



## **Yolo Donor Survey 2021 – Report on Findings**

An October 2021 survey of Yolo County donors, conducted by the Yolo Community Foundation and sponsored by Nugget Markets, found that giving increased in response to the pandemic and is likely to remain strong into 2022. Donors are motivated primarily by increased need in the community; as they assess 2022 giving, donor confidence about their own economic circumstances is also an important factor in philanthropic plans. In general, donors expect to increase giving to causes that have been highly visible due to the pandemic and to political and social happenings.

### **Giving increased during the pandemic and is staying steady at this higher level.**

Survey respondents increased their giving in 2020, coinciding with the pandemic. They sustained that increased level of giving into 2021 and anticipate sustaining it further in 2022. In fact, some donors have continued to increase giving from 2020 to 2021 and 2022.

More specifically, 51% of respondents said their 2020 giving exceeded 2019 giving; 35% gave about the same, and 14% gave less. Sixty percent expect 2021 giving (by year-end 2021) to be about the same as 2020 giving; 24% say it will be more and 16% less. Fifty-four percent expect 2022 giving to be about the same as 2021; 28% expect to give more, 4% expect to give less, and 14% don't know.

Giving by our most generous respondents has been and is expected to remain stronger than giving by our respondents in general. For those that gave at least \$25,000 in 2020 (8% of all respondents), 40% say their 2021 giving will exceed 2020, and the same percent say their 2022 giving will exceed 2021.

Of particular interest to nonprofits during this critical year-end giving period, 59% of respondents expect to give about the same in November and December 2021 as they gave in the same timeframe last year; 15% expect to give more, while 11% expect to give less. Among donors that gave at least \$25,000 in 2020, almost twice as many (27%) expect to give more than last year during this year-end giving period, compared to all respondents.

### **Donors are motivated by increased need; 2022 giving plans are tied to economic circumstances.**

Increased community need was by far the major driver of increased giving to date, with 52% citing this as a reason for increased giving since the beginning of the pandemic. Looking forward to 2022, community need remains a significant driver, with 19% of respondents expecting their giving to go up because "there will continue to be a lot of need." However, the respondents' personal circumstances also influence expectations, with 24% reporting that they expect their giving to go up "because my income or assets have increased or are likely to increase and I can afford to give more."

### **Donors anticipate increasing giving mostly to causes that have been in the news.**

Looking forward to 2022, donors expect to give more to Housing & Shelter (24% of respondents), Civil Rights, Social Action, and Advocacy (23%), Mental Health (23%), Community Improvement (22%), Environment (21%), and Youth Development (21%). Of these, Housing & Shelter and Mental Health have

consistently been top areas of community need since the beginning of the pandemic (along with Food, Agriculture, & Nutrition, to which a slightly lower but still significant 19% of donors anticipate increasing their giving). Civil Rights, Social Action, and Advocacy and Environment are also topics that have been in the news.

Donors were much less likely to indicate that they plan to give less to any sector. The cause to which the largest number of respondents indicated plans to cut giving was arts & culture, but only 9% of respondents selected this option, while 11% plan to give more to that sector in 2022; 50% expect to give about the same, and 30% don't know yet. Similarly, 9% plan to give less to education in 2022, the next highest category for planned cutbacks in giving, but 15% plan to give more, 54% plan to give about the same, and 22% aren't sure.

### **Donors are most influenced by cause, reputation, and demonstrated impact.**

When asked what factors influence donors as they choose whether and how much to give, by far the most commonly cited factor was the organization's mission or cause, at 75% of respondents. Other popular factors include the organization's reputation (43%), organizational impact as measured by data and statistics (40%), and organizational impact as measured by stories and testimonials (35%).

When asked about preferences for communicating with nonprofits, donors prefer to learn about an organization from its website (53%), from a friend who is involved with the organization (47%), or from email (42%).

### **While there is some increased interest in direct giving to individuals, this was not a major trend.**

There has been increased attention in recent years to mutual aid and other forms of giving directly to individuals (e.g., via GoFundMe). Respondents were split on how they have incorporated direct giving in their own donations. Thirty percent reported they have done more direct giving to individuals during the pandemic, while 30% said their direct giving to individuals has remained about the same. Nearly as many (27% of respondents) said they don't do direct giving to individuals. Only 5% indicated they have decreased their direct giving during the pandemic.

### **Our respondents have a strong but non-exclusive focus on Yolo County-based nonprofits.**

Forty-one percent of respondents report they give primarily to Yolo-based organizations, and 38% give to a mix of Yolo nonprofits and those based elsewhere around the country. Only 12% have a regional focus, giving primarily to a mix of organizations based in Yolo County and those based elsewhere in Metro Sacramento, and just 5% give mostly to organizations that aren't local. About 32% of respondents said their giving has become more local during the pandemic.

### **About the Respondents**

With 177 respondents from Yolo County, we believe we can draw useful insights from this data, but it is not conclusive.

Our respondents are significantly older, whiter, and more likely to live in Davis than the average resident of Yolo County. Of course, this suggests the data may not be broadly applicable to all donors within Yolo County. Specifically, 77% percent of survey respondents are over age 50, with 26% over age 70. Ninety



percent identified as white, 7% Asian, 2% Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, 1% Black or African American, 1% American Indian or Alaskan Native, 1% other, and 5% prefer not to state. (Note that respondents could select multiple categories for race.) Eight percent indicated they are of Hispanic or Latino/a/x origin, while 89% are not and 3% prefer not to state. Forty-six percent of the survey respondents report living in Davis, followed by Woodland (27%), West Sacramento (16%), Winters (6%), and elsewhere in Yolo County (5%). (We also had seven respondents from outside of Yolo County, but we filtered out those responses for our analysis.)

Our respondents also reported that they are significantly more philanthropic than the average resident of Yolo County. In 2020, none of the survey respondents gave \$0; 41% gave \$1-2,499; 27% gave \$2,500-9,999; 20% gave \$10,000-24,999; 6% gave \$25,000-99,999; and 2% gave \$100,000+. Three percent weren't sure how much they gave in 2020.

### **About the Survey**

At the Yolo Community Foundation, we know that we've all faced extremely tough times in the past year and a half. We created the Yolo Donor Survey to support our local community members in need by enabling us to assess the overall health of philanthropic giving in Yolo County. All Yolo County residents, no matter how much they give or whether they give at all, were invited to fill out this anonymous survey. The survey gathered responses from Oct. 6-26, 2021. We will share this data with local nonprofits, to enable them to better meet their community impact goals, and with local funders, to enable them to direct their resources to meet local needs.

The survey was made possible by generous support from Nugget Markets. To learn more about the Yolo Community Foundation or the Yolo Donor Survey, email us at [info@yolocf.org](mailto:info@yolocf.org) or visit [www.yolocf.org](http://www.yolocf.org).

*Would you like detailed questions-by-question results from the Yolo Donor Survey? Email us at [info@yolocf.org](mailto:info@yolocf.org).*