

Foundation Giving Posts 10 Percent Gain in 2007 Giving Expected To Grow Modestly in 2008, Despite Challenging Economic Environment

New York, NY — May 2, 2008. The country's more than 72,000 grantmaking foundations increased their giving to \$42.9 billion in 2007, according to *Foundation Growth and Giving Estimates: Current Outlook* (2008 Edition), released today by the Foundation Center. This estimated 10 percent gain followed a 7.1 percent increase in 2006.

Contributing to this rise was close to 12 percent growth in foundation assets in 2006 — the first double-digit gain in assets recorded since 1999. The establishment of new foundations, while occurring more slowly than in the late 1990s and early 2000s, also helped to raise the level of foundation giving.

Key estimates reported include:

- Independent and family foundations — which represent almost nine out of 10 foundations — raised their giving by 12.7 percent in 2007, up from an increase of 9 percent in 2006.
- Corporate foundation giving rose 6.6 percent in 2007, following a modest 2.6 percent increase in 2006.
- Community foundations raised their giving by 13.9 percent in 2007, up from 11.8 percent growth in 2006 — the fourth consecutive year of double-digit increases.

Although the current economic downturn makes projections difficult, findings from the Foundation Center's 2008 "Foundation Giving Forecast Survey" suggest that prospects for growth in giving this year remain modestly positive. Just over half of the survey's respondents expect to increase their giving in 2008, with the biggest foundations being most likely to expect increased giving. An estimated 9 percent rise in foundation assets in 2007 to a record \$670 billion also points to foundations continuing to show positive, albeit more modest, growth in giving in the current year.

"Foundations are sometimes confused with individual donors in how their giving will respond to economic fluctuations," said Sara Engelhardt, president of the Foundation Center. "In fact, foundations — especially the larger, endowed grantmakers — often engage in long-range planning to ensure that they can maintain relatively stable levels of support for their grantees, regardless of periodic dips in their assets."

About the Foundation Giving Survey

Giving projections for 2007 and 2008 reported in *Foundation Growth and Giving Estimates* are based on responses to the Foundation Center's 2008 "Foundation Giving Forecast Survey" from 1,240 large and mid-size foundations across the country, combined with year-end economic indicators. Survey respondents also provided information on their changing grantmaking strategies and on how they are addressing issues of diversity in their grantmaking activities. (Findings based on the diversity-related questions will be included in a separate report to be released by the Foundation Center later in 2008.) The report also presents findings on actual 2006 giving and assets tracked by the Foundation Center for the more than 72,000 independent, corporate, community, and grantmaking operating foundations in the United States.

Foundation Growth and Giving Estimates is part of the annual *Foundations Today Series* on foundation growth and giving and can be **downloaded** at no charge from the Gain Knowledge area of the Foundation Center's web site. The Center will release an in-depth examination of 2006 foundation trends in *Foundation Yearbook: Facts and Figures on Private and Community Foundations* this summer. "Highlights" of *Foundation Giving Trends*, 2008 edition, the Foundation Center's annual examination of funding trends of more than 1,200 of the largest U.S. foundations (released in February), are also available at **Gain Knowledge**. These reports are available separately or through subscription to the complete series (\$95) and can be purchased at the Foundation Center's online **Marketplace**.