

CHARITIES LOOK FOR FINANCING IN DIFFERENT METHODS



As the country continues to struggle through the post-recession fallout, companies and individuals alike have stopped donating money, food, and clothing to charities. This means that nonprofit organizations have had even tougher times trying to feed the poor and clothe the homeless. Plenty of these nonprofit organizations have had to close their doors because of a lack of donations. The Chronicle of Philanthropy claims that there are 400 charities that raise the most money in the country. Those 400 charities have had trouble making up for decreases in donations as a result of the recession. There was a 0.2 percent increase last year in donations, making giving to nonprofit organizations almost null and void. These 400 charities went through an 11 percent decline for donations in 2009, so the 0.2 percent increase makes almost no difference. The Chronicle reported that most of the charities do not expect to see a turnaround in donations for quite some time. To make matters worse, government funding for human service nonprofit organizations has decreased greatly too. As fundraising has become a major challenge to nonprofits, they are trying to find alternative ways to finance their operations in order to keep feeding the hungry and clothing the homeless. "When people were ready for placement, we couldn't find them jobs," said Brenda Palms Barber, executive director of the North Lawndale Employment Network and chief executive of Sweet Beginnings. "So I decided we would become their first employment. I knew we could not depend on government funding. We couldn't depend on private foundation funding. We had to change. We had to come up with an earned income strategy. We are seeing growth even in a really tough economy." Sweet Beginnings hires anywhere from eight to 10 men and women per quarter who work 90 days. Once their 90 days are up, they are then assisted in finding a permanent job in another sector. Sweet Beginnings sells its honey at Whole Foods stores in five Midwestern states and the organization has an apiary at the O'Hare Airport in Chicago. Sweet Beginnings is a nonprofit group that has a recidivism rate of less than four percent despite the national average being 65 percent. "We can't just do what we've always done and expect to make headway in repairing the world," David Brand, president and chief executive of the Alliance for Global Good, said. "Innovation is essential. We want to take an operation and help it grow and mature." Charities across the country are doing what they can to raise money in an effort to keep their doors open. There are quite a few food delivery organizations that typically handout thousands of turkeys to food banks across the country each year during the holidays. Instead, most of these charities are struggling to collect as little as 500 turkeys right now.

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