



## The Generosity Market Heats Up

*By Kathy Brown*

Once the turkey has been carved, pies consumed, and dishes cleaned, don't declare an end to Thanksgiving 2020 just yet. Linger on "thanksgiving" a little longer, because Tuesday, December 1, is when the "giving" part of the holiday really kicks in.

GivingTuesday, held annually on the Tuesday after Thanksgiving, began in 2012 in New York as a day to encourage people to do good. This global generosity movement saw sixty countries participate with donations totaling nearly \$2 billion in 2019.

Given COVID-19 and its impact on the economy, one might expect philanthropy to be sluggish in 2020. However, the national GivingTuesday organization reported recently that financial donations to nonprofits are up across all categories year-to-date. Gifts from major donors (\$1,000-plus) are up 6%, while gifts from mid-level donors (\$250-\$999) are up 8.1%. Activity in the smaller donor category (less than \$250) is especially robust, with donations up almost 20% over a year ago.

"This is a very responsive marketplace," Woodrow Rosenbaum, GivingTuesday's chief data officer, said in a recent webinar. "This may be the hottest generosity market that we've ever seen."

Locally, SHARE Charlotte, a platform that connects volunteers and donors to more than 400 nonprofits, powers GivingTuesday. #GivingTuesdayCLT has influenced more than \$28 million in value given to Charlotte nonprofits over the past seven years and has inspired over 25,000 new donors.

Melissa Hovey, WIF member and SHARE Charlotte's director of marketing, said in a recent interview that though philanthropy is flourishing nationally, in Charlotte the situation is "more of a mixed bag."

At the start of the pandemic, Charlotte-area nonprofits that had big spring fundraisers planned were forced to host virtual events or cancel, which was devastating for nonprofits relying on spring events for operating funds.

However, as virtual events are becoming the norm, some area nonprofits hosting fundraisers online in the fall were able to meet their financial goals. This was due to the nonprofits' creative virtual events as well as zero venue and catering costs.

"For those nonprofits that had a good support base and did not just retreat but instead came up with virtual volunteer opportunities or other ways to keep donors engaged, things aren't as hard for them right now," Hovey said.

"The message the community needs to hear is that nonprofits are hurting, so anything you can do this year to help is fantastic," she said. "We want people to be generous, and it's not always about the money—it includes volunteerism, in-kind donations, and general kindness."



WIF members can get involved by making a gift to the WIF Annual Fund or to any local nonprofit. Visit [GivingTuesdayCLT.org](https://GivingTuesdayCLT.org) to sign up to give your time, make a financial donation, or purchase much-needed goods from a nonprofit's Amazon Smile wish list.

Finally, help amplify generosity in Charlotte by posting reminders on social media. Remember to use the hashtag #GivingTuesdayCLT.