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New study highlights differences between generations and their attitudes toward giving to charity

INDIANAPOLIS (Dec. 15, 2010) -- A new study published by Giving USA Foundation and researched and written by the Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University highlights the differences – and challenges – in reaching “Millennial” donors – adults born since 1981.

Because the majority of Millennials and even Gen Xers (born 1964 to 1980) have lower income than their parents and grandparents, they tend to give smaller amounts of money to charitable causes, whether secular or not, the study found. One conclusion? Engage the younger generation now as volunteers.

“Generation X is now entering its peak earning years and the Millennials are not far behind. Engaging people under 45 now as donors and volunteers using methods that appeal to their giving nature truly makes sense,” said Edith Falk, chair of Giving USA Foundation.

Una Osili, Ph.D., director of research at the Center on Philanthropy added, “People may be surprised by one finding from this study. As with earlier generations, Millennials who give contribute the largest share of their dollars to religion. There has been a lot of information reported on the secularization of America, so this could be a countering trend.”

The Center on Philanthropy Panel Study forms the dataset used for analysis. In this nationally representative sample of households:

- 33 percent of households headed by a Millennial gave, and the average total contributions were \$557.
- 59 percent of households headed by a member of Gen X gave, and the average total contributions were \$1,488.
- 69 percent of households headed by a Boomer gave, and the average total contributions were \$2,613.
- 77 percent of households headed by someone born before 1946 gave, and the average total contributions were slightly lower than Boomers' average, at \$2,540.

In addition to summarizing findings about charitable giving and generations, the report includes conclusions and recommendations from other studies about generational differences in giving and from members of Giving Institute: Leading Consultants to Nonprofits.

The report, entitled "Charitable Giving and the Millennial Generation," is available for purchase (\$15) and immediate download in the *Spotlight* e-newsletter section of the on-line store at www.givingusareports.org.

About Giving USA Foundation™

The Foundation, established by Giving Institute: Leading Consultants to Non-Profits, endeavors to advance philanthropy through research and education. For more information, visit www.givingusa.org.

About the Center on Philanthropy

The Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University is a leading academic center dedicated to increasing the understanding of philanthropy and improving its practice worldwide through research, teaching, training and public affairs programs in philanthropy, fundraising, and management of nonprofit organizations. For more information, visit www.philanthropy.iupui.edu.

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