

Connections

Mixed news

Skepticism of charity growing in U.S.

Giving and voluntarism are increasing, but so is mistrust of the nonprofit sector's use of charitable dollars, a new study says.

By SALLY HARRIS AND TODD COHEN

Americans who support charity are contributing more of their money and spending more time volunteering, but fewer households are contributing dollars.

Americans also are growing more

skeptical about whether nonprofits are honest and ethical in their use of the charitable dollars they receive.

Those are among the results of a survey on giving and voluntarism in the U.S. released in October by Independent Sector in Washington, a national coalition of nonprofits.

Three in 10 people responding to the survey disagreed with the statement that "most charities are honest and ethical in their use of donated funds," compared with one in four respondents in 1993.

The biennial survey, conducted by the Gallup Organization, says the average household contribution to

charity grew to \$1,107 in 1995 from \$880 in 1993 - an increase of 16 percent. After inflation, the increase was 10 percent, representing the first real increase since 1989.

Over the same two-year period, however, the percentage of households contributing to charity fell to 68.5 percent from 73.4 percent, while the percentage of household income given to charity rose slightly to 2.2 percent from 2.1 percent.

Volunteering also grew in 1995, with volunteers donating 20.3 billion hours - up from 19.5 billion in 1993. Ninety-three million adults, or nearly 49 percent of the population, volun-

teered in 1995, up from 89.2 million, or nearly 48 percent, in 1993. The average volunteer spent 4.2 hours a week working for a charity - the same as in 1993.

"The findings leave us cautiously optimistic about the future of giving and volunteering in our country," says Sara Melendez, president of Independent Sector.

The survey also found that volunteers give more to charity than people who don't volunteer, and contributing households with a volunteer give a much higher percentage of their household income than do contributing households that don't have a vol-

unteer.

Levels of giving and volunteering also are closely related to membership in a religious or other nonprofit organization.

The survey also found that "as the percentage of volunteers increases, giving will rise, or in times of economic recession or uncertainty, giving will not decline as much."

The survey also reported differences in giving patterns according to gender race, age, income and education. It also found a number of key factors that prompt people to con-

Look for SKEPTICISM, page 9

Playing it by ear

Health care gets dose of the arts

By STEPHANIE GREER

Durham

Be-bop and gospel music aren't traditional treatments for stroke patients or cancer victims. Indeed, many health-care professionals dismiss the healing value of music.

But members of the Society for the Arts in Healthcare are singing a different tune.

The national organization held its annual conference in Durham September 26-28. Attendees came from nearby Duke Medical Center and from as far away as California and Oregon to discuss issues developing around the use of arts as part of the healing process.

The use of music, for example, has been shown to vastly improve patients' demeanors and to raise their heart rates, divert their minds from uncomfortable procedures, quiet newborns and even lend patients a rhythmic helping hand in learning to walk again.

Research shows that sick people



Deforia Lane

HEALTH

who listen to music experience a significant increase in immune cells in their saliva, said Deforia Lane, the conference keynote speaker and resident director of music therapy at the Hospitals of Cleveland Ireland Cancer Center and Rainbow Babies and Children's Hospital.

People attending the conference included artists, nurses, doctors, therapists and other health-care professionals - all of whom are working to use the arts to further health-care goals.

Yet they concede they face an uphill fight because most health-care professionals and administrators see the arts as a "fringe" in health care that is not important enough to be permanently added to the budget.

The three music therapists at Lane's hospital, for example, are not supported by permanent hospital funding; rather, the positions are funded by grants.

The creation of Lane's job came about by accident. As a breast cancer survivor and former music student, Lane understood the power of music. She began to visit hospital patients and play music for them in her free time following her battle with cancer. She was so popular that administrators asked her to stay.

But the hospital's permanent budget has no room for the three other music therapists.

Although the number of professionals who find arts to be essential to healing is small, the rate of arts acceptance in the health-care profession is growing, Lane said. There are now 7,000 music therapists in the U.S., she said.



Debby Stone (left) and Anne Griffin Wilson perform a Christmas program at Bowman Gray Medical Center.

Using the arts in hospitals involves a lot more than simply music therapy. Bowman Gray and Baptist Hospitals in Winston-Salem sent several representatives to the Durham conference. One of those representatives was Pam Wilson, Baptist Hospital's assistant director of recreation therapy.

Baptist began utilizing recreational therapy as far back as 1975 and, about five years ago, the hospital developed a visual/performing arts committee, Wilson says. Hospital administrators schedule live performances, hire designers to oversee visual arts in and on the building itself, and encourage students and employees to play instruments, sing or use their other artistic talents to entertain patients.

Wilson says the arts are used largely to soothe and ease stress on patients and employees. And therapists at Baptist and Bowman Gray also are using music for its physiological effects - on hand movements, blood pressure and memory loss, Wilson says.

The artistic encouragement comes straight from the top. The hospital vice president pays for artistic efforts out of his department budget.

"We just think it's life-enriching," Wilson says. "It brings in a touch of something you may not think you're going to see in an environment that's so stressful...As a therapist, I have tremendously seen the benefits of patients who have been exposed to the arts."

She says she was surprised at the conference at how many health-care workers and artists complained about the difficulty in getting hospitals to fund the use of the arts.

"In some ways, it was nice to hear that maybe we're doing more than maybe we realized we were doing," she says. "But then again, it's very hard because you've got the places with staff dedicated just to cultural arts. And even though they've got the professional staff, we may have a better structure here for it."

Conference participants brought up other issues during a roundtable discussion that centered on the need for teamwork between artists and health-care professionals. There was also a debate over the issue of funding: One audience member suggested that hospitals ask artists to volunteer their time and talent for patients. But another audience member said volunteering diluted the value of artists' work by suggesting it doesn't merit payment.

Journal Online wins award

Washington, D.C.

Philanthropy Journal Online has been named "Best Nonprofit Electronic Publication" in a national competition sponsored by Nonprofits Online '96, a national conference on nonprofits and the Internet.

The award, which was judged by a committee of nonprofit professionals and consultants who work with Internet technology, was presented October 15 at a one-day conference in Washington.

Sean Bailey, director of new media for the *Philanthropy Journal*, accepted the award for the Journal's staff.

Philanthropy Journal Online was launched September 1. The site offers Web surfers a variety of services and activities, including the ability to search for the latest job openings; sign up for *Philanthropy Journal Alert*, a free email newsletter about national nonprofit news and new stories and information on *Philanthropy Journal Online*; register the Web page for a nonprofit or foundation with the Meta Index of Nonprofit Organizations or *Philanthropy Links*; visit the leading nonprofit Web links selected by the *Philanthropy Journal* staff; and read news stories about the nonprofit sector.

Two main features of *Philanthropy Journal Online* - *Philanthropy Links* and the *Meta-Index of Nonprofit Organizations* - have previously received national awards for best nonprofit resource links on the Internet.

Other winners of Nonprofits Online '96 Awards for Nonprofit Website Excellence include:

- Best Innovative Presentation of Content
- Refuse & Resist - <http://www.calyx.com/~refuse/>
- Best Interactive Advocacy Campaign
- NetDay '96 - <http://www.net-day96.com>
- Best CyberFundraising Site
- American Red Cross - <http://www.redcross.org>
- Best Use of Interactive Membership Development - Tie
- American Civil Liberties Union - <http://www.aclu.org/>
- Women Leaders Online - <http://wlo.org>

United Way of America names new president

A veteran of the United Way system has been named president and chief executive officer of United Way of America.

Betty Stanley Beene, president of the United Way of Tri-State, succeeds Elaine Chao as the new head of the professional staff of the United Way of America, based in Alexandria, Va.

Beene was selected after a national search was begun in May.

Paula Bethea Harper, chairman of the Board of Governors of the United Way of America, says Beene's strong history with the United Way move-

ment played an important factor in her selection for the job.

"She has demonstrated her commitment to resource development and to community impact," Bethea says. "Betty will be a positive agent for change. She will bring great momentum to our new strategic direction."

As head of the United Way of Tri-State, Beene oversaw a fundraising operation that worked with 30 local United Way affiliates in the Connecticut, New York and New Jersey area, and raised \$95.6 million in 1995. She also has served as presi-

dent of the United Way of Houston.

Beene worked for 12 years with local and regional United Way organizations and 15 years with the Girl Scouts. She is a doctoral candidate in human resource development at George Washington University and serves on the boards of directors of the Center for Strategic and International Studies and the Wesley Theological Seminary.

She will receive a salary of \$275,000.

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