

United Way Says Giving Didn't Grow Enough to Meet Inflation as the Economy Sputters
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By Raymund Flandez

The sputtering economy made fundraising difficult for local United Ways across the country last year, with contributions of \$3.86-billion virtually unchanged from 2009's total of \$3.84-billion.

When inflation is taken into account, though, that 0.4% growth is technically a drop of 1.2%

Still, it is an improvement over the previous year, when donations dropped 5%, and United Way officials say it's a strong showing given the shaky job and stock markets.

"We're still in a difficult economy that could even be more difficult," says Sal Fabens, United Way Worldwide spokeswoman. "Despite being in a recession, to have some growth is hopeful to me."

United Way's traditional sources of donations continue to struggle: Contributions solicited through workplace fundraising drives grew just 0.2%, and corporate giving was down 1.4%.

But the organization has been helped by its efforts, to diversify its fundraising approach. United Way says efforts to raise money from particular types of donors, such as well-to-do women, and campaigns to seek out large or planned gifts helped make up for sluggish giving in 2010 among less-affluent people.

United Way reports:

- Fund raising from affinity groups grew at 11.9%, raising more than \$200-million in 2010. Donations collected by the United Way Women's Leadership Council grew by 110%.
- Contributions to endowments and planned gifts increased by 12.7%, with bequests rising 27.3%.
- Donations of \$10,000 or more from individuals, which accounted for more than one-third of total giving, rose by 1.5%.