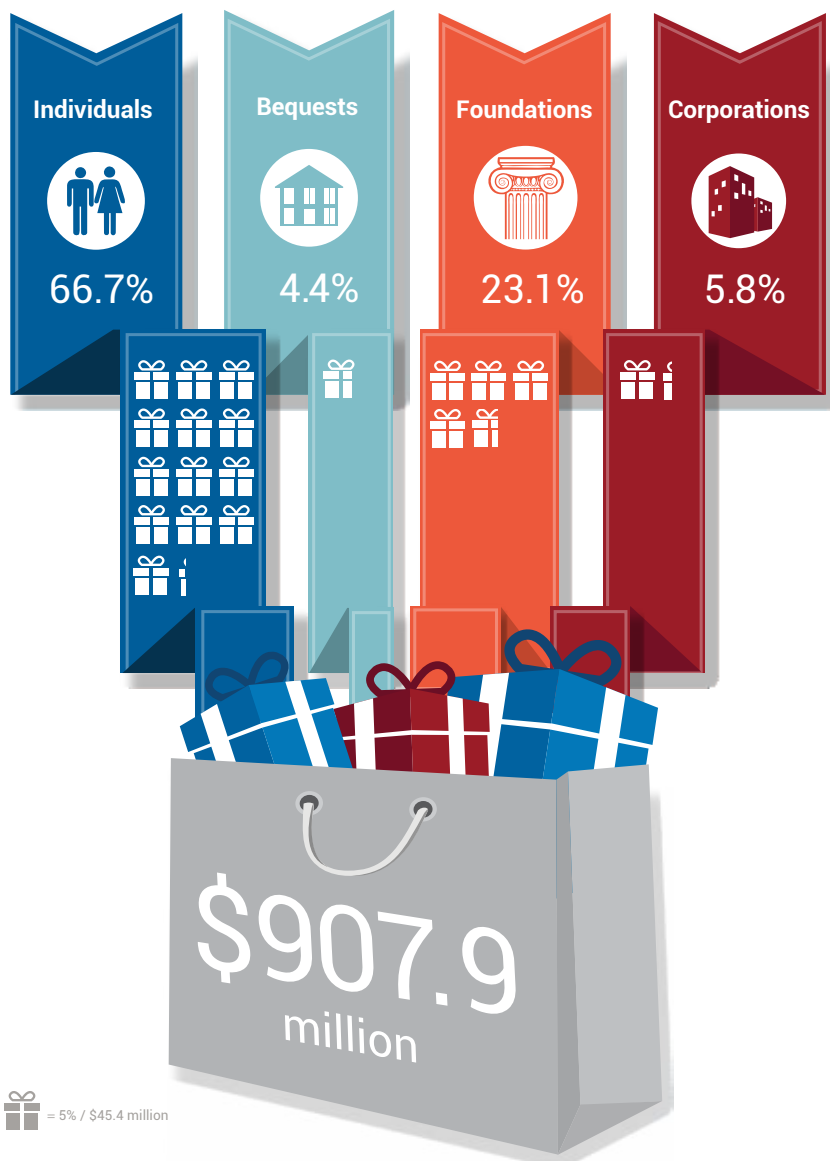




# Estimate of Charitable Giving in Kent County, Michigan

**E**ach year, the Johnson Center for Philanthropy estimates the total amount of charitable giving in Kent County, Michigan, using multiple sources of data from the most recent year for which adequate data are available. The estimates given in this data brief are for the year 2013. Separate estimates are given for the amount donated from four sources: individuals, bequests/estates, foundations, and corporations. The annual *Giving USA* report is the source of national comparison data. Dollar amounts have not been adjusted for inflation.



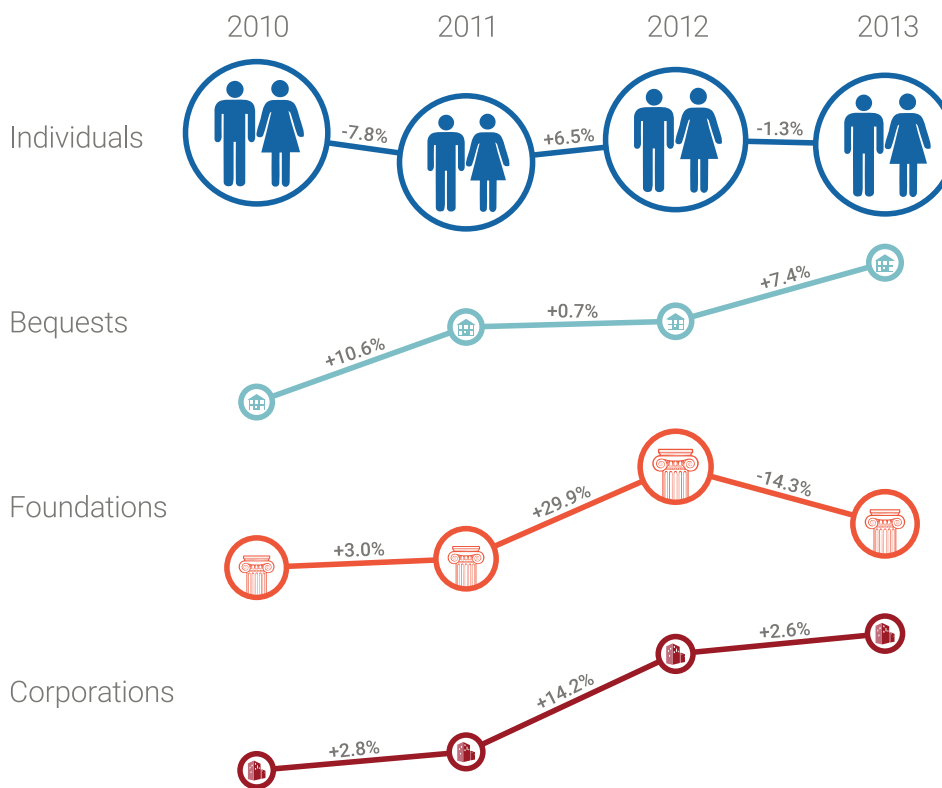
We estimate that donors of all types located in Kent County gave a total of **\$907,877,678** in 2013. This represents a moderate decrease of slightly more than **\$39 million** from our estimate of 2012 total giving.

Of this \$907.88 million, the majority (**66.7%**) came from individuals, but foundations also contributed a significant portion (**23.1%**). In fact, foundations in Kent County contributed a much higher percent of total giving than foundations across the nation (**14.6%**).

The data suggest that Kent County continues to be particularly generous when compared with the rest of the state. While **6%** of Michigan households are in Kent County, individuals in the county contributed **9%** of Michigan's total estimated individual giving in 2013.



The figure and table below show the year-to-year changes, from 2010 to 2013, in estimated giving from each type of donor in Kent County.

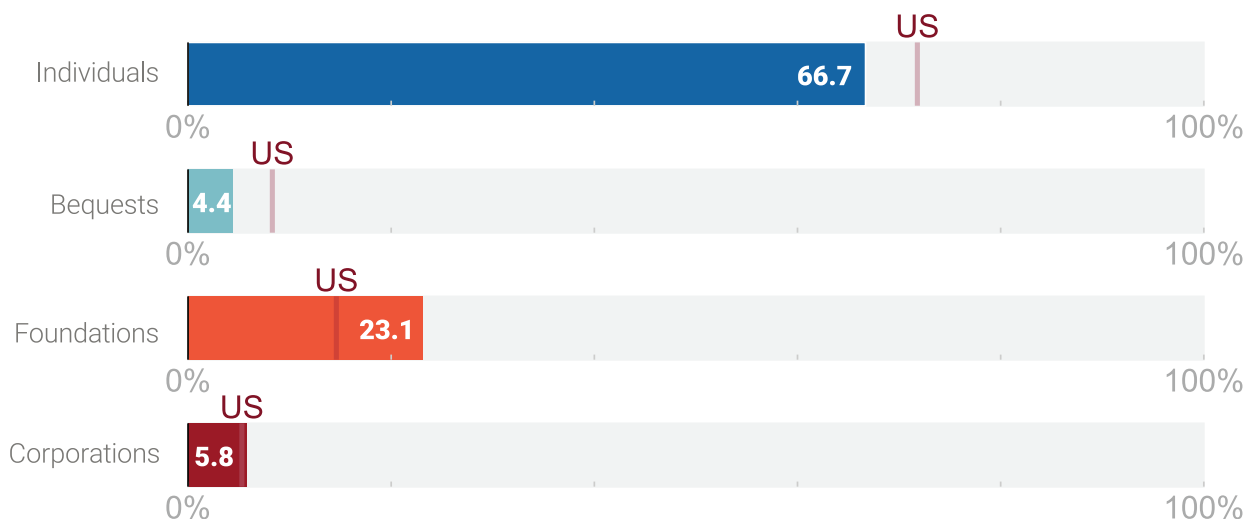


| Estimated Giving (in millions) |                 |                |                 |                 |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| DONOR TYPE                     | 2010            | 2011           | 2012            | 2013            |
| Individuals                    | \$625.39        | \$576.63       | \$614.07        | \$605.79        |
| Bequests                       | \$33.54         | \$37.08        | \$37.35         | \$40.12         |
| Foundations                    | \$182.82        | \$184.38       | \$244.78        | \$209.60        |
| Corporations                   | \$43.52         | \$44.72        | \$51.05         | \$52.37         |
| <b>Total</b>                   | <b>\$885.28</b> | <b>\$842.8</b> | <b>\$947.25</b> | <b>\$907.88</b> |

- Over the four years, the trend in total estimated giving is upward, though there is considerable year-to-year variation. It decreased in 2013 by 4.1%, following an increase of 11.9% from 2011-2012.
- These recent annual variations in Kent County giving were somewhat different than national trends. Total annual estimated giving nationally increased by 4.4% from 2012-2013, compared to the 4.1% decrease in Kent County. Furthermore, from 2011-2012, Kent County giving increased at a greater rate (12.4%) than did giving across the nation (4.2%). This year-to-year volatility in local giving could be caused by a number of factors, and shows why it is important to track giving data over time.



The figure below compares the estimated 2013 giving by type of donor for Kent County and the United States as a whole.



- The percentage of total estimated charitable giving coming from foundations in Kent County is much greater than the percentage from foundations across the U.S. (23.1% vs 14.6%) and the percentage coming from individuals is slightly lower in Kent County than in the U.S. overall (66.7% vs 71.8%). This does not necessarily mean individuals in Kent County give less than individuals in other communities. Rather, these differences in percentage from the national estimates are likely caused by the relatively higher level of foundation giving in Kent County compared to other parts of the country.
- From 2012–2013 Kent County individual giving decreased by 1.3%, compared to an increase of 4.2% nationally.
- Foundation giving in Kent County from 2012–2013 decreased by 14.3%, while nationally it increased by 5.7%. There could be a number of reasons for this decline, and foundation giving in Kent County is still a larger percentage of the total than it is nationally.
- A large portion of total foundation giving in Kent County comes from several large foundations located there. For example, the 2013 annual giving by six foundations created by one extended family accounted for 42.8% of Kent County’s total foundation giving.
- The percentage of estimated giving coming from corporations is about the same in Kent County and across the nation (5.8% vs 5.3%). Corporate giving in Kent County also increased from 2012–2013 by 2.6% while nationally it decreased by 1.9%.



## Notes on Estimation Methods

**E**stimating the amount of charitable giving in a given community is very difficult because of the diverse ways that people give and the lack of precise data on giving that is specified by region. However, calculating such estimates can help communities and their leaders understand the scale of their philanthropic contributions, track them over time, and use them for planning or other purposes.

The most respected estimate of total giving across the U.S. is provided each year in the publication *Giving USA*. We adapted that method as closely as possible to estimate charitable giving in Kent County. Note that, like other giving estimates, the one here is likely an underestimation of actual total charitable giving, because of individuals who do not report their full giving, the amounts given “in kind,” and other factors.

We have adjusted the data reported in previous years’ briefs, based on newly available data from the Internal Revenue Service and the U.S. Census.

These figures estimate giving by donors located in Kent County. We have not analyzed how much of that giving is distributed inside vs. outside of Kent County.

Figures for individual giving include estimates of both itemized and non-itemized deductions. Giving for itemized deductions used the total itemized charitable deductions that Kent County tax filers claimed on their tax forms. The estimate for non-itemizers was calculated using the average giving (nationally) per household, based on the number of households in Kent County that did not itemize their taxes. This was an updated method in this year’s data brief, as more detailed county level data has become available. The same method was used to calculate an estimate of total individual giving for the state of Michigan, which then allowed for an assessment of the percent of statewide giving coming from Kent County. The American Community Survey five-year estimates were used to determine the percent of Michigan households in Kent County.

Bequest giving is based on the number of deaths of people over age 55 in Kent County multiplied by the size of the average bequest (from research conducted by Russell N. James).

Data for the foundation grantmaking total comes from the Foundation Center and includes only those foundations classified as independent, community, or operating. Several large public charities such as medical research and hospital foundations, arts organization trusts, and federated giving institutions are not included, following the *Giving USA* method of tracking those contributions when the initial philanthropic gift is made.

Corporate giving includes contributions from corporate foundations listed in Foundation Center data, as well as an estimate of direct giving by corporations using data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis on the GDP of the Grand Rapids/Wyoming MSA.



Estimates prepared by the Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy at Grand Valley State University. For all inquiries, please contact the Johnson Center at 616-331-7585.