

# Overview

## Secular Giving

Based on data collected in 2009  
about giving in 2008



IUPUI

LILLY FAMILY  
SCHOOL OF PHILANTHROPY  
INDIANA UNIVERSITY  
Indianapolis

# Philanthropy Panel Study – A part of the Panel Study of Income Dynamics

This analysis is available to Premium Service Subscribers of the Lilly Family School of Philanthropy at Indiana University. To subscribe, go to [www.philanthropy.iupui.edu](http://www.philanthropy.iupui.edu).

The Philanthropy Panel Study (PPS) is a module of the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID), which reaches more than 8,000 households every two years. The PSID is fielded by the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan. Questions were asked in 2009 about giving in 2008.

The School of Philanthropy thanks Atlantic Philanthropies for the initial funding to launch PPS in 2001 and the donors whose recent contributions make continued waves of PPS possible.

**Recent donors include:**

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation  
Charles Stewart Mott Foundation  
John Templeton Foundation  
United Nations Foundation

To contribute, please contact Lisa Viaches ([lviaches@iupui.edu](mailto:lviaches@iupui.edu)) or give online at [www.philanthropy.iupui.edu/give-now](http://www.philanthropy.iupui.edu/give-now) and select “School of Philanthropy Research Funding.”

# Acknowledgments

The analyses presented here are made possible by the work of many people, including:

Founding Director of the Philanthropy Panel Study, Mark Ottoni-Wilhelm

At the Lilly Family School of Philanthropy at Indiana University:

Gene R. Tempel, Founding Dean

Patrick M. Rooney, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Research

Una O. Osili, Director of Research

Amy N. Thayer, Associate Director of Research

Amir D. Hayat, Applied Statistician

Grace Baranowski, Research Associate

Yuan Cheng, Graduate Student Intern

Traci Wilmoth, Research Assistant

Thomas Pearson, Research Assistant

Jon Bergdoll, Research Assistant

Denay Patterson, Research Assistant

Melissa Wall, Research Assistant

Riley Mineart, Research Assistant

Permission is granted to use, circulate, and cite figures in this pamphlet with attribution to the Philanthropy Panel Study.

For more information about the Philanthropy Panel Study, please see the School's website at [www.philanthropy.iupui.edu](http://www.philanthropy.iupui.edu).

Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy  
550 West North Street, Suite 301  
Indianapolis, IN 46202

# Overview of Secular Giving

A number of demographic factors play a role in how much households and individuals give to charity. The graphs in this overview provide comparisons of giving to charities for secular causes by:

- Age (<=40, 41-64, and 65+)
- Income (<=\$50,000, \$50,001 - \$99,999, and \$100,000+)
- Wealth, excluding the equity in a home (<=\$50,000, \$50,001-\$199,999, and \$200,000+)
- Education level of the head of household (high school or less, some college, bachelor's degree, and graduate school)
- Geographical location, using regions of the United States defined by the U.S. Census Bureau
- Marital status of the head of household (married, never married, widowed, separated, and divorced)

This overview uses the 2009 wave of the Panel Philanthropy Study (PPS) data, a module of the Panel Study on Income Dynamics (PSID), to make inferences about household charitable giving in the United States. The PPS is the nation's first and largest ongoing study examining the charitable giving of American households over time. This overview uses the nationally representative data from PPS to present some key facts about charitable giving based on responses provided by households in 2008, drawing on demographic characteristics of U.S. donor households. This report presents the giving rate (the percentage of U.S. households that gave) and the average and median gift amounts among U.S. donor households to charities for secular causes.

In general, the higher the number of respondents in a group, the more reliable the result (the more likely the same result would be found if we had an opportunity to conduct the same study repeatedly with multiple representative samples at the same time). Statistics calculated for a group with fewer than 100 observations are starred in this report in order to indicate that the result should be interpreted with caution. Moreover, the analysis presented in this report does not control for any other variable.

Households that answered the philanthropy questions were asked first if they made charitable donations totaling \$25 or more in 2008. Households responding "yes" were asked further questions about how much they gave to each of 11 different types of charities. Nearly 8,700 households participated in the 2009 wave of the PSID. The analysis for this report is based on the 8,475 households that responded to the philanthropy questions. In our analysis, we used the sampling weights provided by the PSID research team at the University of Michigan to yield nationally representative results.

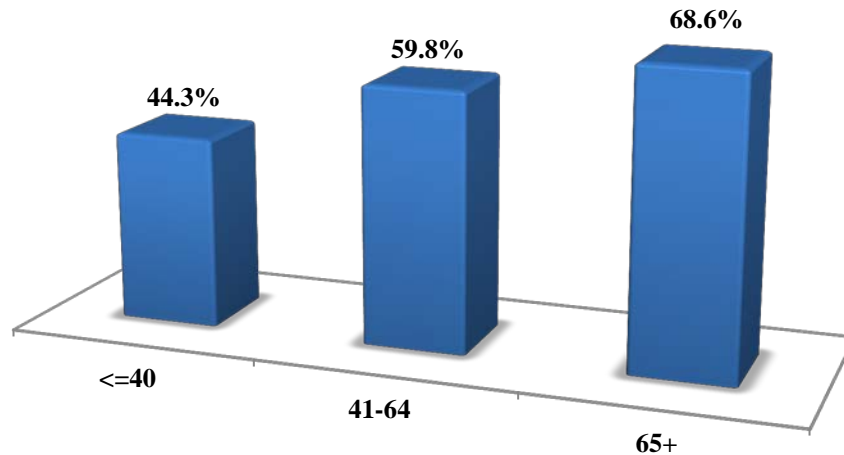
Secular giving included any one of the 10 non-religious types of giving, even if the organization was faith-based.

## **Overview of Secular Giving in 2008**

	Giving Rate	Average amount per donor household	Median amount per donor household
Secular Giving	56.5%	\$1,142	\$400

- 56.5 percent of all U.S. households gave to charities for secular causes in 2008
- \$1,142 was the average giving amount to charities for secular causes per U.S. donor household in 2008
- \$400 was the median giving amount to charities for secular causes per U.S. donor household in 2008

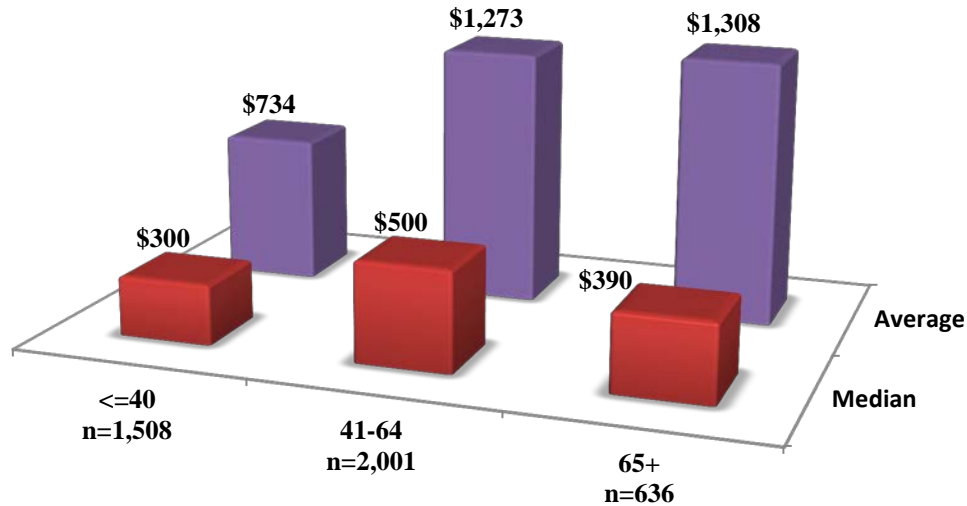
## Secular Giving Rate by Head of Household's Age Group



This graph shows the giving rate of U.S. households to charity for secular causes in 2008 by the age group of the head of household.

- The rate of giving to charity for secular causes increased with the head of household's age.
- The giving rate to charity for secular causes of households headed by an individual 41 to 64 years old was 15.5 percentage points higher than that of households headed by an individual 40 or younger.
- The giving rate to charity for secular causes of households headed by an individual 65 or older was 8.8 percentage points higher than that of households headed by an individual 41 to 64 years old.
- Overall, 56.5 percent of responding households gave to charity for secular causes in 2008.

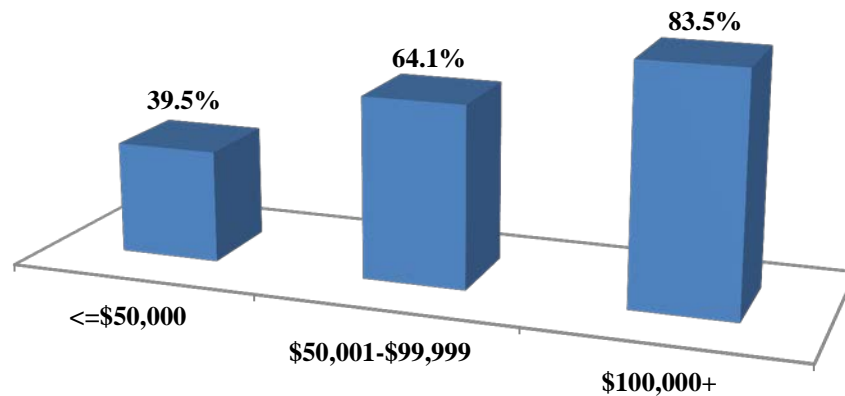
## Secular Giving by Head of Household's Age Group



This graph shows the average and median amounts given to charity for secular causes in 2008 by the age group of the head of household, among U.S. donor households.

- Among those that gave, households headed by an older individual gave more to charity for secular causes on average; however, the median gift amounts from those that gave did not necessarily increase with the head of household's age.
- Donating households headed by an individual 41 to 64 years old gave a median gift amount to charity for secular causes that was \$110 larger than that from donating households headed by an individual 65 or older.
- Donating households headed by an individual 65 or older gave \$35 more to charity for secular causes on average, than those headed by an individual 41 to 64 years old.
- Among all U.S. donor households, the average gift to charity for secular causes was \$1,142 (median=\$400).

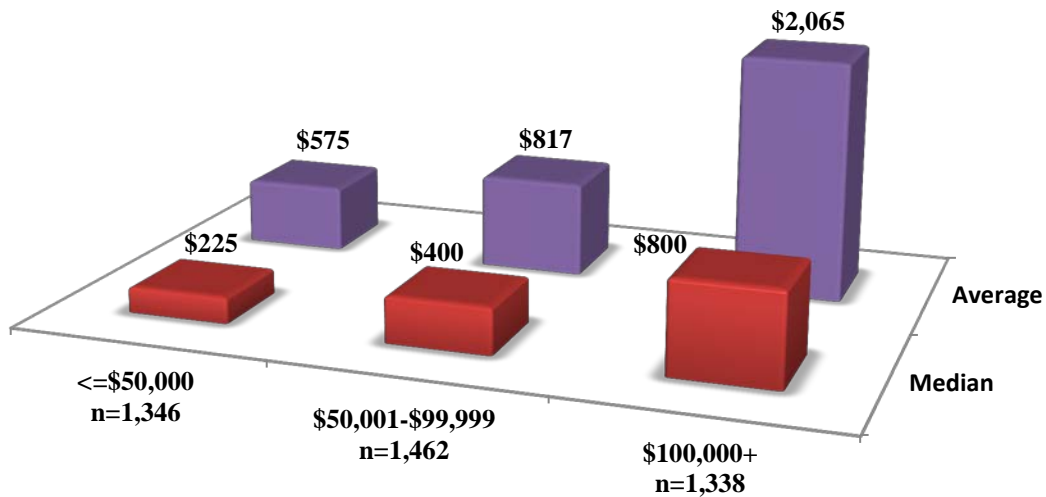
## Secular Giving Rate by Household Income Level



This graph shows the giving rate of U.S. households to charity for secular causes in 2008 by household income level.

- Households with higher income levels gave at higher rates to charity for secular causes.
- The giving rate to charity for secular causes of households with income levels of \$100,000 or more is more than twice that of households with income levels of \$50,000 or less.
- The giving rate to charity for secular causes of households with income levels between \$50,001 and \$99,999 was 24.6 percentage points higher than that of households with income levels of \$50,000 or less.
- Overall, 56.5 percent of responding households gave to charity for secular causes in 2008.

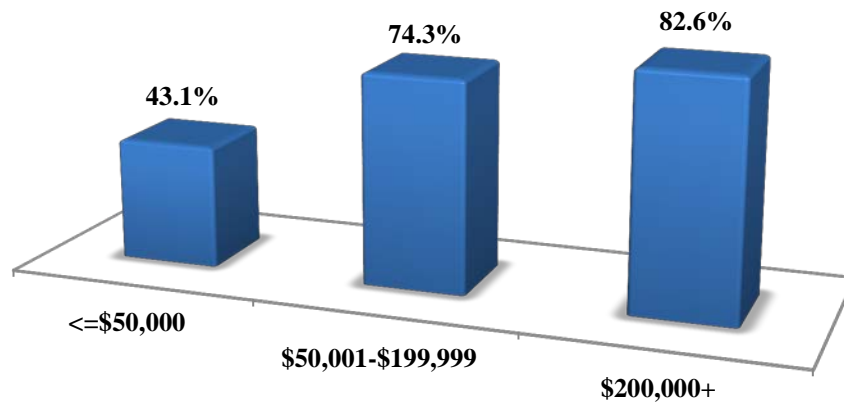
## Secular Giving by Household Income Level



This graph shows the average and median secular giving amounts in 2008 by household income level, among U.S. donor households.

- Among those that gave, households with higher income levels gave higher average and median gift amounts to charity for secular causes.
- Donating households with income levels of \$100,000 or more gave \$1,248 more on average than those with income levels between \$50,001 and \$99,999 and \$1,490 more on average than those with income levels of \$50,000 or less to charity for secular causes.
- Among those that gave, the median gift amount to charity for secular causes from households with income levels of \$100,000 or more was twice that from households with income levels between \$50,001 and \$99,999.
- Among all U.S. donor households, the average gift to charity for secular causes was \$1,142 (median=\$400).

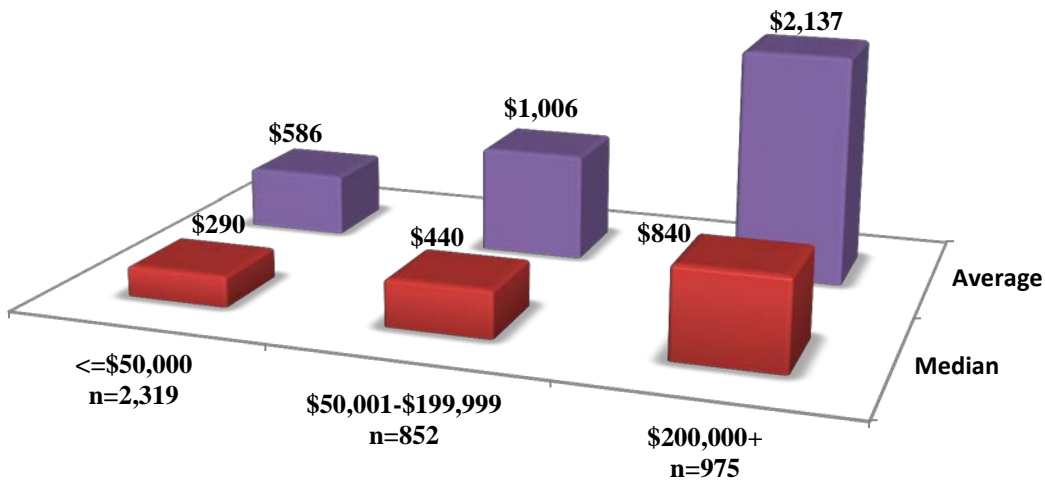
## Secular Giving Rate by Household Wealth Level



This graph shows the giving rate of U.S. households to charity for secular causes in 2008 by household wealth level. For this analysis, wealth did not include the value of the equity of the household home.

- Households with higher wealth levels gave at higher rates to charity for secular causes.
- The giving rate to charity for secular causes of households with wealth levels of \$200,000 or more was only 8.3 percentage points higher than that of households with wealth levels between \$50,001 and \$199,999.
- The giving rate to charity for secular causes of households with wealth levels of \$200,000 or more was nearly twice that of households with wealth levels of \$50,000 or less.
- Overall, 56.5 percent of responding households gave to charity for secular causes in 2008.

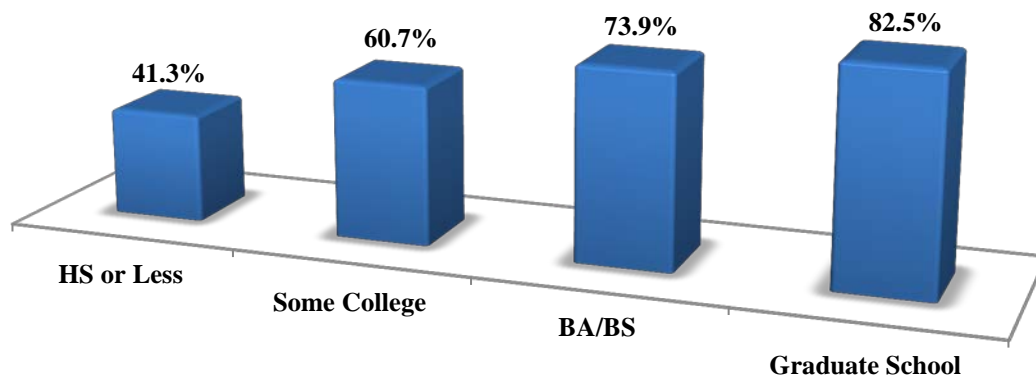
## Secular Giving by Household Wealth Level



This graph shows the average and median amounts given to charity for secular causes in 2008 by household wealth level, among U.S. donor households. For this analysis, wealth did not include the value of the equity in the household home.

- Among those that gave, households with higher wealth levels gave higher average and median amounts to charity for secular causes.
- Among those that gave, households with wealth levels of \$50,000 or less gave \$420 less, on average, to charity for secular causes than households with wealth levels between \$50,001 and \$199,999.
- Donating households with wealth levels of \$200,000 or more gave more than twice the average gift amount to charity for secular causes than that from donating households with wealth levels between \$50,001 and \$199,999.
- Among all U. S. donor households, the average gift to charity for secular causes was \$1,142 (median=\$400).

## Secular Giving Rate by Head of Household's Education Level

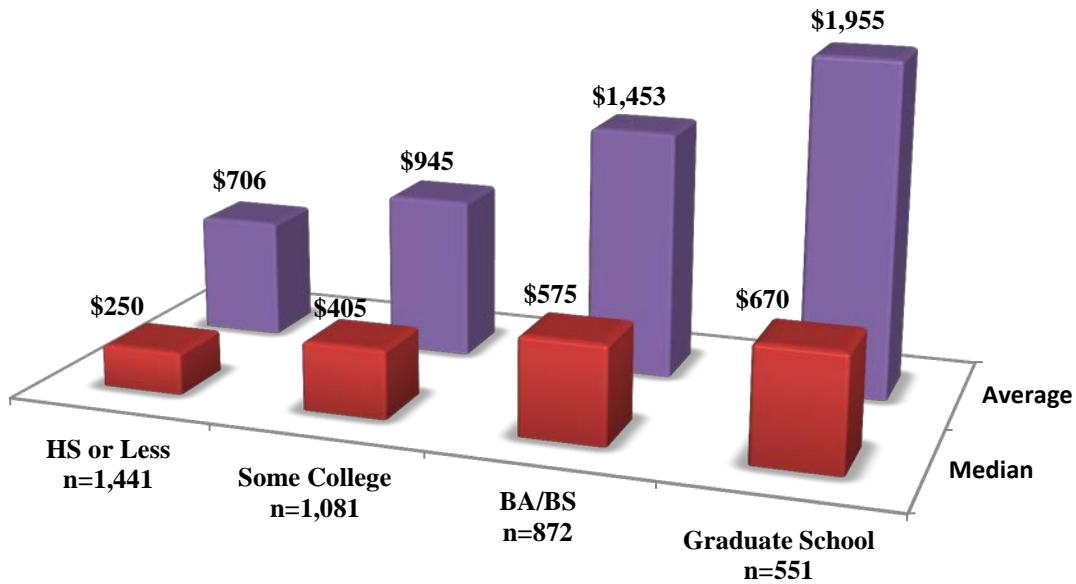


HS or Less – high school education or less  
BA/BS – bachelor's degree

This graph shows the giving rate of U.S. households to charity for secular causes in 2008 by education level of the head of household.

- Households headed by an individual with a higher level of education gave at higher rates to charity for secular causes.
- The giving rate to charity for secular causes of households headed by an individual with some college education was 19.4 percentage points higher than that of households headed by an individual with a high school education or less.
- The giving rate to charity for secular causes of households headed by an individual with at least some graduate coursework was nearly twice that of households headed by an individual with a high school education or less.
- Overall, 56.5 percent of responding households gave to charity for secular causes in 2008.

## Secular Giving by Head of Household's Education Level

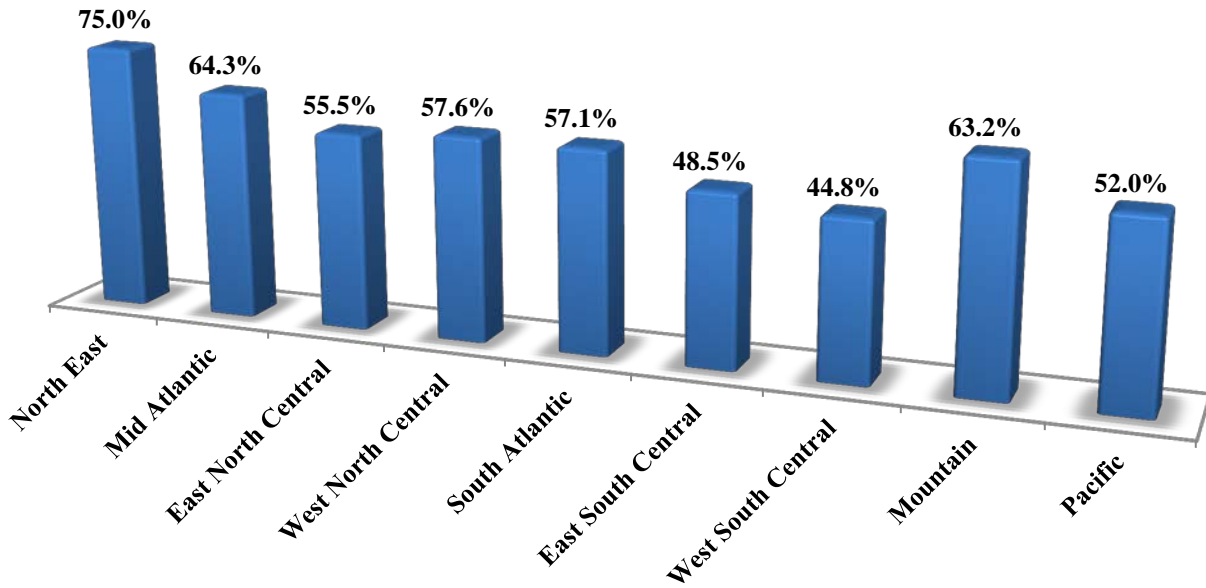


HS or Less – high school education or less  
BA/BS – bachelor's degree

This graph shows the average and median amounts given to charity for secular causes in 2008 by education level of the head of household, among U.S. donor households.

- Among those that gave, households headed by an individual with higher levels of education gave larger average and median gift amounts to charity for secular causes.
- Among those that gave, the average gift to charity for secular causes from households headed by an individual with at least some graduate coursework was more than twice that from households headed by an individual with some college education.
- Among those that gave, the average gift to charity for secular causes from households headed by an individual with a bachelor's degree was more than twice that from households headed by an individual with a high school education or less.
- Among all U. S. donor households, the average gift to charity for secular causes was \$1,142 (median=\$400).

## Secular Giving Rate by Household Geographic Location

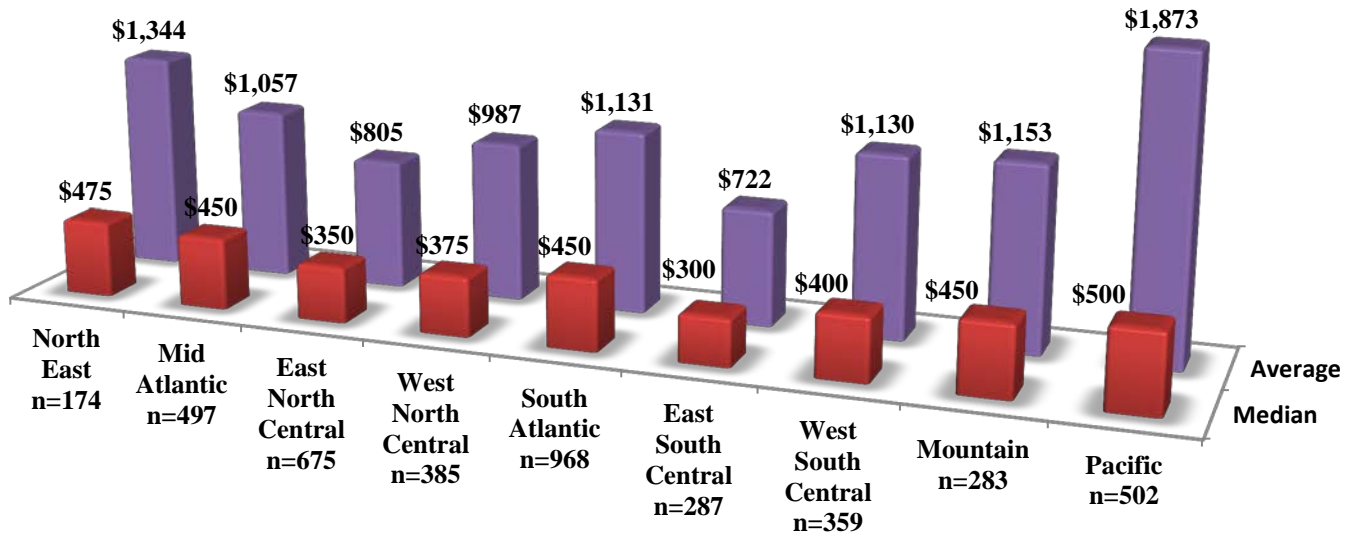


This graph shows the giving rate of U.S. households to charity for secular causes in 2008 by U.S. geographic region.

- Only two regions had household giving rates lower than 50 percent to charity for secular causes (East South Central and West South Central).
- A difference of 30.2 percentage points separated the region with the highest giving rate to charity for secular causes (North East) and the lowest (West South Central).
- Overall, 56.5 percent of responding households gave to charity for secular causes in 2008.
- The regions as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, are described below.

North East	Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont
Mid Atlantic	New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania
East North Central	Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin
West North Central	Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota
South Atlantic	Delaware, Florida, Maryland, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, Washington, DC, West Virginia
East South Central	Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, Tennessee
West South Central	Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas
Mountain	Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Nevada, Utah, Wyoming
Pacific	Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon, Washington

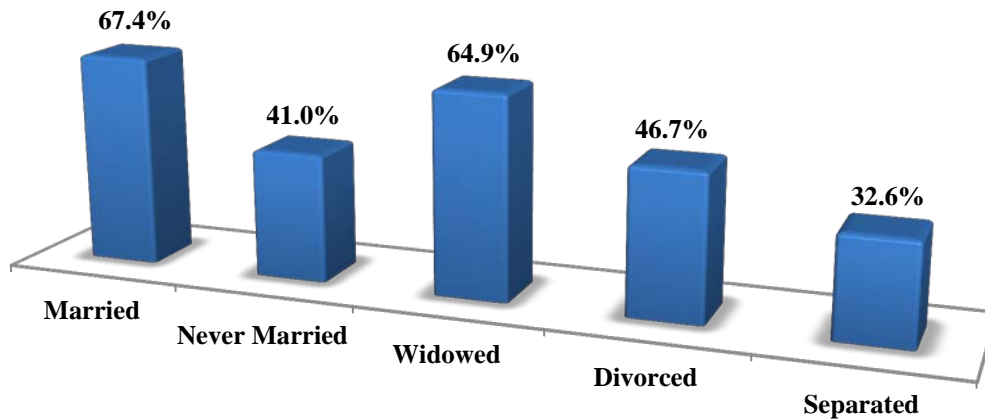
## Secular Giving by Household Geographic Location



This graph shows the average and median secular giving amounts in 2008 by U.S. geographic region, among U.S. donor households.

- Donating households from the Pacific region gave \$1,151 more on average to charity for secular causes than donating households from the East South Central region.
- Among all donating households, the average gift to charity for secular causes was \$1,142 (median=\$400).
- Region definitions can be found on the previous page.

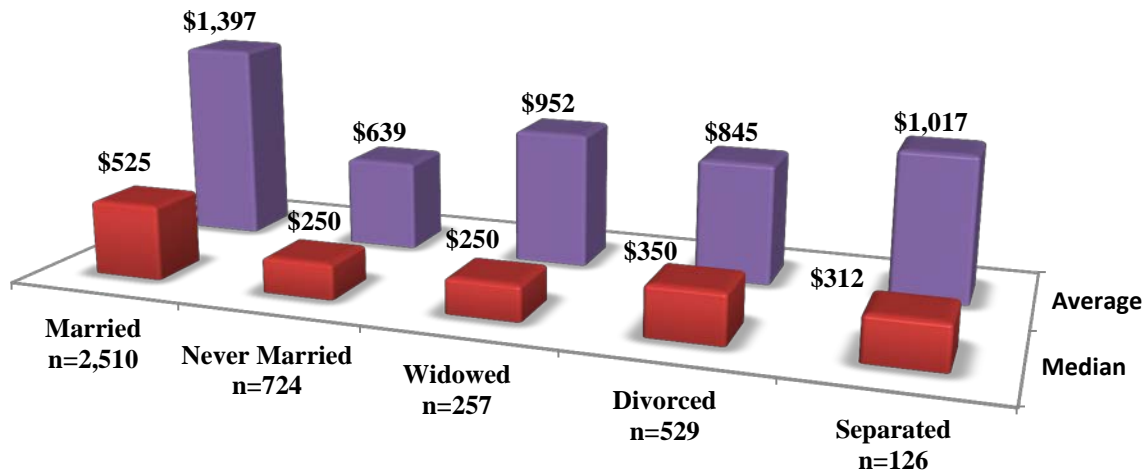
## Secular Giving Rate by Head of Household's Marital Status



This graph shows the giving rate of U.S. households to charity for secular causes in 2008 by marital status of the head of household.

- Donating households headed by a married individual gave at a rate to charity for secular causes that was 2.5 percentage points higher than households headed by a widowed individual.
- The giving rate to charity for secular causes of households headed by a married individual was more than twice that of households headed by a separated individual.
- A household headed by a divorced individual gave to charity for secular causes at a rate that was 5.7 percentage points higher than households headed by a never married individual.
- Overall, 56.5 percent of responding households gave to charity for secular causes in 2008.

## Secular Giving by Head of Household's Marital Status



This graph shows the average and median giving amounts to charity for secular causes in 2008 by the marital status of the head of household, among U.S. donor households.

- Though households headed by a separated individual gave at the lowest rate to charity for secular causes, those that did give donated the second most on average to these organizations.
- Among those that gave, the average gift to charity for secular causes from households headed by a married individual was more than twice that from households headed by a never married individual.
- Though the average gift to charity for secular causes from donor households headed by a widowed individual surpassed that from donor households headed by a divorced individual, the median amount given to charity for secular causes by divorced donor households was \$100 higher than that from widowed donor households.
- Among all U.S. donor households, the average gift to charity for secular causes was \$1,142 (median=\$400).