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Companies Strengthen Social Investment Strategies, Reinforce Commitments to Stakeholders Despite Continued Global Uncertainties

Largest corporate social engagement survey of 258 companies finds modest increases in rates of corporate giving across the US

October 24, 2017, New York, NY— In the largest, most robust, industry-leading and internationally-recognized research of corporate social engagement, [CECP: The CEO Force for Good](#), in association with [The Conference Board](#), found in their annual *Giving in Numbers: 2017 Edition* report that the world's leading corporations are **emphasizing strategy and outcomes more than ever with 60% of companies allocating more resources to programs that align with their strategic social cause area and 87% of companies measuring the impact of at least one grant.** Additionally, median **total giving** among all companies **increased by 2.3% between 2014 and 2016**, with **pharmaceutical companies seeing the greatest increases in societal investments. Support for the arts and cultural programs is also on the rise, with corporate cash giving growing 48% in the last three years.**

The **top 25% of companies**—or top quartile--when measuring total giving, **gave at least \$53 million** in 2016, or **1.70% of pre-tax profit**. Median total giving in 2016 among all 258 respondents was \$19 million (0.91% of pre-tax profit).

CECP, a coalition of more than 200 of the world's largest companies with a combined annual revenue of more than \$7 trillion, released, in association with The Conference Board, *Giving in Numbers: 2017 Edition*, a report on **the largest social engagement survey of 258 of the world's largest companies.** Now in its 12th year, *Giving in Numbers* is the leading study on the [funds, resources, and skills](#) that companies invest globally to solve pressing societal challenges.

"This past year has been marked by unprecedented global challenges and widespread uncertainty, yet the business community has once again stepped up on critical issues," said **Daryl Brewster, CEO, CECP.** "*Giving in Numbers* shares vital data and trends on how leading companies are effectively addressing social issues, from the arts to social services, and plots a course for corporations playing a role in standing up for their varied stakeholders."

Key findings from this year's survey include:

- **Total giving increased:** Median **total giving** among all companies **increased by 2.3% between 2014 and 2016.**
- **Companies are seeking deeper partnerships:** Looking to increase impact of their grants to organizations, companies are working with fewer partners and decreasing the total number of grants, while enlarging the remaining grants. **Six out of ten companies are allocating their giving resources into the program area they consider their strategic/signature program.**



- **Measuring outcomes became a more widespread practice:** Assessing societal impact or outcomes of corporate initiatives remains a prevalent practice among leading companies, and in **2016, 87% of companies measured the impact of at least one grant (up from 85% in 2014).**
- **Support for Culture and Arts is on the rise:** Giving in Numbers data revealed that **cash giving to Culture and Arts programs grew by 48% between 2014 and 2016**, the most among all program areas. Multiple sources point to an increasing relevance of Culture and Arts among companies as a cause area, as well as the positive impact this program area has in the well-being of communities.
- **The Health Care industry made a big impact on aggregate total giving:** Companies in the **facilities/medical equipment subindustry accounted for three-quarters of the aggregate decrease in total giving.** On the other side, **pharmaceutical companies drove the largest proportion of the aggregate total giving increase across industries.**

“The findings from this year’s survey, along with other primary research conducted by CECP, confirms that social investments made by leading companies are doing more and doing better to ensure community stability and well-being,” said **Carmen Perez, Director, Data Insights, CECP.** “For businesses looking to fine-tune, expand, or pursue effective social strategies, *Giving in Numbers* offers concise guidance and indispensable benchmarking.”

“A variety of recent events both natural and political have highlighted the importance of corporate giving,” said **Jonathan Spector, CEO, The Conference Board.** “It’s likely that importance will grow as climate change threatens more natural disasters and federal funding for important social causes, such as the arts, is put under a microscope. Although we’ve seen a slight increase in corporate giving in the past three years, data from the most recent 12 months suggests contributions are plateauing. Corporate giving teams need all the tools in their arsenal to advocate for higher budgets as nonprofits turn increasingly to companies for funding. *Giving in Numbers* is one of the most important tools available.”

Key insights from the *Giving in Numbers* survey of 2016 data were released in front of an audience of 250 corporate societal engagement professionals at the [CECP Summit](#) in May 2017. CECP also created an accompanying infographic illustrating five indicators from *Giving in Numbers: 2017 Edition*, available [here](#).

Custom analysis of the data is available to CECP-affiliated companies at no additional cost; these companies can access data through CECP’s [secure online portal](#) or by calling CECP. 2016 data is now available online.

CECP is grateful to **Citi, Newman's Own Foundation, PwC US, The Travelers Companies, Inc., and USAA** for their support in making *Giving in Numbers* possible.

Note to Editors: Carmen Perez is available for comment and a more in-depth look at the community investment data collected from 258 of the world’s largest companies.

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ABOUT CECP: THE CEO FORCE FOR GOOD

CECP is a CEO-led coalition that believes that a company’s social strategy—how it engages with key stakeholders including employees, communities, customers, and investors—determines company success. Founded in 1999 by actor and philanthropist Paul Newman to create a better world through business, CECP has grown to a movement of more than 200 of the world’s largest companies that represent \$7 trillion in revenues, \$18.6 billion in societal investment, 13 million employees, and \$15 trillion in assets under management. CECP helps companies transform their social strategy by providing customized connections and networking, counsel and support, benchmarking and trends, and awareness building and recognition. <http://cecp.co>



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