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# Motivating Donors for Charitable Giving

*Survey of Donors in Thurston County, Washington*

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## Executive Summary

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Charitable donations by living individuals constitutes the largest single source of donations to non-profits in the United States, constituting on average three-quarters of all donations to the non-profit sector and dwarfing the contributions of corporate philanthropy, foundation grants, and charitable bequests (Giving USA, 2006, p.1). If policymakers expect the non-profit sector to provide a safety net for those in poverty, they would be well served to know whether the donors to such service organizations are in any position to meaningfully provide support. Knowing who is actually motivated to support their organizations, and where those motivations are rooted could assist non-profit administrators and various fundraising institutions.

This research was designed to test theories of motivation as found in national and international literature by relating these findings to donors who live, work, or attend school in Thurston County, Washington. We distributed an electronic survey requesting demographic information as well as questions to assess motives and opinions of our respondents. We received 150 responses, but cannot generalize our findings to the entire county due to the homogeneity and size of the sample.

We found that highly religious donors are more likely to give through religious organizations, and rank basic service organizations as more important than organizations that provide services such as environmental advocacy or cultural activities. We also found that donors who have previously benefited from philanthropic organizations are more likely to feel an obligation to give back to the community. Finally, we found that altruism and effectiveness are not as significant in their power to motivate donors in Thurston County as we expected based on our literature review.



# Motivating Donors for Charitable Giving

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## Why a survey of charitable donors' motivations?

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Philanthropy has a long history as a socially encouraged value. Beginning with religious requirements to tithe and progressing to favorable tax treatment of charitable donations, society has long placed high value on sharing whatever wealth an individual or family may possess. Charitable donations by living individuals constitutes the largest single source of donations to non-profits in the United States, constituting on average three-quarters of all donations to the non-profit sector and dwarfing the contributions of corporate philanthropy, foundation grants, and charitable bequests (Giving USA, 2006, p.1).

Understanding donors' motivations is crucial to policymakers, fundraisers, non-profit administrators, and donors themselves. If policymakers expect the non-profit sector to provide a safety net for those in need, they would be well served to know whether donors to such service organizations are in any position to meaningfully provide support. Knowing who is actually motivated to support their organizations, and where those motivations are rooted could assist non-profit administrators and various fundraising institutions.

Reviewing research regarding donor motivations raised questions as to how those national and international-level findings would play out in Thurston County. Our questions formed around three central areas: whether donors are strongly motivated by altruism, effectiveness, and/or religious obligations. Knowing what motivates a person to give to a cause should help non-profit development professionals target their campaigns effectively to their audiences.

We performed our research by distributing an electronic survey, requesting demographic information as well as questions to assess motives and opinions of our respondents. Our respondents' full demographic profile is attached as Appendix 1, and the complete survey and scoring mechanisms are attached in Appendix 2. Appendix 3 contains our suggestions for further research on this topic.

## Survey Findings

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We chose three central questions after reviewing national and international research on donor motivations. We found that our respondents demonstrated few differences from national and international research, and what differences there were are explained by demographic details. However, we did find that religious identity does not provide a strong indicator in Thurston County of a person's likeliness to contribute to charitable causes.

A breakdown of responses based on religious identity and prior experience as a beneficiary is attached in Appendix 1.

## Religious Identity

Most if not all of the world's major religions encourage or mandate a tithe, or the giving of a specified percentage of the worshipper's wealth – usually around ten percent – to those who are in need of such support or to further the work of the church. Previous studies have found that individuals who identify as religious give more in charitable donations than those who do not (Berger, 2006, p. 122). However, a 2005 study by the Barna Group found that one in six adults in Washington State is either atheist or agnostic – a number nearly double the national average (Barna, 2005).

To test whether a comparatively lower level of religious affiliated adults locally impacts levels of charitable giving, we asked whether respondents considered themselves to have a strong religious or spiritual identity, and how often respondents attended religious services. Based on these answers, we categorized our respondents into three groups: highly religious (strong religious identity and frequent attendance); not religious (no strong religious identity, irregular or no attendance); and moderately religious (mixed answers).

According to our findings, respondents categorized as highly religious demonstrated significant religious motivation. They were far more likely to give to religious causes, such as missionary work or church-based aid. These respondents also were more likely to attribute their motivation to religious or spiritual obligations to help the poor (90%) and support religious causes (64%). Religiously motivated respondents demonstrated a unique view of the relative importance of certain organizations. Compared to the overall averages, religiously motivated respondents were more likely to rank public benefit organizations such as food banks and homeless shelters as “important” or “very important” (92% vs 80% average), and less likely to prefer arts and cultural organizations (12% vs 33%) or environmental organizations (42% vs 64%).

We also found that in many cases, highly religious respondents had a similar pattern of answers to non-religious respondents, and those two groups differed strongly from those respondents in the middle group. Highly religious and non-religious respondents were less likely to attribute their donations to social expectations than moderately religious respondents (11% highly religious and 5% not religious, versus 24% moderately religious), as well as less likely to respond only to requests for donations (9% highly religious and not religious, versus 22% moderately religious).

## Altruistic Motivations

One common assumption about charitable and philanthropic giving assumes that individuals give primarily because they recognize a need to assist those who are less fortunate. However, several studies suggest that individuals often give for reasons of personal benefit either instead of or in conjunction with altruistic motivations (Rooney and Frederick, 2006; Kottasz, 2004; and others).

An interesting factor is raised when considering who gives to charitable causes, what they give, and from what resources that giving occurs. While many donors assume much of social giving assists those in need, in truth only one-third of philanthropic giving helps those in poverty (Lampman, 2007, p. 13). One dynamic in exploring donor motivations is the simple fact that there are multiple opportunities to participate in philanthropic efforts. Non-profit organizations fall into several sectors, including public-society benefit organizations; health and human services; arts, culture and humanities; environment and animals; international affairs; religious organizations; and education.

To test these theories, we calculated an altruistic motivation score for each respondent, based on answers to certain motive and opinion statements (see Appendix 2 for detail). We found that this score could be predicted based on gender (3.79 for male, 3.93 for females) at a significance of 5%, but that this score was not statistically significant for differences in education, age, or income.

## Effective Organizations

Another factor in donor motivations may be the growing movement toward requiring demonstrated effectiveness and accountability in all public organizations. Donors are more likely to ask exactly where their donation will be used, how it will be applied, and whether in their own estimation that donation is doing anything to assist their chosen cause. An organization's perceived poor and questionable uses of resources are more aggressively researched and reported by activists and media, bringing a harsh spotlight to organizations that are less than exemplary. Even if an egregious event is but a single instance, it often has the potential to tar the entire sector with the "unworthy" label.

If there truly is a difference between donors' perceptions of the results of their giving and the reality thereof, then donors may be less motivated to give socially. The problem this presents is twofold. First, a lack of financial and volunteer support could devastate non-profit organizations that rely on the contributions of individual donors. Secondly, in a socio-political system that increasingly relies on the non-profit sector to provide basic support to needy persons, a collapse of such non-profit organizations would have the immediate effect of increasing the level and intensity of poverty throughout the country.

To gauge how effectiveness motivated our respondents, we calculated an effective motivation score based on answers to certain motive and opinion statements (see Appendix 2 for detail). We found that this score could not be predicted based on gender, education, or income. We did find that both higher levels of giving and more hours volunteered correlated with higher effectiveness scores.

## Prior Beneficiaries

Multiple studies show that past experiences with benevolent organizations strongly influence current choices in social giving. A person who was at one point in their life a beneficiary of a philanthropic organization, whether it be a package from a food bank, a musical instrument from an arts organization, or a scholarship from a university, may be more likely to give back to that organization or to a similar cause. In contrast, a person who has had less pleasant experiences may harbor skepticism toward similar philanthropic organizations. With so many potential causes to which a donor may give, understanding the donor's decision process and motivations can better serve non-profit organizations as they work to stand out in a crowded field.

We did find that past beneficiaries of charitable and philanthropic giving were more likely to agree that "charities play an important role in [the] community" (92% v 77% generally). We also found that these respondents were more likely to feel a social obligation to assist others, and more likely to give due to personal expectations.

## Next Steps

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Using our findings from research on local donor motivations and the economic importance of Thurston County non-profit organizations, the researchers will construct tools for local non-profit development officers to improve their outreach to county citizens, and increase their ability to connect with and retain

potential donors. The tools that we intend to produce include a brochure suitable for distribution to non-profit agency development officers, a multi-media instrument suitable for presentation to this audience, and a presentation of our research findings to county non-profit organizations using our instruments.

# Appendix 1: Detailed Findings

## Demographic Information

Demographic data indicated that our typical respondent was a 40 year old female state employee with a bachelor's degree, with an annual household income between \$50,000 and \$100,000. Our typical respondent also donated about \$500 during 2007, and volunteered approximately 20 hours.

## Religious Identification

As described in Appendix 2, we used respondents' answers to two questions to assign them to categories. Based on those categorical assignments, we calculated the percent of respondents agreeing and disagreeing with various statements. Those results are categorized in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1: Rankings of Importance by Organization Type

<b>Ranked important or very important</b>	<b>Not Religious</b>	<b>Moderately Religious</b>	<b>Highly Religious</b>
public-society benefit organizations (food banks, homeless shelters, etc.)	80%	90%	92%
health and human services (hospitals, health services, etc.)	47%	43%	43%
arts, culture and humanities (symphony, museums, etc.)	33%	38%	12%
environmental and wildlife organizations (zoos, environmental advocates, etc.)	64%	40%	42%
international affairs organizations (international relief, etc.)	49%	45%	50%
religious organizations (churches, missionary societies, etc.)	8%	42%	78%
educational organizations (colleges, community education opportunities,	46%	52%	32%

Table 2: Motivations and Opinions by Religious Strength

<b>Agree / Disagree (%): Religious Strength</b>	<b>Not Religious</b>	<b>Moderately Religious</b>	<b>Highly Religious</b>
I have a religious or spiritual obligation to give money for religious causes.	7 / 84	21 / 50	64 / 18
I have a religious or spiritual obligation to assist those who are poor or disadvantaged.	28 / 52	56 / 33	90 / 5
I have a social obligation to assist those who are poor or disadvantaged.	75 / 11	83 / 11	73 / 5

<b>Agree / Disagree (%): Religious Strength</b>	<b>Not Religious</b>	<b>Moderately Religious</b>	<b>Highly Religious</b>
I have a social obligation to support organizations that benefit the community.	76 / 9	74 / 11	61 / 11
I give through my religious community to help accomplish a social goal.	5 / 80	28 / 50	74 / 15
I give on my own when I recognize a specific need I can assist.	82 / 2	95 / 0	100 / 0
I give to charitable or philanthropic organizations to help people in unfortunate circumstances.	84 / 2	78 / 6	90 / 5
I give to charitable or philanthropic organizations to help accomplish a social goal.	74 / 7	67 / 11	70 / 6
I give to charitable or philanthropic organizations because it is expected of me.	5 / 73	24 / 53	11 / 61
I give to charitable or philanthropic organizations to get tax benefits for myself.	9 / 61	33 / 50	19 / 51
I give to charitable or philanthropic organizations that have a proven record of effectiveness in their area.	74 / 5	78 / 0	83 / 8
I generally do not give to charitable or philanthropic organizations.	17 / 68	12 / 65	7 / 81
Charitable and philanthropic organizations play an important role in my community.	81 / 4	72 / 6	91 / 3
I prefer to give money to charitable or philanthropic organizations for a specific program or activity.			
I prefer to give money to a charitable or philanthropic organization for them to use at their discretion.	56 / 18	39 / 32	50 / 33
I prefer to give through formal giving drives organized through the organization at which I work.	25 / 44	17 / 44	6 / 65
I give only when asked.	9 / 65	22 / 56	9 / 82
I prefer to give time to a charitable or philanthropic organization.	31 / 23	35 / 35	38 / 28
I prefer to give non-cash donations to organizations.	25 / 22	29 / 35	9 / 41
It is mainly the role of the government to provide support to the poor.	42 / 32	47 / 24	30 / 46
It is mainly the role of charitable organizations to provide support to the poor.	15 / 53	33 / 50	40 / 37
It is mainly the role of religious organizations to provide support to the poor.	14 / 60	17 / 72	25 / 47
It is mainly the role of the private sector to provide support for the poor.	10 / 60	17 / 56	19 / 43
I trust the charitable or philanthropic organizations to which I donate.	87 / 5	83 / 11	92 / 3

## Prior Beneficiaries

As described in Appendix 2, we used respondents' answers to two questions to assign them to categories. Based on those categorical assignments, we calculated the percent of respondents agreeing and disagreeing with various statements. Those results are categorized in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 3: Motivations and Opinions by Prior Experience as Beneficiary

<b>Agree / Disagree (%): Past Beneficiary</b>	<b>Not Basic Recipient</b>	<b>Basic Recipient</b>	<b>Not Other Recipient</b>	<b>Other Recipient</b>
I have a religious or spiritual obligation to give money for religious causes.	21 / 63	33 / 50	22 / 61	28 / 58
I have a religious or spiritual obligation to assist those who are poor or disadvantaged.	51 / 36	57 / 26	44 / 40	63 / 27
I have a social obligation to assist those who are poor or disadvantaged.	74 / 11	84 / 0	67 / 13	90 / 4
I have a social obligation to support organizations that benefit the community.	69 / 13	69 / 8	67 / 9	80 / 8
In my life, I have received financial assistance or basic support (food, shelter, etc.) from a charitable or philanthropic organization.	0 / 91	100 / 0	10 / 83	46 / 49
In my life, I have received a benefit (such as a scholarship) from a charitable or philanthropic organization.	37 / 58	83 / 9	0 / 85	100 / 0
I give through my religious community to help accomplish a social goal.	28 / 58	40 / 45	31 / 51	31 / 60
I give on my own when I recognize a specific need I can assist.	88 / 2	92 / 4	87 / 2	90 / 2
I give to charitable or philanthropic organizations to help people in unfortunate circumstances.	85 / 3	92 / 4	87 / 4	87 / 4
I give to charitable or philanthropic organizations to help accomplish a social goal.	68 / 11	71 / 4	67 / 13	64 / 2
I give to charitable or philanthropic organizations because it is expected of me.	10 / 66	8 / 76	7 / 70	17 / 66
I give to charitable or philanthropic organizations to get tax benefits for myself.	10 / 73	13 / 61	15 / 67	11 / 74
I give to charitable or philanthropic organizations that have a proven record of effectiveness in their area.	78 / 5	68 / 8	77 / 7	73 / 4
I generally do not give to charitable or philanthropic organizations.	10 / 74	29 / 62	9 / 78	16 / 68
Charitable and philanthropic organizations play an important role in my community.	77 / 8	92 / 0	76 / 9	88 / 2
I prefer to give money to charitable or philanthropic organizations for a specific program or activity.	63 / 17	63 / 13	57 / 21	57 / 15

<b>Agree / Disagree (%): Past Beneficiary</b>	<b>Not Basic Recipient</b>	<b>Basic Recipient</b>	<b>Not Other Recipient</b>	<b>Other Recipient</b>
I prefer to give money to a charitable or philanthropic organization for them to use at their discretion.	49 / 30	56 / 24	53 / 22	52 / 27
I prefer to give through formal giving drives organized through the organization at which I work.	13 / 57	9 / 61	11 / 58	16 / 56
I give only when asked.	13 / 65	4 / 75	11 / 73	13 / 67
I prefer to give time to a charitable or philanthropic organization.	25 / 39	46 / 8	23 / 43	29 / 15
I prefer to give non-cash donations to organizations.	24 / 34	20 / 32	23 / 28	21 / 34
It is mainly the role of the government to provide support to the poor.	44 / 34	38 / 35	45 / 29	41 / 39
It is mainly the role of charitable organizations to provide support to the poor.	20 / 49	28 / 40	20 / 47	25 / 50
It is mainly the role of religious organizations to provide support to the poor.	13 / 68	16 / 44	13 / 69	13 / 57
It is mainly the role of the private sector to provide support for the poor.	12 / 62	12 / 42	9 / 60	12 / 61
I trust the charitable or philanthropic organizations to which I donate.	87 / 7	88 / 8	84 / 7	90 / 4

# Appendix 2: Survey Questions and Calculated Scores

## Survey Details

The survey was conducted between February 15 and 29, 2008. The survey was posted to SurveyMonkey.com, and a link to the survey was sent by email to approximately 1200 people. While a small number of people received the survey through a personal email from one of the researchers, the majority received the survey from an anonymous email address.

Survey respondents' zip code data were validated to ensure they lived, worked, and/or attended school in Thurston County. We received 160 responses; ten responses were discarded because their answers to the location questions did not indicate that they fit the survey sample.

## Survey Questions

The following represents the major questions asked of our respondents on our electronic survey. Each question either asked the respondents to fill in a blank, choose from a drop-down menu, or rank importance or validity numerically. The questions were divided in categories concerning demography, donation patterns, donor opinions, and donor motivations during 2007.

### Demographic Questions

The questions in Table 4 assessed basic demographic information. With this data, we could determine the overall profile of our survey respondents.

Table 4: Demographic Questions

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Responses provided</b>
Age	How old were you at your last birthday?	Numeric answer, open field
Gender	What is your gender?	1=Male 2=Female 3=Other
HomeZIP	What is the ZIP code of your primary residence?	Numeric answer, open field
WorkZIP	What is the ZIP code of your primary work or school location? (if applicable)	Numeric answer, open field

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Responses provided</b>
EducLevel	What is the highest level of education you have completed?	1=Less than 9th grade 2=9th to 12th grade, no diploma 3=High school graduate/equivalency (i.e. GED) 4=Some college, no degree 5=Associate (2 year) degree 6=Bachelor's (4 year) degree 7=Graduate/professional degree
JobType	For your primary job, what type of employer do you work for?	1=City government 2=County government 3=State government 4=Federal government 5=Self employed 6=Private, for profit organization 7=Non-profit organization 8=Student 9=Not currently employed
Income	What was your total household income from all sources in 2007?	1=\$0 - \$24,999 2=\$25,000 - \$49,999 3=\$50,000 - \$74,999 4=\$75,000 - \$99,999 5=\$100,000 - \$124,999 6=\$125,000 - \$149,999 7=\$150,000 - \$199,999 8=\$200,000 - \$299,999 9=\$300,000 or more
Donations	What was the total value of your household's charitable donations in 2007?	1=Less than \$50 2=\$50 - \$249 3=\$250 - \$499 4=\$500 - \$999 5=\$1,000 - \$2,499 6=\$2,500 - \$4,999 7=\$5,000 - \$9,999 8=\$10,000 - \$24,999 9=\$25,000 or more
VolHours	Approximately how many hours did you volunteer to charitable or philanthropic organizations in 2007?	Numeric answer, open field
ReligID	Do you see yourself as having a strong religious identity?	0=No 1=Yes
ReligAttend	How often do you attend religious services?	1=At least once per week 2=At least once per month 3=At least once every few months 4=Not on any regular basis 5=Never

The questions in Table 5 assessed donation patterns during 2007. For each statement, respondents were asked to choose the **frequency** with which they donated, as well as the **method** used to donate.

Table 5: Donation Patterns during CY 2007

Variable	Question	Responses provided
GiveType1	I gave through a workplace campaign (ie. Combined Fund Drive, United Way) to a general fund	<b>Frequency:</b> 1=I do not give in this way 2=When asked 3=Regularly 4=No particular pattern  <b>Method:</b> 1=I do not give in this way 2=Cash donation 3=Noncash donation 4=Paycheck deduction 5=Volunteer time 6=Volunteer services 7=A combination of the above methods
GiveType2	I gave through a workplace campaign (ie. Combined Fund Drive, United Way) to a specific organization(s)	
GiveType3	I gave to a religious organization/community	
GiveType4	I gave to organizations with which I am affiliated	
GiveType5	I gave directly to individuals in need	
GiveType6	I purchased items or pledged money to individuals participating in benefit events	
GiveType7	I gave to a community fund/foundation	
GiveType8	I gave material resources such as clothing, food or furniture, but not including money, directly to people in need	

## Opinions

The questions posed in Table 6 assessed respondents' opinion of various categories of charitable organizations. For each statement, respondents were asked to rank the relative **importance** of certain organizations.

Table 6: Importance of Organization Types

Variable	Question	Responses provided
OrgType1	public-society benefit organizations (food banks, homeless shelters, etc.)	1=Not Important 2=[less than somewhat important] 3=Somewhat Important 4=[more than somewhat important] 5=Very Important
OrgType2	health and human services (hospitals, health services, etc.)	
OrgType3	arts, culture and humanities (symphony, museums, etc.)	
OrgType4	environmental and wildlife organizations (zoos, environmental advocates, etc.)	
OrgType5	international affairs organizations (international relief, etc.)	

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Responses provided</b>
OrgType6	religious organizations (churches, missionary societies, etc.)	
OrgType7	educational organizations (colleges, community education opportunities, etc.)	

The questions posed in Table 7 gathered respondents' underlying opinions about the role of charitable and philanthropic organizations, as well as their preferred method for giving socially. Respondents indicated the strength of their agreement with each of the following statements.

Table 7: Opinion Statements (Agree/Disagree)

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Responses provided</b>
Opinion01	Charitable and philanthropic organizations play an important role in my community.	1=Strongly Agree 2=Moderately Agree 3=Neither Agree Nor Disagree 4=Moderately Disagree 5=Strongly Disagree
Opinion02	I prefer to give money to charitable or philanthropic organizations for a specific program or activity.	
Opinion03	I prefer to give money to a charitable or philanthropic organization for them to use at their discretion.	
Opinion04	I prefer to give through formal giving drives organized through the organization at which I work.	
Opinion05	I give only when asked.	
Opinion06	I prefer to give time to a charitable or philanthropic organization.	
Opinion07	I prefer to give non-cash donations to organizations.	
Opinion08	It is mainly the role of the government to provide support to the poor.	
Opinion09	It is mainly the role of charitable organizations to provide support to the poor.	
Opinion10	It is mainly the role of religious organizations to provide support to the poor.	
Opinion11	It is mainly the role of the private sector to provide support for the poor.	
Opinion12	I trust the charitable or philanthropic organizations to which I donate.	

## Motivations

The questions posed in Table 8 assessed respondents' personal, social, and/or financial motivations for social giving. Respondents indicated the strength of their agreement with each of the following statements.

Table 8: Motivation Statements (Agree/Disagree)

Variable	Question	Responses provided
Motive01	I have a religious or spiritual obligation to give money for religious causes.	1=Strongly Agree 2=Moderately Agree 3=Neither Agree Nor Disagree 4=Moderately Disagree 5=Strongly Disagree
Motive02	I have a religious or spiritual obligation to assist those who are poor or disadvantaged.	
Motive03	I have a social obligation to assist those who are poor or disadvantaged.	
Motive04	I have a social obligation to support organizations that benefit the community.	
Motive05	In my life, I have received financial assistance or basic support (food, shelter, etc.) from a charitable or philanthropic organization.	
Motive06	In my life, I have received a benefit (such as a scholarship) from a charitable or philanthropic organization.	
Motive07	I give through my religious community to help accomplish a social goal.	
Motive08	I give on my own when I recognize a specific need I can assist.	
Motive09	I give to charitable or philanthropic organizations to help people in unfortunate circumstances.	
Motive10	I give to charitable or philanthropic organizations to help accomplish a social goal.	
Motive11	I give to charitable or philanthropic organizations because it is expected of me.	
Motive12	I give to charitable or philanthropic organizations to get tax benefits for myself.	
Motive13	I give to charitable or philanthropic organizations that have a proven record of effectiveness in their area.	
Motive14	I generally do not give to charitable or philanthropic organizations.	

## Calculated Scores

For analytical purposes, we chose to calculate a score for respondents in four areas: strength of religious identity, strength of altruistic motivation, strength of effectiveness motivation, and strength of religious motivation. The data used in each calculation are listed below.

To calculate **religious strength**, we began by dividing answers to our “ReligAttend” question into two groups. Respondents who answered that they attended religious services “never” or “not on any regular basis” were assigned a zero, while an answer indicating attendance “at least every few months” or more frequently was assigned a one. This score was then added to the “ReligID” score, which asked respondents whether they considered themselves to have a “strong religious or spiritual identity”, with an affirmative answer being assigned a one, and a negative answer a zero. The result of this calculation was a Religious Strength score between zero and two. Scores of zero were determined to be “not religious”, scores of one were determined to be “moderately religious”, and a score of two indicated “highly religious”.

To calculate the strength of motivation scores, we took the mean of certain answers as indicated below:

- **AltruismMean** = Motive questions 11, 12, 14; the inverse of Motive questions 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 10; Opinion question 5, and the inverse of Opinion questions 1 and 10.
- **ReligiousMean** = The inverse of Motive questions 1, 2, and 7.
- **EffectiveMean** = The inverse of Motive questions 4, 8, and 13; and the inverse of Opinion questions 1, 2, 3, 4, and 12.

## Appendix 3: Recommendations for Further Research

If future researchers wish to use this format to conduct another study, we would recommend certain changes be considered. It is important to identify and learn from mistakes we made in the data collection and analyzing process so that future researchers can take steps in attempt to eliminate these shortfalls. We have identified three major areas where our research design and implementation could have been approached differently:

1) *More quantitative data may facilitate analysis.*

Our original intent was to perform a largely quantitative analysis of our survey results, especially in regard to correlations between income, education, and donation patterns. To facilitate that goal, several of our questions were asked in an open format, requiring our respondents to provide specific data regarding income, donation value, and years of schooling. While reviewing the survey before deployment, we changed these responses from an open field to a choice of ranges. This choice limited the quantitative analysis we could perform with the resulting dataset.

2) *The online survey method of gathering data has its shortfalls when used exclusively.*

There are a few identifiable shortcomings when implementing an online survey; many of which we experienced when we began to collect and analyze our data. One problem we faced was the questionable diversity of our sample. We used the snowball method when distributing our survey. We sent it out to our personal contact lists, then asked that they forward it to anyone they knew who lived, worked, and/or went to school in Thurston County. The snowball did not grow to the size that we anticipated. We responded by utilizing a large email list of legislative employees because we knew that they would at least satisfy the criteria of working within Thurston County. We received the majority of our responses after sending our survey to these people (as evidenced by the volume of completed surveys that came in within 48 hours of sending the survey to this list, as well as the number of respondents identifying themselves as state employees).

Another shortfall in exclusively using an online survey is keeping the interest of the respondent. We wanted people taking the survey to stay with it long enough to complete it. To help ensure that this happened, we simplified and shortened a few of the questions we initially intended to ask. In retrospect, some good data could have come from the queries we decided to eliminate.

3) *There are more effective ways to get a larger, more diverse sample.*

Time and money constraints, feasibility, and which method would produce the most useful response were considered when deciding which research instrument would best serve our purposes. Looking back on the data we received, it is obvious that a combination of research methods would have produced more quantitative, testable data. We feel that doing more legwork in preparing diverse lists of people to send our survey to, coupled with distributing hard copies of our surveys to a more diverse set of people would

have returning a larger, more varied set of respondents. It is important to recognize that in order to have truly quantifiable, testable data a randomly chosen cross-section of Thurston County respondents is necessary. A combination of research methods, removed of the time and money constraints that served as constrictions to our research, are needed to produce this random sample.

### Steps for Further Research

The researchers conducting this study feel that our results can serve as a pilot for a larger, county-level study of donor motivations. With more focused and detailed questions that reach a truly random sample, this study could provide useful local-level findings for just about any locality that shares demographic characteristics similar to Thurston County.

Further substantive research attempting to uncover local donor motivations could then be compared to national findings. These findings would uncover parallels and differences in giving trends that exist throughout parts of the nation that share similar demography to Thurston County. This information will be shared with local non-profit institutions enabling them to target certain populations and segments within the county. Knowing the giving motivations and tendencies of givers located within their immediate community will undoubtedly assist non-profit organizations in soliciting donations. Recognizing trends that exist nationally will also aid these institutions in forging relationships with other non-profits throughout the county that share similar missions.

## Appendix 4: Works Cited

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