

## CHARITABLE GIVING FLOWS DURING THE PANDEMIC

With Covid-19 causing disruptions to every aspect of modern life, Christian non-profits of all types are acutely aware of potential risks that could negatively impact their ministries, not the least of which is their base of financial supporters. How has Covid-19 affected giving to non-profits?

Anticipating a drop in donations, many non-profits have laid off staff or cut salaries. They have put off making new hires when possible, fearing an inability to cover expenses and feeling uncertain about the future.

As time passes and the data comes in, much of the distress and uncertainty has turned to cautious optimism. With the exception of tuition-driven institutions, donation income has held or even increased amongst a large cross section of non-profits. A mission organization with whom we are quite familiar, said their first half of 2020 had yielded the highest giving they have ever experienced. Another is right on target with their income projections for the year, bearing in mind their average annual growth has been 10% per year for the past decade. Additionally, one of our large churches in the local community has not experienced a drop in giving, even without the benefit of the normal congregational gatherings.

Without being dismissive of the providential blessings of God, are there factors that have contributed to the unexpectedly favorable financial outcomes for non-profits during a pandemic? One of our



colleagues, an expert in the fund raising field, said the resilient stock market and sustained market growth has bolstered major donors' sense of financial security. Although smaller donors will likely struggle with allocating their contributions, particularly blue collar workers whose jobs have been threatened or perhaps eliminated. Another positive factor has been the way organizations have communicated the needs of their ministries and articulated their impact. This has resulted in donors continuing to give generously. One of the upshots from this sustained financial support is that non-profits are starting to hire again, although still at a slower rate than prior to Covid-19.

As encouraging as these reports may be, there is still a long and arduous road ahead for organizations. David Gyertson, a member of the Dingman team states, "The current disruptions are having a visible impact on leadership effectiveness.

Recently, more CEOs are manifesting stress behaviors producing sobering consequences." Many non-profit boards will be grappling with the deficiencies of executive leadership abilities that have been exposed, due to the extraordinary circumstances manifested in 2020. This will require courageous decisions and pro-active responses on the part of boards and will create opportunities for supporting existing leadership or preparing for new leadership better equipped to embrace the new challenges of our collective future. If we can be of assistance to you in either of these two needs, please know we are available for no obligation discussions. [Read more about Board Governance and Leadership Transitions](#)

*Bruce Dingman is President of The Dingman Company, an Executive Search Firm that primarily serves Christian and non-profit organizations. Working most often at the CEO/President/Executive Director level, or positions reporting to that level, Dingman specializes in searches for universities and colleges, seminaries, health care, missionary organizations, churches (typically for Senior or Executive Pastor), primary/secondary schools, and associations. [Read more about The Dingman Company.](#)*

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