



Giving in America rises for fifth straight year

Americans gave a record \$358 billion to charity in 2014, showing that philanthropy has fully recovered from the recession and surpassed its all-time peak.

The [Giving USA Annual Report](#), published by the Giving USA Foundation and researched and written by the Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy, said giving increased 7.1 percent over 2013, making the fifth straight year it rose. The 2014 total is the first time giving topped the 2007 inflation-adjusted peak of \$355 billion.

About three quarters (or 72 percent) of the giving came from individuals, while 5 percent came from corporations, 15 percent from foundations and 8 percent from bequests. Megagifts of more than \$200 million—mainly from tech entrepreneurs—were a significant contributor, the report said.



Peter Dazeley | Photographer's Choice | Getty Images

"The 60-year high for total giving is a great story about resilience and perseverance," said W. Keith Curtis, chair of the Giving USA Foundation and president of The Curtis Group.

He said individual giving is driven by disposable income, household wealth and growth in the [S&P 500](#)—and all three improved in 2014.

Individual giving rose 4 percent to \$258.5 billion, while bequest giving surged by 15.5 percent to \$28 billion and corporate giving jumped 13.7 percent to \$17.8 billion.

The largest beneficiary of America's charitable giving remains religious institutions. Giving to religion increased 2.5 percent to \$114.9 billion. Yet religion's share of total charitable dollars has been declining over the past 30 years—from 53 percent in 1987 to 32 percent today.

Education was the second most popular cause, increasing 4.9 percent to \$54.6 billion. The fastest-growing cause was art and culture, with 9.2 percent growth to \$17.2 billion. Giving to health causes increased 5.5 percent to \$30.4 billion.

Source: www.cnbc.com, June 16, 2015, "Inside Wealth", edited by Robert Frank