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With Cash Giving Flat, Big Companies Offer Other Aid

By Ben Gose and Marisa López-Rivera

AMERICA'S BIGGEST COMPANIES expect a third-straight year of modest increases in cash gifts in 2013, according to a *Chronicle* survey, and are increasingly seeking other ways to help charities, such as through employee volunteerism and donations of products.

Donations grew by 2.7 percent in 2012, to \$5.3-billion, for 106 companies that provided two years of data. More than three-quarters of corporate leaders said their giving budgets will be about the same in 2013. About 16 percent said they will give more, and 6 percent will donate less.

Businesses awarded a median of 0.8 percent of their 2011 pretax profits to charity in 2012. That's lower than in any of the previous six years, when the percentage of profits going to charities varied from 1 percent to 1.4 percent.

Mark Shamley, head of the Association of Corporate Contributions Professionals, in Mt. Pleasant, S.C., says he's not surprised about the modest increases, despite a rebounding economy and the strong stock market. Companies remain wary of the recovery, he says, and are hesitant to make big investments in their business operations, much less boost philanthropic budgets.

Among other findings:

■ Wells Fargo gave away the most cash in 2012, \$315.8-million, increasing its giving to support a new program that provides down-payment assistance to home buyers in neighborhoods with high foreclosure rates. (See article on Page 12.) Walmart, which had

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COURTESY OF CHARITY: WATER

Google set out to remedy a common problem in parts of the world where wells have been drilled but no longer work. It gave \$5-million to Charity: Water to install sensors that track whether water is flowing.

INSIDE

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- Data on giving by 106 of America's biggest companies. Page 8

Small Nonprofits and Social Entrepreneurs Share Work Space and Ideas

By Nicole Wallace

NEW YORK

WHEN SHIMMY MEHTA, founder of Angelwish, a charity that helps donors buy presents for chronically ill children, told a new acquaintance that he was thinking about improving the organization's Web site, she responded by saying she could ask her boyfriend, an engineer at Google, to look at the site and offer advice.

"For small nonprofits, those are the moments you try to hunt down," says Mr. Mehta. "But they don't always fall in your lap."

Angelwish is a founding member of the Centre for Social Innovation, which is working hard to make sure that Mr. Mehta's serendipitous connection is one of many sparked here in the shared work space it opened in May. After nine years of running cutting-edge work spaces in Toronto, the scrappy Canadian charity has expanded to the Big Apple.

The Centre for Social Innovation's mission is to create work spaces for nonprofits and social entrepre-

neurs that foster collaboration, new ideas, and, ultimately, social change. And the group's leaders are excited to test their approach in New York.

"If you want to change the world, you want to find the biggest platform you can," says Tonya Surman, chief executive of the Centre for Social Innovation.

Cool Office Design

The New York outpost boasts soaring ceilings, exposed ductwork, bright colors, and eclectic furnishings. Located in a West Chelsea building that also houses architects, designers, and Tommy Hilfiger, the work space embraces an office-cool design aesthetic more often associated with Google or Facebook than with the nonprofit world.

Unexpected features abound. An old wooden canoe sometimes doubles as a beer and wine cooler for events. There's a gorgeous chandelier from an old New York hotel, and some members work at long tables made from old signs for an auto garage. But the play-

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NICOLE WALLACE, FOR THE CHRONICLE

New York's Centre for Social Innovation hopes to speed up change through collaboration.



MATT ROURKE/AP IMAGES

Red, White, and Green

■ The Joyce Foundation hired digital gurus from the 2012 presidential campaign to help its grantees bolster donations. Among them: CeaseFire PA (left), an antigun group that raised so much it can now afford its first development chief.

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Reining in Overhead

■ A new Oregon law denies tax deductions for gifts to charities that spend less than 30 percent on programs—but it will probably face a court challenge.

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NAILAH FEANNY, FOR THE CHRONICLE

Eli Malinsky (right), executive director of the Centre for Social Innovation, says bringing people with different perspectives together is key to solving tough social problems. Above, nonprofit workers in the building devise a project.



NAILAH FEANNY, FOR THE CHRONICLE



YVONNE BAMBRICK

A chalkboard in a communal area draws the workspace's tenants and visitors together to share ideas.

Group Seeks to Bring Together Socially Minded People to Spark New Ideas

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fulness of the design serves a serious purpose: getting people to connect.

"When you walk into our space, we're not the same as a regular office," says Eli Malinsky, executive director of the Centre's New York branch. "We throw people off kilter, and that sends a cue that you should behave differently here."

Groups can rent private offices or private desks reserved for their use, or they can buy packages that allow a certain number of hours each month working at shared desks.

The options put the space within reach for organizations with a wide range of budgets. While private offices rent from \$1,000 to \$2,800 a month, shared-desk packages start at \$125 a month. So far, more than 60 organizations have signed up, and the group expects the number to rise to more than 300 in the next two years.

Bringing together nonprofits, socially minded businesses, and even some government agencies working on an array of causes, expands everyone's horizons, says Mr. Malinsky.

"The challenges we face will not be addressed by a single point of view, a single sector, or a single set of approaches," he says. "The better job we can do collaborating and connecting to

complementary organizations and people, the better chance we have of developing real, systemic solutions."

The organization focuses on small nonprofits, usually with four or fewer employees, groups that Mr. Malinsky says are more open to working together and creating a shared culture.

"If you have a 15-staff organization, you already have a kind of ossified culture," he says. "You have patterns, and to collaborate with you requires a little bit more bureaucratic conversation."

Making Introductions

Shared work spaces aren't a new idea in the nonprofit world, says Sarah Eisinger, director of the Nonprofit Centers Network.

Their numbers have been growing as charities face greater pressure to cut costs and collaborate. She estimates there are roughly 350 nonprofit centers in the United States and Canada.

What sets the Centre for Social Innovation apart is the energy the group focuses on encouraging members to interact, says Ms. Eisinger.

"One of the myths of nonprofit centers is that, 'Well, we're going to put in conference rooms, we're going to have a common pantry, and there's going to be a water cooler, and boom, the

magic is going to happen,' " says Ms. Eisinger. "The magic doesn't just happen because you have some shared space."

In both Toronto and New York, the Centre for Social Innovation has full-time staff members, called "community animators," whose job is to help members connect with one another and with outside resources. The organization hired Allie Mahler, co-founder of an educa-

"We throw people off kilter, and that sends a cue that you should behave differently here."

tion nonprofit, to fill the role in New York.

Making the right introductions is a big part of the position, says Mr. Malinsky: "They'll say something like, 'Ryan, I know you're really working on this housing issue in Uganda. Have you met Sarit, who just returned from southern India and had been developing a very interesting model for sustainable housing in rural areas?'"

Communal Lunches

Design also helps spur collaboration. For example, in for-profit co-working spaces designed to

generate as much rent as possible, kitchens tend to be "as small and tucked away as possible" because they aren't money makers, says Mr. Malinsky. By contrast, he says, "we do big, open kitchens because kitchens are gathering and meeting points for people."

The large, inviting kitchen crafted from an old apothecary near Niagara Falls buzzed with activity last month as members prepared for the Salad Club, an idea that got its start seven years ago in Toronto. Participants in the weekly lunchtime gatherings each bring a salad topping to share, while the Centre for Social Innovation provides the greens and salad dressing.

Members gathered around a kitchen island, chatting as they chopped peppers, tomatoes, watermelon, and more. With the space less than two months old and organizations continuing to move in, there were a lot of introductions.

The kitchen islands were a conscious choice to spur interaction, says Ms. Surman: "Instead of people facing a wall to chop the vegetables, we have them facing each other."

The conversations continued as participants dug into heaping salad bowls at a long table made from a discarded freight-elevator door. Even on days when the

Salad Club doesn't meet, the table becomes a place for impromptu gatherings. Says Mr. Malinsky: "You can't eat lunch by yourself when you're sitting at a large, harvest table."

Special Events

The Salad Club is just one of the events that take place at the Centre for Social Innovation. The organization hosts workshops on topics such as storytelling and plans gatherings where members share advice. Three organizations that completed successful campaigns to raise money using sites like Kickstarter will be sharing hints at a Lunch and Learn session scheduled for later this month.

Renting out space in the common areas for special events has proven valuable both as a source of revenue and as a way to spread the word about the work space.

While the Salad Club is aimed at members, another event the organization is importing from Toronto, called Six Degrees of Social Innovation, is designed to expand the fledgling community's reach.

Members each receive six tickets for the event, one for themselves and five to pass on to someone in their networks who is also passionate about so-

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Steps to Building a Collaborative Nonprofit Community



NAJLAH FEANNY, FOR THE CHRONICLE

The Centre for Social Innovation, in New York, houses nonprofit organizations and social entrepreneurs and seeks to help them cross-pollinate their ideas for social change. Here are the three main ways it fosters collaboration:



NAJLAH FEANNY, FOR THE CHRONICLE

1 Open design

A big kitchen and other communal areas encourage tenants to interact and share ideas. Even small design details, like having a kitchen island, can be important for encouraging interaction, says Tonya Surman, the chief executive: “Instead of people facing a wall to chop the vegetables, we have them facing each other.”



NAJLAH FEANNY, FOR THE CHRONICLE



NAJLAH FEANNY, FOR THE CHRONICLE

2

A “community animator”

The organization’s staff includes employees who make introductions and help organize group activities. Allie Mahler (right), co-founder of an education nonprofit, fills that role in New York.

“It’s not enough just to put people in a physical space and expect that collaboration to happen,” says Eli Malinsky, executive director of the New York branch. “It requires intentional, dedicated attention on a day-to-day basis.”



YVONNE BAMBRICK



YVONNE BAMBRICK

3

Frequent events

From networking parties that draw outsiders interested in social change (above) to weekly “Salad Club” lunches for tenants (right), the organization creates opportunities for chance meetings and conversation.

Bringing people with different perspectives together is key to the group’s mission of spurring new ideas and social change.



NAJLAH FEANNY, FOR THE CHRONICLE

TECHNOLOGY



A new mobile application guides immigrants with green cards through the naturalization process. It was created as part of a campaign to increase the number of people who apply for citizenship.

App Helps People Apply for Citizenship

A NONPROFIT COALITION HAS CREATED A MOBILE APP TO help immigrants with green cards navigate the daunting naturalization process.

CitizenshipWorks helps people determine if they are eligible to become an American citizen and explains the application process and necessary documents. It also helps them find free or low-cost legal assistance and aids the process of studying for the English and civics test. The information is available in both English and Spanish, with more languages to be offered soon.

The app was created by Pro Bono Net, a nonprofit that uses technology to increase access to legal assistance, and the Immigration Advocates Network. It was paid for with money from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, the Silicon Valley Community Foundation, the Grove Foundation, and the New Americans Campaign.

A major benefit of the app is that it offers convenient access to easy-to-understand information, says Damian Thorman, national program director at the Knight Foundation: "This tool allows you to go online at 2 p.m. or 3 a.m., depending on your schedule."

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Go to citizenshipworks.org.

Nonprofit Data Moves Into the Spotlight

A CONFERENCE at the University of Chicago on August 23 will focus on one of the hottest topics in the charity world: the use of data by nonprofits.

Sessions will focus on big-picture topics, like using data to promote transparency, and technical issues, such as how to use data to improve fundraising and build maps in Google Fusion Tables. Speakers include Rayid Ghani, chief scientist for data analytics in President Obama's 2012 campaign, and Eric Stowe, founder of Splash, a fast-growing international-development charity.

The meeting is being organized by Data Analysts for Social Good, which has also hosted Webinars, lectures, and networking events in Chicago.

"Hackathons" and other events that pair data scientists and charities for short-term projects are helpful, but nonprofits must be able to analyze data on their own to make their work truly data-driven, says Andrew Means, the group's founder and an analyst at the YMCA of Metro Chicago.

The fee for the one-day conference is \$80, and a limited number of spots are still available.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Go to dогоooddata2013.eventbrite.com.

Site Showcases International Ad Campaigns

NONPROFITS seeking inspiration for their next public-service campaign can now see what their counterparts around the world are doing, thanks to a new Web site.

Creative for Good features case studies of more than 60 campaigns, such as an effort in India to get men and boys to combat violence against women by ringing the doorbell when they hear a violent argument in a nearby home.

The new site was created by the Ad Council, the World Economic Forum, and Ketchum.

TO GET THERE: Go to creative-for-good.org.

—NICOLE WALLACE

Playful Events Help an Organization Attract a Wider Array of Socially Conscious Visitors

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cial change. That person gets to keep one ticket and pass on four tickets to a socially minded colleague, and so on.

In addition to drawing people who work at nonprofits, the Six Degrees event in June attracted architects, bankers, business people, and designers, well beyond the "usual suspects," says Melissa Lloyd, a management consultant who works with charities and is a Centre member.

"It was absolutely bustling," she says.

During the event, participants wrote the names of their organizations on a big chalkboard, sketched pictures, and drew arrows between groups

that had already made connections or were hoping to.

New Yorkers might not be used to "playing name games and going around the table and sharing," but given the opportunity they dive in and make real connections, says Ms. Lloyd.

"These are very serious folks," she says. "They're working on serious issues, but things like that give them an excuse to play around a little bit."

Mutual Help

While the Centre for Social Innovation's New York branch is still new, the collaborative atmosphere is already yielding practical benefits for tenants.

As executive director of the SOUL Foundation, which sup-

ports education in Uganda, Jenna Rogers is the charity's only employee in the United States. Before renting a private desk at the Centre for Social Innovation, she worked out of her cousin's product-development business in Brooklyn and various coffee shops.

The SOUL Foundation recently won its first foundation grant. As Ms. Rogers prepared her grant proposal, a staff member at KickStart International, another group in the co-working space that receives money from that grant maker, read it and offered advice.

Pitching in to help each other is the norm at the Centre for Social Innovation, says Ms. Rogers.

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