

Executive Summary

Research & Polling, Inc. was commissioned to conduct three Market Research and Needs Assessment studies for United Way of Central New Mexico, which included: focus groups among UWCNM Major Donors, a survey among UWCNM Major Donors, and a survey among the general donor population in the Central New Mexico region. Below is a summary of the results from the survey conducted among Major Donors of UWCNM. This summary also highlights similarities and differences between UWCNM Major Donors and donors in the general Central New Mexico population in key areas of the study.

Motivations for Giving

There are myriad motivational factors that drive or inspire Major Donors to give. Some give because they want to help those in need, while others do so to “give back” to the community. Still a portion of Major Donors give to charitable organizations because it is the “right thing to do”. Other reasons why Major Donors give to charitable organizations include: religious motivations, giving people a chance at a better life, and because they can afford to give something back to the community. Different, yet complementary, messages should be developed by UWCNM in order to inspire additional giving among Major Donors and donors in general, as they are often influenced by different motivations.

In the eyes of UWCNM Major Donors (when asked unprompted), homelessness and child abuse/neglect are the top problems in need of support from charitable organizations, followed by hunger and the education system. Other problems include: child poverty and domestic violence. When asked in an *aided* manner how serious various problems are in their community, drug abuse, alcohol abuse, and domestic violence top the list. Child abuse/neglect and poverty are also high on the list.

Major Donors were also asked to rate how well their community is addressing each problem. When looking at the difference in the percentage who feel a problem is serious and the percentage who feel their community is addressing the problem well, the biggest gaps between seriousness of a problem and the adequacy of the community addressing the problem are for drug abuse (65% gap), poverty (60% gap), alcohol abuse (59% gap), domestic violence (59%), and child abuse/neglect (55%). Interestingly, this is the identical list when looking at perceived gap among the general donor population in the Central New Mexico region.

Qualities of Charitable Organizations

UWCNM Major Donors focus mostly on administrative or operational aspects when asked what they feel are the most important qualities when determining to which charitable organizations they will donate. Attributes such as how an

organization distributes money to causes/organizations and the percentage of money that goes to programs versus administration are seen as most important (when asked in an unaided manner). Donors in the Central New Mexico region in general also mention operationally-focused qualities most often.

United Way of Central New Mexico is seen as the “most effective” charitable organization among nearly half of UWCNM Major Donors (and among 12% of the general donor population in the region). Roadrunner Food Bank and religious organizations are in 2nd and 3rd place, although mentioned among a much smaller percentage of Major Donors (6% each).

Donating to United Way of Central New Mexico

The majority of UWCNM Major Donors (52%) donate to the organization for convenience-related reasons, such as “easy to donate through”, “can designate/earmark to specific charities”, and “ability to donate through workplace/payroll deductions”. In fact, 44% of Major Donors say they would donate *less* if UWCNM did not exist, mainly because it “would not be as simple”.

Whereas some Major Donors contribute for convenience-related reasons, others donate to UWCNM because of the organizations’ image: “good organization”, “UWCNM does a lot to help the community”, and “UWCNM assesses/studies the needs of the community”. Among UWCNM donors in the general population of the Central New Mexico region, the image of UWCNM weighs higher in their reasons for donating to UWCNM (70% mention a reason related to its image).

Most UWCNM Major Donors have a positive impression of the organization overall (92%). In fact, among the 301 surveyed, there are no Major Donors who have a negative opinion of UWCNM. Major Donors feel UWCNM is more effective than other charitable organizations (when asked in a prompted manner) at raising money at a low overhead cost, providing service

at the local level rather than at the national level, and responding to community needs.

Perceptions about UWCNM

Although the majority of UWCNM Major Donors (56%) correctly assume that the entities that decide how UWCNM invests in the community are panels/committees of local volunteers and the people who contribute, over one-third think that the United Way Board is the entity that makes the investment decisions.

Forty-five percent of Major Donors correctly guess that 100% of every donor dollar goes directly to programs and services and the average guess is that UWCNM's administrative costs equal 11.8% of the total budget. Two-thirds of Major Donors say they are aware that all of UWCNM's administrative costs are paid for by Corporate Cornerstone companies.

The Corporate Cornerstone program is a big hit among UWCNM Major Donors in that over three-quarters (77%) say that, knowing that all administrative costs are paid for by local sponsor companies makes them *much more likely* to donate to UWCNM (and 14% say it makes them *somewhat more likely*).

Community Fund

Three-quarters of UWCNM Major Donors say they are aware of UWCNM's Community Fund. However, when read a description of the Community Fund and asked if they were aware of it, the percentage drops to 70%. In total, nearly three-fifths of UWCNM Major Donors (58%) say they would be *very likely* to give to the Community Fund. Among those who do not currently give to the Community Fund, 38% say they would be *very likely* to do so. The main reason why Major Donors would not give to the Community Fund is clearly because they want their donations to be designated to specific agencies.

UWCNM should focus its efforts to educate Major Donors (and all donors in the general population for that matter) about the Community Fund in such a way that they gain an understanding about its importance in providing funding to a network of core programs that help the most vulnerable community members. In fact, the most effective messages about the Community Fund (among those tested in the survey) are those that focus on these details, which is further evidence that donors should be exposed to this

message so that they change their existing misconceptions (if they have any) and become more aware of the importance of the Community Fund.

Donation Practices

Outside of donations to UWCNM, Major Donors also donate to religious organizations (34%), educational institutions (13%), and Roadrunner Food Bank (11%). Interestingly, one-in-ten Major Donors say they only donate to UWCNM. The average donation to charitable organizations (overall) is \$8,283 and the median is \$4,018. On average, 61% of overall contributions (to charitable organizations) are donated through UWCNM.

The plurality of UWCNM Major Donors say (when asked unprompted) that a "thank you" letter or a simple "thank you" is the most appropriate form of appreciation from UWCNM. For one-fifth of Major Donors, no form of appreciation is needed.

Nearly two-fifths (37%) of UWCNM Major Donors have attended a social event for UWCNM in the past 12 months. Major Donors would appreciate either that UWCNM hold *the same amount* of social events (45%), or even *less* social events (22%). Very few say they would like *more* social events to be held (1%).

UWCNM Marketing

When asked unaided, 14% of UWCNM Major Donors recall the recent "Try Giving" advertising campaign. This rises to 36% when asked directly if they recall the "Try Giving" campaign.