

## Trends and Philanthropy

Americans gave a record \$306 billion to charity in 2007. The 3.9% increase was far less than the 10% and 13% increases in 2004 and 2005. When adjusted for inflation, 2007 giving reflected a 1% gain.

**Today, we are seriously challenged with sustaining growth for critical service needs and impacting the root causes of poverty.** I'd like to share relevant data which will frame our lifestyle, values and charitable giving patterns in the future:

- The next generation of technology users will be younger and less affluent, mirroring that half of the world's population that is under 25 years of age.
- 25% of US workers have been with a company less than one year, and half less than five years.
- Today's college grads will have about 10 to 14 jobs by the time they are 38.
- Work is being done from anywhere, at anytime...the virtual office is reality.
- Five to ten years from now, 5 billion of the 6 billion people on earth will have a cell phone.
- One in 10 Virginia residents was not born in the USA.
- **Shifts happen.** Seventeen percent of the couples married in 2007 met on-line. Fifty percent of all 1<sup>st</sup> marriages will end in divorce.
- **Married couples are 31 % more likely to be donors. Are women socializing men with respect to their philanthropy?**
- The last 500 years have been driven by the printed word. The next long period of time will be driven by video as the number one way to communicate.
- If you have a six year old child or grandchild, by the time that child graduates from college, his or her PC will be as smart as the human brain.
- By 2030, 20% of the US population will be seniors many of whom will require expanded, special services.

Many changes will bring about new and unanticipated needs in the areas of healthcare, social services, housing, education, training, financial stability and more. We are compelled to act. In not taking on risk, we risk much more—the lack of opportunity to make a real difference. United Way's key areas of focus for community impact are: **Health—Income and Financial Stability—Education**—consistent with the demographics and trends in our local communities, and we are moving forward with your help.

I invite you to consider a new, high impact philanthropic strategy: focus your giving while being community minded, tax efficient and financially savvy— **endow your annual gift this year—create a legacy today for a better future for our community. Thank you for your generosity, caring and community spirit.**

*(This article was contributed by Marie Torrans, Managing Director and Charitable Gift Planning Officer, United Way Foundation. Attributions: The Commonfund, Sharpe Companies, [Financial Times](#), [Wall Street Journal](#)).*