daisies, usually under 35. They’re often single or divorced and live in urban, rather than suburban, areas. Tulips make giving decisions alone. Charitable behavior was not an important part of their childhood and they continue that behavior as adults by donating a minimal $100 per year.

They give through personal connections.

WHERE DO TULIPS DONATE AND VOLUNTEER?
• I donate about $100 a year.
• Charitable behavior was not an important part of the way I was raised.

WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO MAKE TULIPS FLOURISH?
• I can be reached best through personal connections.

POSSIBLE MESSAGES FOR TULIPS:
• My individual effort can make a difference.
• Convey that giving is the right thing to do.
• Charities need everyone’s support.
• My friends expect me to give.

WHAT ARE THE MOTIVATIONS OR BARRIERS FOR TULIPS WITH REGARDS TO THEIR GIVING?

MOTIVATIONS
• I’m not highly motivated or concerned by the quality of the organization, the community’s needs or the cause itself.
• I will, however, donate if someone I know well asks me.

BARRIERS
• I’m generally not a strong believer in charitable support.
• I prefer to spend my money in other ways.

Marigolds are the smallest group, and could be of any age, gender or marital status. Marigolds are the least educated and have a lower than average household income. When they do make giving decisions, they decide alone. They rarely donate and almost never volunteer because they don’t believe that charities deserve their support.

Rarely donate and almost never volunteer

WHERE DO MARIGOLDS DONATE AND VOLUNTEER?
• I rarely donate and virtually never volunteer.
• I do not believe charities deserve my support.
• I donate only about $50 per year, and that’s mainly through direct requests to purchase products, such as candy bars and cookies.

WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO MAKE MARIGOLDS FLOURISH?
• Marigolds are a difficult audience to reach and motivate.

POSSIBLE MESSAGES FOR MARIGOLDS
• Encourage small donations.
• Encourage me to volunteer; I’d rather give time than money.

WHAT ARE THE MOTIVATIONS OR BARRIERS FOR MARIGOLDS WITH REGARDS TO THEIR GIVING?

MOTIVATIONS
• I might donate when asked by a close relative or friend.

BARRIERS
• I rarely give or volunteer.
THE 2000 GIVING AND VOLUNTEERING STUDY

This Executive Summary is an overview of findings from The Denver Foundation's 2000 Giving and Volunteering Study. The goal for the 2000 Giving and Volunteering Study is "To provide valuable and useable information on giving and volunteering that will encourage and improve community philanthropy." For more information about the survey or for copies please visit The Denver Foundation's Web site at:

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