

ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

Cantus Fiscal 2019 Individual Giving Final Results

As reported earlier this month, individual giving to our Annual Fund totaled \$164,679. This is exceptionally good news ... and an all-time high! We exceeded our goal by ~\$12,000, raised our FY18 total by 11.5% and added to our surplus (cash in the bank) going into our next year.

We owe our success to many 'contributions': beautiful singing, inspired programs, four regular direct mailings, hundreds of thank-you calls, hundreds more reminder/request calls and some plain ol' good luck. THANK YOU all for your many significant efforts! You truly made a difference.

It's important to recognize and learn from several positive trends that we can see in our results:

- Total giving grew nearly \$17,000 from our previous fiscal year in an overall environment where U.S. charitable giving was down ~1% in the most recent year.
- ~645 different donors gave to Cantus ('Recurring' and some Board gifts are monthly).
- ~250-275 new donor households gave to Cantus who had not given in FY18.
- We received 14 gifts of \$2,500+ (up from 8) for ~\$54,000 (up from \$29,000).
- Mostly resulting from the above, our average gift increased ~15%, from \$164 to \$188.
- Bucking national patterns, the number of donors giving \$100-\$999 grew by 12% (~\$12,000) suggesting these donors have capacity for increased giving (even if our gain came at other organizations' 'expense').
- A special Spring 2019 effort targeting those who gave in late 2017, but not in late 2018, 'brought back' ~45 of these donors and raised ~\$4,500 we may not have otherwise received. (Nationally, after a new donor has 'lapsed' for more than two years, there's only ~2% chance of them giving again!)
- Our 55% donor 'retention' rate continues to run well above the ~45% national average.
- Board giving totaled \$23,481, higher than in either of the two previous fiscal years.

Several challenging trends materialized that are important to recognize for our future efforts:

- The number of individual donors decreased ~5% from ~678 who gave in FY18. Some of this was due to the higher standard deduction and fewer 'fans' being able to itemize.
- Consistent with the above, we received 12% fewer gifts of less than \$100 than in FY18.
- ~300 donors who gave in FY18 did not give in FY19 (80% of new donors don't 'renew' the next year).
- We received no 'matching gifts' from donors' employers versus ~\$1,800 in both FY18 and FY17.
- Our entire increased giving amount can be explained by those who gave \$2,500+.
- Gifts from concert inserts and ticket orders declined over 50%, so we had to work harder (via our mailings and phone calls) to make this up.

Finally, we had some good luck and unexpected surprises:

- We received an unsolicited \$5,000 check from a foundation that Joe agreed to count as an Individual Gift because we had not applied for it, as we do for most foundation gifts.
- A generous couple gave \$5,000 in late July 2017 and \$10,000 a year later in early August 2018. Because of our FY dates, we say they gave in FY17 and FY19 (but not FY18).
- Had #1 not occurred and #2 been a week earlier, our FY19 results would have been \$8,000 LESS than FY18 and over \$3,000 SHORT of our FY19 goal. (But we'll take it!)

Perhaps the most significant conclusions are that it takes all of us, each year, to create the successes we've enjoyed. And to rise to even higher levels of success will require us to try new things – along with what already works. Congratulations again, everyone! Now on to FY20 and our 25th Anniversary celebrations!!

Jonathan Guyton, FY19 Engagement Committee Co-Chair