



The Center on Philanthropy
at Indiana University
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AMERICA GIVES

Survey of Americans' Generosity
After September 11

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America Gives Survey of Americans' Generosity After September 11

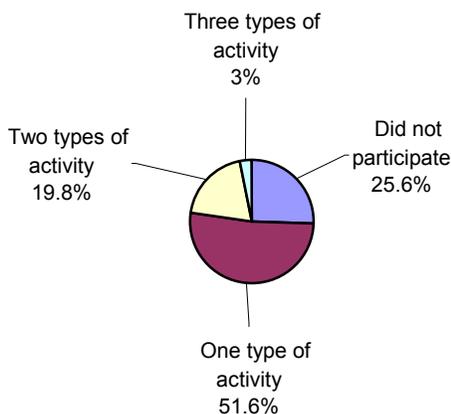
The Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University surveyed 1,304 adults about their household's philanthropic behavior after the events of September 11, 2001. The questions were part of a larger study on giving that the Center was conducting at the time of the September 11 attacks. The Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP) and the AFP Foundation for Philanthropy funded the post-attack portion of the study and joined the Center in releasing the results.

The respondents were randomly selected from across the country. Walker Information, an Indianapolis-based research firm, conducted the telephone survey from October 22 to November 28, 2001. The margin of error for the survey is ± 3.3 percent.

The survey found that Americans were very generous in their response to the September 11 events.

- Of the people surveyed, 74.4 percent responded to the tragedy with some form of charitable behavior—giving money; giving food, clothing, blood; and/or giving volunteer hours to help the victims.
- Among the 74.4 percent who responded to the tragedy by giving or volunteering, participation rates were as follows: 51.6 percent responded with exactly one of these types of charitable activity, 19.8 percent participated in two of them, and 3.0 percent participated in all three forms of philanthropy, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Individuals' Responses to the Tragedy



Financial donations to the relief efforts

- Of the adults surveyed, 65.6 percent said they or their household made financial contributions to charities for the victims of the tragedy.

- There was a wide outpouring of support in small donations. Among *contributing households*, half of the survey respondents gave \$50 or less, and 74 percent gave \$100 or less.
- Among *contributing households*, the average donation was \$133.72, and the median was \$50 (half of the donations were more and half were less).
- Looking at *all households* in the survey (including those that did not make donations), the average contribution was \$85.41 and the median was \$25 (half gave more and half gave less).

The \$133.72 average gift found by the survey was higher than might be expected. The median gift of \$50 may be more representative of giving by most Americans in response to September 11. We hypothesize that several factors may have played a role in raising the amount of the average gift, including:

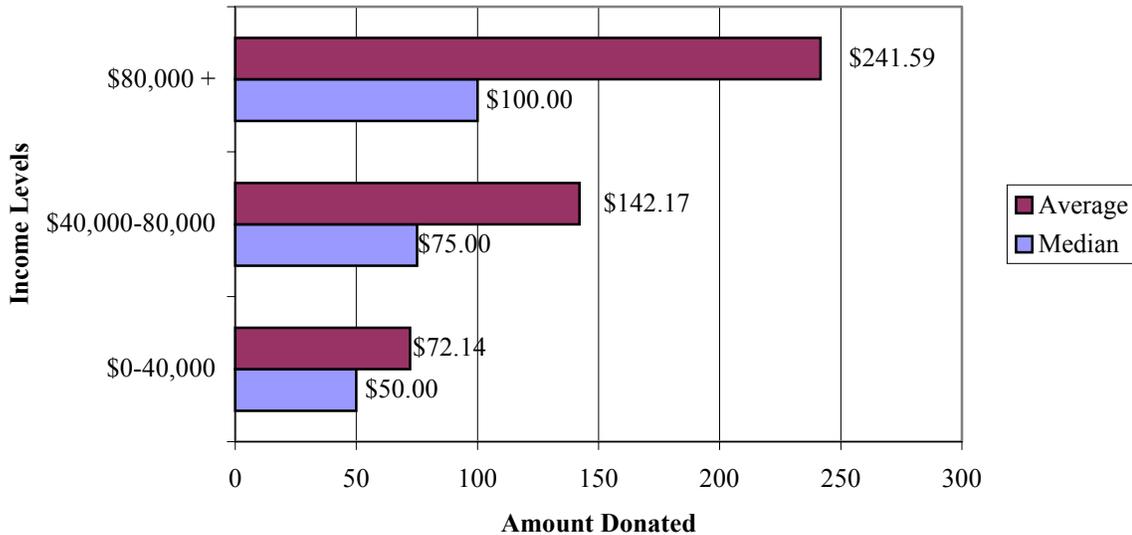
- The simple random sample that was used (originally designed for the different purposes of the larger survey) over-represented certain groups of donors who tend to report higher-than-average donations on other surveys of giving. Respondents reported several large gifts, ranging from \$800 to \$5,000, that raised the average.
- Some respondents may have “over-reported” the amounts that they gave (reporting amounts higher than they actually gave), perhaps because they wanted to feel more a part of the intense emotional and patriotic outpouring of support in response to the horrific events of September 11. Also, some of the gifts reported may be gifts respondents *intended* to make, or may still make, but for which they have not yet actually sent a contribution.
- Although the survey specifically asked about giving to the victims of September 11, some of the gifts reported may have been given to local organizations for other relief or non-relief causes *in the spirit of* responding to September 11. The outpouring of giving and media coverage may have raised awareness of the need for philanthropic giving more generally.

Income was the single most important factor in determining how much a household donated (see Figure 2). The average donation made by households with incomes less than \$40,000 was \$72.14, and the median was \$50. Mid-level income households (\$40,000 to \$80,000) gave an average of \$142.17, with a median of \$75. Households with incomes over \$80,000 donated an average of \$241.59, and the median gift from this group was \$100.

Income made a significant difference in financial contributions to the relief efforts even when we controlled for such other factors as education level, race/ethnicity, employment

and household status. Not surprisingly, respondents who were employed full time donated significantly more than those who were unemployed or employed part time.

Figure 2: Average and Median Giving by Income Level



The number of children living away at college was another important determinant of donation size. All other factors being equal, for each child in college, families who donated gave an additional \$35.34 to help the victims of the September 11 tragedy. College tuition is a significant financial burden for many families. It is possible, however, that parents with children living away from home, especially those whose children travel to college by air, may have felt particularly moved to make larger contributions as an expression of sympathy for those who lost family members in the tragedies.

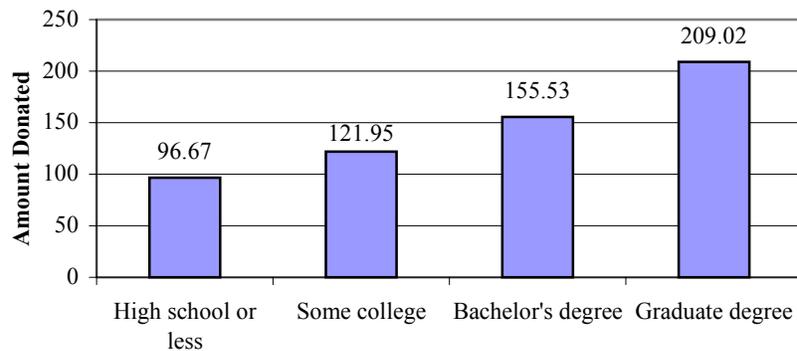
Males and females were equally likely to report household donations. The median for both groups was \$50 (half reported more and half reported less than this amount for both groups).

White households were statistically significantly more likely than minority households to make a donation (66.5 percent of whites donated versus 60.4 percent of minority households). However, these differences were not significant when we controlled for other factors, such as income, education, employment, household status and age. There were no statistically significant differences in the average *amounts* given by households of different racial or ethnic groups.

The level of education made a significant difference in whether a household donated, as well as how much they donated (see Figure 3). In general, the higher the level of educational attainment, the higher was the contribution. However, the differences in the

amount given by people at different education levels were not significant when other factors, such as income, were held constant.

Figure 3: Tragedy-related Giving by Education Level



Household status presents a similar pattern. Couples were most likely to donate to help the September 11 victims. Couples donated significantly more than single-person households, giving an average of \$150.91, compared to \$100.93 for singles. However, the differences in amounts given were not statistically significant when other factors were held constant, such as income, education, and race/ethnicity.

Other charitable donations

In addition to monetary support to aid the victims, Americans were generous in other types of giving. Of the adults surveyed, 27.1 percent indicated they made other donations to the relief effort, such as clothing, food and water, or blood.

Volunteering to help the victims

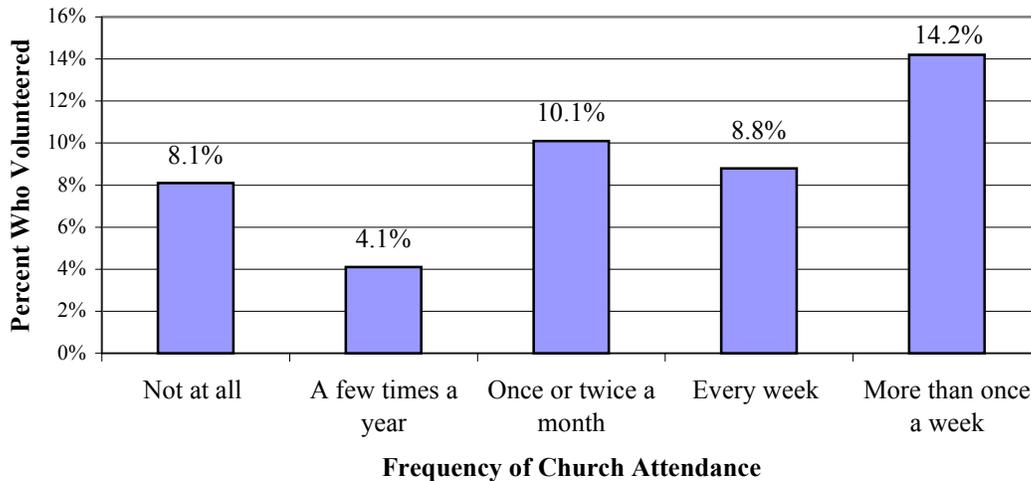
- 8.3 percent of those surveyed indicated they performed voluntary service to help the victims of the tragedy.
- The average volunteer donated nearly 17 hours of time. The median level was 8 hours (half of the volunteers donated more and half donated less).

It is not surprising that few people reported volunteering, given the difficulty of volunteering in this particular tragedy. For example, travel was restricted, volunteering on-site was discouraged early on, and the primary need was for people with very specialized skills.

Survey respondents who attend religious services more than once a week were most likely to volunteer after the September 11 crisis. Of the respondents who attend religious services more than once a week, 14.2 percent volunteered to help victims after the attack, versus 8.8 percent of those who attend weekly, 4.1 percent of those who attend a few

times per year, and 8.1 percent of those who do not attend religious services. However, for those who did volunteer, religious attendance did not make a difference in how many *hours* of service they performed (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Volunteering To Help Tragedy Victims



No other variables significantly determined whether or not a person volunteered, or how much they volunteered. For example, education, income, gender, number of children in the home and away at college, race or ethnic group, marital status and employment status did not make a difference. Previous studies of volunteering have shown that females are more likely to volunteer, as are those with higher levels of income and education. The circumstances related to September 11 were probably so unusual that the typical patterns of volunteering behavior do not apply.

Other studies

Our results on participation rates in philanthropic responses to September 11 are consistent with those published earlier by other research organizations. The results of the studies are summarized in Table 1. A survey from the National Opinion Research Center (NORC), fielded September 13 to 27, 2001, found that at that time “almost half (49%) contributed to charities, 24 percent donated or tried to donate blood, and 8 percent did extra volunteer work for an organization. A full 59 percent did at least one of these actions.” Note that this study was conducted very soon after the tragedy, so that the percentages are smaller than those seen in later studies.

In a separate poll conducted October 5 to 8, 2001, INDEPENDENT SECTOR (IS) found that “more than half (58%) gave money to charities in response to the terrorist attacks in the four weeks just after September 11. Also, 13 percent gave blood and 11 percent gave time. Overall, 70 percent of Americans reported charitable involvement in some way.”

In addition, a poll conducted by USA TODAY/CNN/Gallup (December 14-16, 2001) found that 64 percent of respondents reported making contributions to funds for the victims.

These studies did not attempt to measure the amounts of giving and volunteering Americans contributed after the events of September 11. However, the percentages reported in these studies generally are consistent with and help to verify the results in our study. Taken together, these results lead us toward the emerging picture of the philanthropic behavior of Americans in the first few weeks and months following the tragedy.

Table 1: Summary of National Surveys on Post-September 11 Philanthropy

	Survey Dates (2001)	Percentage Reporting Charitable Involvement	Percentage Donating Money	Amount Given	Percentage Donating Food, Clothing or Blood	Percentage Volunteering	Hours Given
National Opinion Research Ctr.	Sept. 13-27	59	49 (money & other)	--	24 (blood)	8	--
INDEPENDENT SECTOR	Oct. 5-8	70	58	--	13 (blood) 6 (other)	11	--
Center on Philanthropy	Oct. 22- Nov. 28	74.4	65.6	\$133.72 (Avg) \$50(Mdn)	27.1 (blood & other)	8.3	168 (Avg) 8(Mdn)
USA Today/ CNN/Gallup	Dec. 14-16	--	64	--	--	--	--