

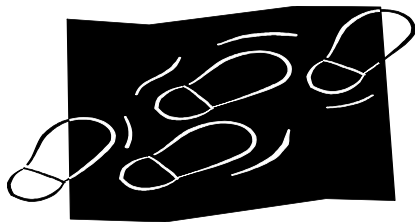
## Tracking Corporate Contributions

By Martha Cooney

The practice of corporations making donations to benefit human service, educational, cultural, civic, and other organizations has a long history. The Conference Board in its *Corporate Contributions: The View From 50 Years*, traces the tradition back to the middle of the nineteenth century when railroad companies began to sponsor the expanding YMCA movement in this country. The management of these companies felt obligated to donate funds because their workers needed economical places to stay as they worked on the railroads around the country.

From these beginnings, when direct contributions were considered illegal unless directly related to the business of the company, corporate philanthropy has grown to be not only a legal enterprise, but a multi-faceted, multi-million dollar one that has an impact on the bottom line of the recipients, and also on the reputation, strategy, and mission of the company.

According to the Foundation Center and the Conference Board, two organizations that track corporate philanthropy annually, contributions from companies in 1999 totaled about \$3 billion. This represents about eight percent of the \$23.3 billion in total contributions by U.S. grantmaking foundations recorded by the Foundation Center in 1999, and an 18.4% rise in corporate contributions from 1998.



In figures reported by the Center in 2000, corporate contributions were experiencing a slow-down, with

growth at the 9 percent level. This reflects changes in the economy as well as sharper scrutiny by company executives of charitable activities.

Tracking corporate giving was given a big boost in March 2000. Private foundations are now required to supply copies (at a reasonable

### Sources for the 990-PF:

*Grantsmart*

<http://www.grantsmart.org/search/search.html>

*Guidestar*

<http://www.guidestar.org>

*Foundation Center Tutorial*

<http://fdncenter.org/learn/demystify/index.html>

rate) of their three most recent tax returns to anyone who requests them. The IRS form 990-PF is the tax return that must be filed annually by all private foundations and is public information. This form is available at several web sites (see box). Although many corporations also make direct contributions to charities that are not tracked in the Form 990-PF, this filing provides much useful fiscal data as well as a complete grants list, indicating the amount given to each recipient (see page 10 of each filing). The Foundation Center provides an excellent tutorial and explanatory material to “demystify” the 990-PF.

*Martha Cooney is the Director of the Center for Business Research (CBR) at the C.W. Post Campus of Long Island University.*

## Web Sites:

**www.aafrc.org**: The American Association of Fund-raising Counsel (AAFR) was founded in 1935 to promote the need for professionalism and ethical standards of practice, and to influence the creation of laws governing philanthropy. The AAFRC publishes the annual *Giving USA* which provide statistics and reports trends in philanthropy.

**www.corphilanthropy.org**: Actor Paul Newman serves as the spokesman for the Committee to Encourage Corporate Philanthropy. This organization serves as the only national forum of business CEOs with an agenda exclusively focused on corporate philanthropy. Their goal is to encourage corporate America to give at least \$15 billion a year to charity.

**www.conference-board.org**: The Conference Board has been tracking corporate contributions since 1947. Its annual survey is widely quoted and represents one of many management surveys produced by this organization based in New York City.

**http://fdncenter.org**: The Foundation Center website provides a wealth of information on all aspects of foundation giving. Statistical data, a searchable database for grants, and excellent support and tutorial materials are provided.

**www.ncrp.org**: The National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy's mission is to make philanthropy more responsive to people with the least wealth and opportunity. Their aim is to promote a new vision of philanthropy, as well as critique and reform philanthropy.

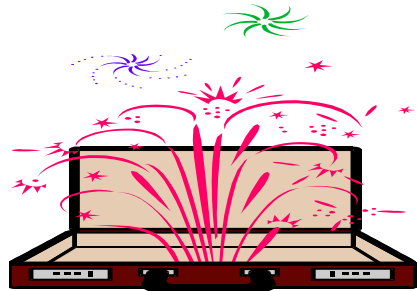


## What's New in the CBR:

Assistant Professors Dona McDermott and Elizabeth Mezick were recently granted tenure at the C.W. Post Campus of Long Island University.

This spring, Professor Elizabeth Mezick graduated with a M.S. in Accountancy from Long Island University.

Linda McCormack joined the CBR staff last September and assumed the editorship of *Business Alert*. Previously, Ms. McCormack worked as a law librarian at the firms, Shearman & Sterling and Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson.



## AACSB ACCREDITATION

As of Spring 2001, the College of Management's bachelor's and master's degree programs in business are accredited by AACSB - The International Association for Management Education. The AACSB Peer Review Team Report stated that the professional staff of the Center for Business Research is to be commended for its planning and continuous support of the program and students. Students are increasing their use of the library's resources and are very satisfied with the support they receive through the CBR. The College joins an elite group of colleges and universities that are AACSB accredited.

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