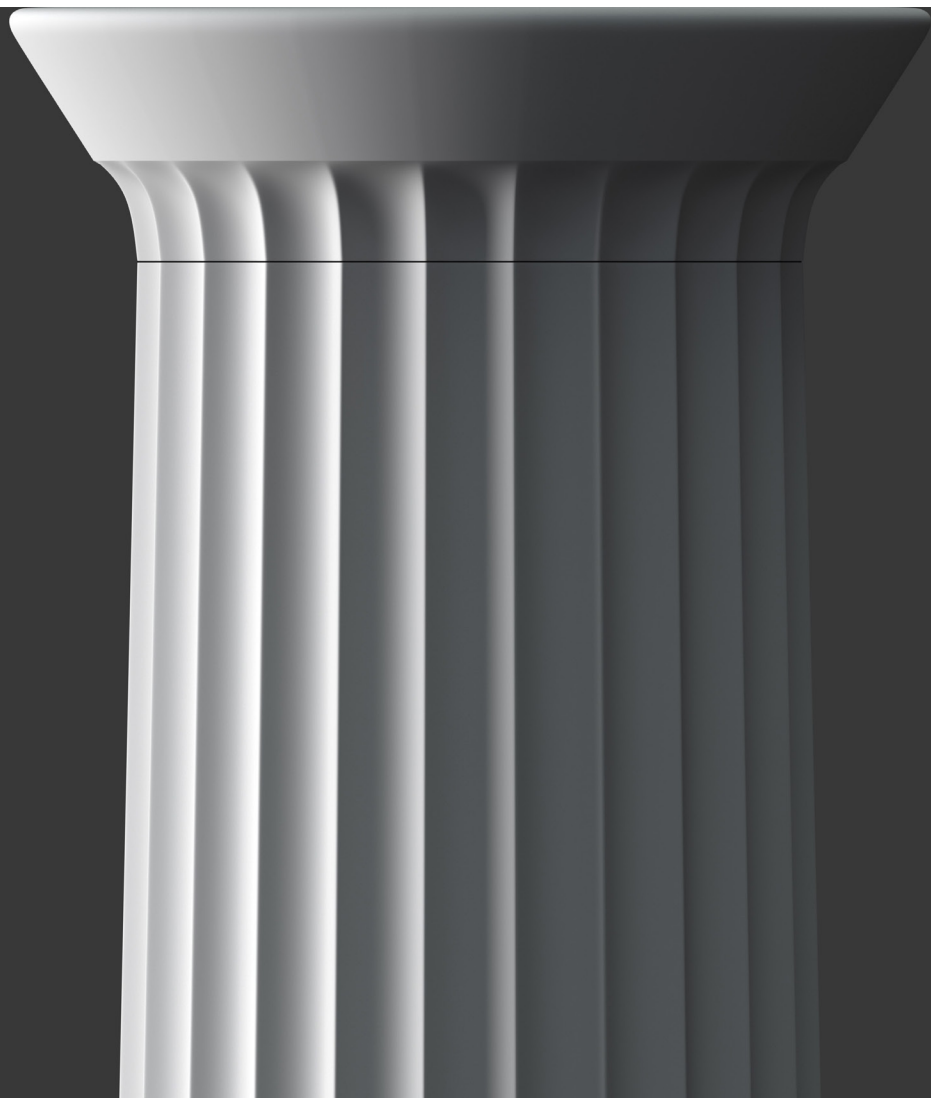


A Marts & Lundy *Special Report*

\$10M+ Gifts to Higher Education

March 2020



We are pleased once again to provide our special report on \$10M+ Gifts to Higher Education. Over the past five years, we have been reporting healthy and steady increases in this category of giving to Higher Education, especially related to total dollars. This year's report, however, is showing some reversing of that trend—at least for the past year. It is also worth noting that even though the stock market continued its climb through the end of 2019, \$10M+ total giving is not keeping pace.

Over the previous three years, the number of \$10M+ gifts to higher education has been essentially flat, with fewer than a handful of gifts changing the totals each year. From 2018 to 2019, there was a decrease of 4 gifts or 2%, but that represented a decrease of \$1.5B or 19% in total giving. The bulk of that decline stems from the fact that there was no “Bloomberg-like” commitment. The largest gift commitment in 2019 was \$750M compared with Bloomberg's \$1.8B commitment in calendar year 2018.

While higher education continues to receive the bulk of \$10M+ gifts—68 percent in 2019—we are seeing a change in the balance of giving levels. During the period of recovery after the Great Recession, we saw growth in gifts less than \$100M. Since 2015, giving in that range has slowed and it is the \$100M+ gift level that is growing. That means the presence or absence of just one gift in the rarefied air of these mega gifts will define the story of \$10M+ giving in any one year. For instance, if you consider that the top gifts in each of the past seven years have ranged between \$400M and \$750M, for an average of nearly \$600M, it becomes even more clear how much one single gift, like Bloomberg's \$1.8B, can completely change the outcome of that year to an overall increase in an otherwise declining year.

As we move through the current calendar year, it is hard to accurately predict future trends. This year, in particular, is starting off with some significant national and worldwide societal, public health, and political uncertainties that have already begun to affect consumer confidence in the U.S. While what this will mean for philanthropy is uncertain, it is perhaps more imperative than ever that we use data to inform our understanding of charitable giving. Marts & Lundy's continued research, along with The Philanthropy Outlook 2020 & 2021 and the Giving USA annual report are tools nonprofit leaders and donors alike can use to develop timely strategies amidst a dynamic philanthropy landscape.

Dan Macaluso
Senior Consultant & Principal

Summary of Findings

Total \$10M+ Gift Count to Higher Education

-2% 208 gifts in 2018 vs. 204 gifts in 2019

Total \$10M+ Value of Gifts to Higher Education

-19% \$7.96B in 2018 vs. \$6.46B in 2019

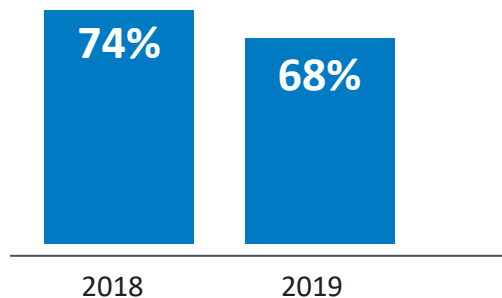
\$10M+ Giving to Higher Education by Recipient State

#1 California

#2 Illinois

California received 40 \$10M+ gifts followed by Illinois, which received 18.

Percentage of Total \$10M+ Giving Directed to Higher Education



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Data Source

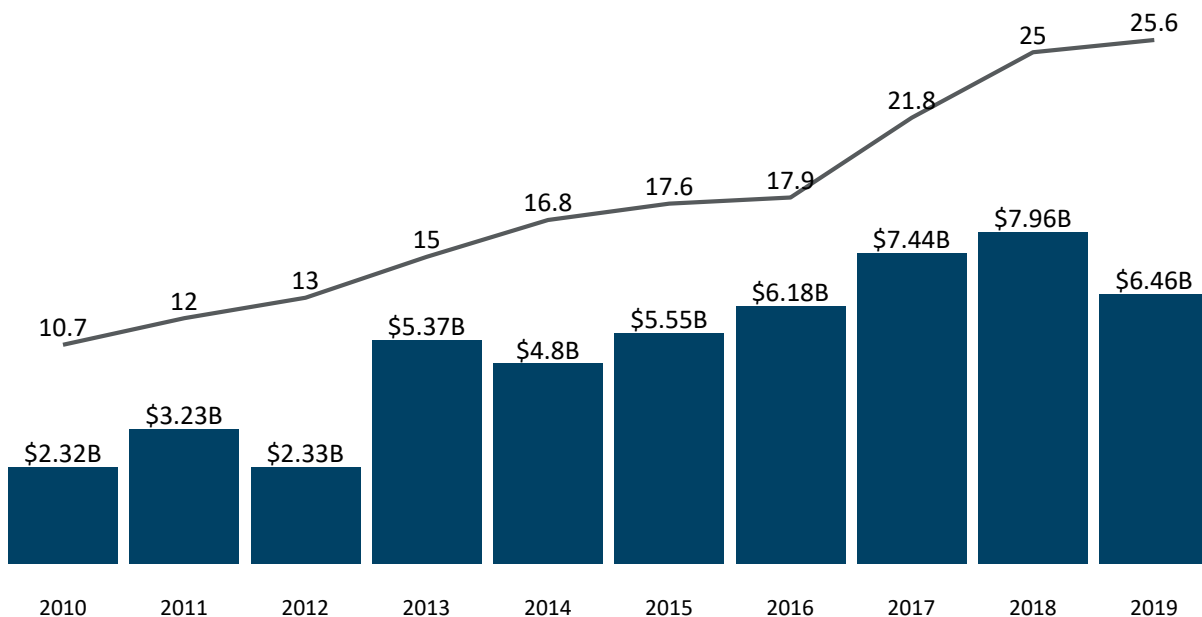
Our analysis focuses on gifts and commitments of \$10M or more primarily from one source: *The Chronicle of Philanthropy* "Big Charitable Gifts" database. The *Chronicle's* list has been supplemented with additional \$10M+ gifts and commitments identified through an automated search of gift announcements on Twitter. All gift types have been included in this analysis: Non-Cash/Gifts-in-Kind, Bequests, Challenge and Matching, and Gifts (including pledges). This analysis reflects only gifts and commitments made by individuals, directly or through family foundations, to recipient organizations within the United States. Gifts made to academic medical centers are generally included as gifts to Higher Education.

Figure 1: \$10M+ Giving to Education through 2019

All dollars in billions.

Line represents year-end value of Dow Jones Industrial Average.

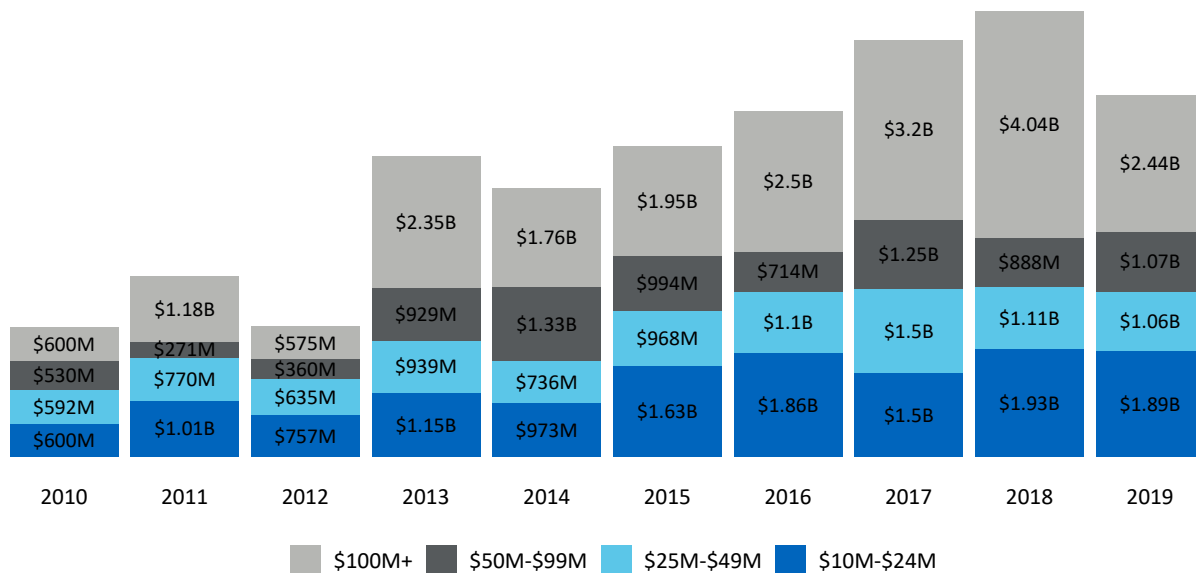
Source: *The Chronicle of Philanthropy* and Twitter. Includes gifts and commitments.



While \$10M+ giving to Higher Education is down 19 percent from 2018 and down 13 percent compared to 2017, it is still higher than the preceding nine years, 2008-2016. The number of \$10M+ gifts stayed nearly the same between 2018 and 2019: 208 and 204 respectively.

Figure 2: \$10M+ Gift Dollars through 2019 by Level

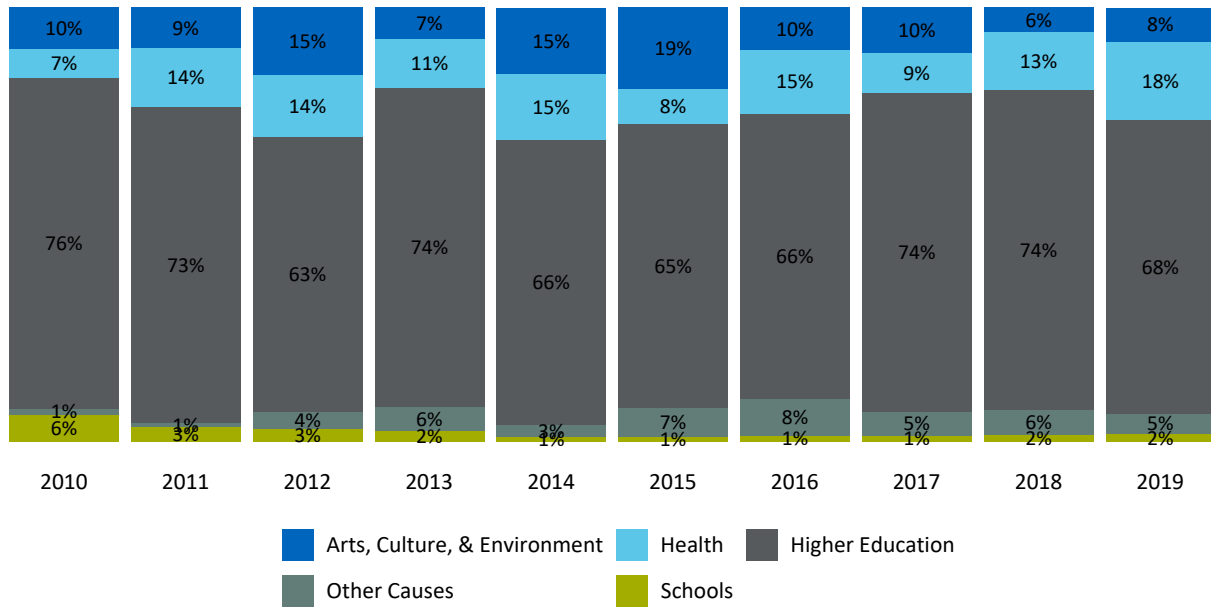
Source: *The Chronicle of Philanthropy* and Twitter. Includes gifts and commitments.



The total value of gifts between \$10M and \$49M has been flat since 2016, and the \$50M-\$100M has remained essentially flat as well. 2018 was the first year in the past 11 where the single largest gift identified during the year changed the direction of year over year \$10M+ revenue from a decrease to an increase. In 2019 we are seeing the same situation in that the absence of an exceptionally large gift drove a decrease in \$10M+ revenue.

Figure 4: \$10M+ Giving to Higher Education as a Percentage of Total \$10M+ Giving

Source: *The Chronicle of Philanthropy* and Twitter. Includes gifts and commitments.



Though the percentage of total \$10M+ giving to higher education was slightly down in 2019, it remains within the normal range compared to its 10-year performance.

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Thank you to Alison Rane, Consultant and Director, Research and Development, and to Nick Wagner, Data Manager, Analytical Solutions, for their work on this report. A special thanks to Nelson Lees, who for many years made this report possible. Though he has retired, we are pleased to ensure that the good work he began will continue in earnest.

