



Fairfield County's Giving Day 2015

A report to the community

Fairfield County's Giving Day resulted in over \$1 million raised. But what else happened? The Giving Day team at the Community Foundation analyzed data from March 5, 2015 and produced a report that reveals what happened with nonprofits, and donors, as well as some surprises for the day.

This key findings report dives deeper into the nonprofit experience including use of the technology, social media, donor giving behavior, among other interesting topics.

The most valuable detail outlines lessons learned and maps a pathway for how organizers and the nonprofits can better prepare in the coming year for Fairfield County's Giving Day on March 10, 2016.

Overview

Hosted by Fairfield County's Community Foundation, with lead sponsor Bank of America, Fairfield County's Giving Day inspired and empowered the region to raise as much money as possible for nonprofit organizations in just 24 hours through online donations. It invited those who love Fairfield County to come together and make an incredibly powerful, collective impact by supporting local nonprofits on March 5, 2015.

Nonprofits drove March 5th and made it a success. While Fairfield County's Giving Day raised the profile of the campaign, it was up to the nonprofits to drive donors to give to them on March 5th. The Community Foundation emphasized this importance to nonprofits, encouraging them to test new ideas, methods, and communication strategies.

To help nonprofits be successful, the Community Foundation provided the following:

Resources



orientation and informational meeting, access to CNE workshops, online nonprofit marketing toolkit with tips and templates, responsive customer support by the Giving Day team, and weekly emails with tips, ideas, best practices and reminders

Technology



high-volume donation platform (hosted by Kimbia), nonprofit-specific donation pages and website (FCGives.org), access to donor real-time data

Prize Pool



nearly \$100,000 in prizes for 10 competitive categories totaling 33 awards throughout the day to maintain momentum of donations and drive donors to give during specific times

Regional Marketing & Promotions

variety of paid and earned print & online news, social media, magazines, radio, town banners and signage, television, flash mob, facebook photo contest

Outcomes

In its second year, Fairfield County's Giving Day surpassed goals and all major outcomes compared with its inaugural year. With support from nearly 400 nonprofits, more money was raised, donor participation increased and nonprofit registration grew.

Total Raised

\$756,229

Comparison

2014

2015

\$1,066,091

Nonprofits

267

386

Donors

9,212

13,161

Average Gift



This year's Giving Day accumulated massive, regional media attention using diverse outlets and sources.

- 12 front page sticky note advertising on city and town daily and weekly newspapers
- 182,479 online impressions through online advertising with Hersam Acorn, Hearst and the Norwalk Hour news sources
- 5 print ads in Moffly Media's Greenwich, New Canaan/Darien, Stamford, Westport/Weston/Wilton & Fairfield Living magazines
- 151 commercials and 9 live announcements from Feb. 12-March 6 on-air at WEBE 108 and KC 101
- Channel 12 television and digital promotions
- 6 street banners in Westport, Fairfield, Norwalk, Ridgefield, Newtown and Stamford
- 3 college campuses-Fairfield University, Western CT State University and the University of Connecticut – displayed and distributed materials.
- 8 Library Community Partners in Brookfield, Stamford, Greenwich, Norwalk, Southport, Ridgefield, Rowayton and Westport promoted and distributed materials
- Marketing partnerships with Cultural Alliance of Fairfield County, Bridgeport Bluefish and Danbury Whalers
- Flash mob at Danbury Mall, choreographed and performed by nearly 100 kids from Creative Youth Productions
- And numerous press releases distributed by the Community Foundation as well as nonprofit organizations

Demographics of nonprofit organizations

Giving Days are structured to increase attention for the nonprofit sector and encourage local philanthropy. 401 organizations registered to leverage the Giving Day campaign to boost awareness for their mission and work. These organizations ranged in budget size, service population, mission and vision. Yet, they shared an incredible day of community giving and celebration of local philanthropy.

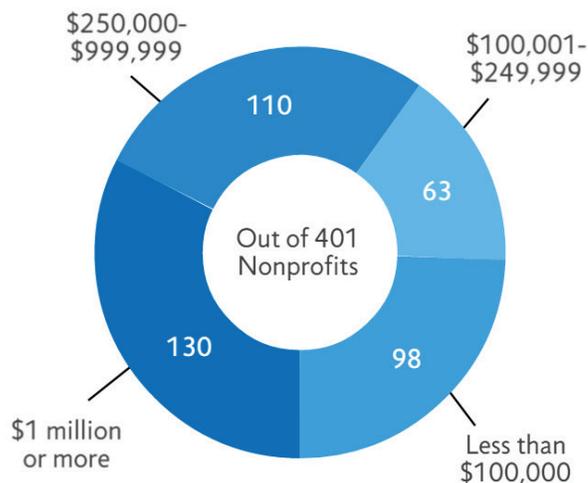
Nonprofits By Town

Nonprofit organizations represented nearly every town and a city in Fairfield County, and range in operating budget size.

| | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Stamford (61) | 8 Ridgefield (22) | 15 Stratford (4) |
| 2 Bridgeport (47) | 9 New Canaan (17) | 16 Brookfield (3) |
| 3 Norwalk (47) | 10 Newtown (15) | 17 Redding (3) |
| 4 Greenwich (31) | 11 Wilton (14) | 18 Weston (3) |
| 5 Westport (31) | 12 Darien (11) | 19 New Fairfield (2) |
| 6 Danbury (26) | 13 Trumbull (6) | 20 Shelton (2) |
| 7 Fairfield (24) | 14 Bethel (5) | 21 Sherman (1) |

*25 located outside of Fairfield County that serve the region

Nonprofits By Budget Size



Nonprofit categories

The two categories with the most nonprofit organizations-arts, culture and humanities AND human services- raised the most dollars. While only 14 organizations identified as animal related, this category raised more than nine other categories that contained a higher number of organizations.

Amount Raised by Category

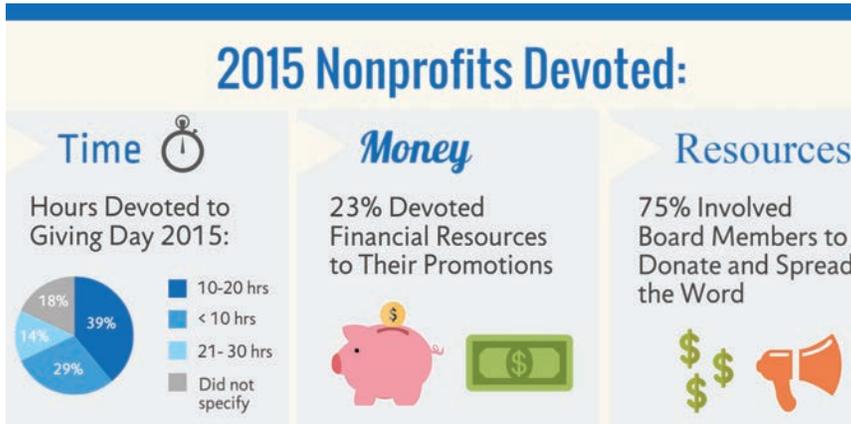


| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Advocacy (11 NPOs) (\$6,330 Raised) | Employment (25 NPOs) (\$6,586 Raised) | Mental Health & Crisis Intervention (17 NPOs) (\$33,136 Raised) |
| Animal Related (14 NPOs) (\$115,773.25 Raised) | Environment (25 NPOs) (\$28,791 Raised) | Other (40 NPOs) (\$61,506 Raised) |
| Arts Culture & Humanities (86 NPOs) (\$281,452 Raised) | Housing & Shelter (20 NPOs) (\$44,518 Raised) | Volunteerism (3 NPOs) (\$3,780 Raised) |
| Education (64 NPOs) (\$107,938 Raised) | Human Services (78 NPOs) (\$179,247 Raised) | Youth Development (39 NPOs) (\$91,889 Raised) |

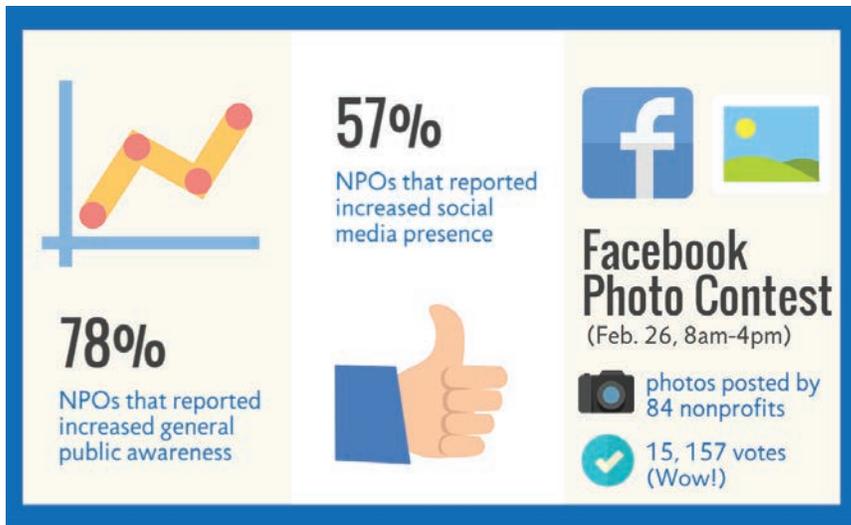
*NPOs = nonprofits

The nonprofit experience

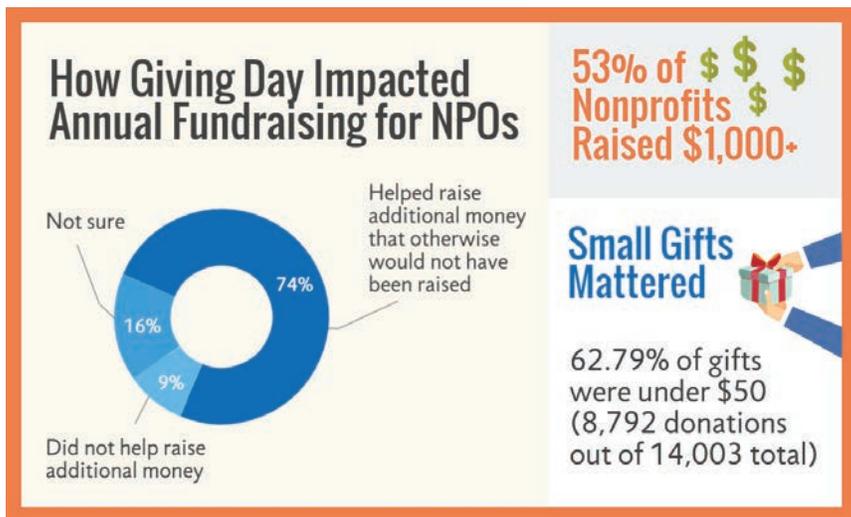
A successful nonprofit Giving Day campaign is largely dependent on the effort directed toward strategy and planning, and the cultivation of champion supporters to amplify their message.



Raising the profile of local nonprofits is a primary goal of Giving Day. A majority of nonprofits were successful in leveraging the Giving Day campaign to increase attention for their work in the community, especially on social media.



Did Giving Day help nonprofits add revenue to their annual fundraising? YES!



Bonus Incentives!

A prize pool of nearly \$100,000 created excitement throughout the day as organizations competed in the following prize categories.



Most Unique Donors

1st place \$25,000 prize winner- Curtain Call
2nd place \$15,000 prize winner -Music on the Hill

Most Dollars Raised

1st place \$20,000 prize winner -Wildlife in Crisis
2nd place \$10,000 prize winner-Domus Kids

Power Hours

\$1,000 prizes were awarded to organizations with the most unique donors in the following hours:

Rise and Shine Power Hour (6am-7am) winner- Ridgefield Chorale

Lunch Special Power Hour (12pm-1pm) winner- Curtain Call

Quitting Time Power Hour (4pm-5pm) winner- Curtain Call

Super Power Hour (7pm-8pm) winner-Ridgefield Chorale

Two Random \$1,000 Prize Drawings

Coffee Break Power Hour (10am-11am) winner: Greenwich Alliance for Education

Night Owl Power Hour (11pm-11:59pm) winner: Liberation Programs

Launch Prizes

The first 20 nonprofits to secure 25 unique gifts of \$25 or more received \$1,000 prizes

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Amos House, Inc. | Ridgefield Theater Barn |
| Center for Contemporary Printmaking | Scholarship America |
| Curtain Call | Silvermine Guild of Artists, Inc. |
| Danbury Animal Welfare Society (DAWS) | SoundWaters |
| Daniel Trust Foundation | Stamford Center for the Arts/The Palace Theatre |
| Family & Children's Agency | STAR, Inc. |
| Music on the Hill | Strays & Others, Inc. |
| Music Theatre of Connecticut, Inc. | TAILS - The Alliance In Limiting Strays |
| Pequot Library | Westport Country Playhouse |
| Ridgefield Chorale | Wildlife In Crisis |

Drawings

Three \$500 cash prizes were awarded by drawings during a Home Stretch Celebration the evening of March 5.

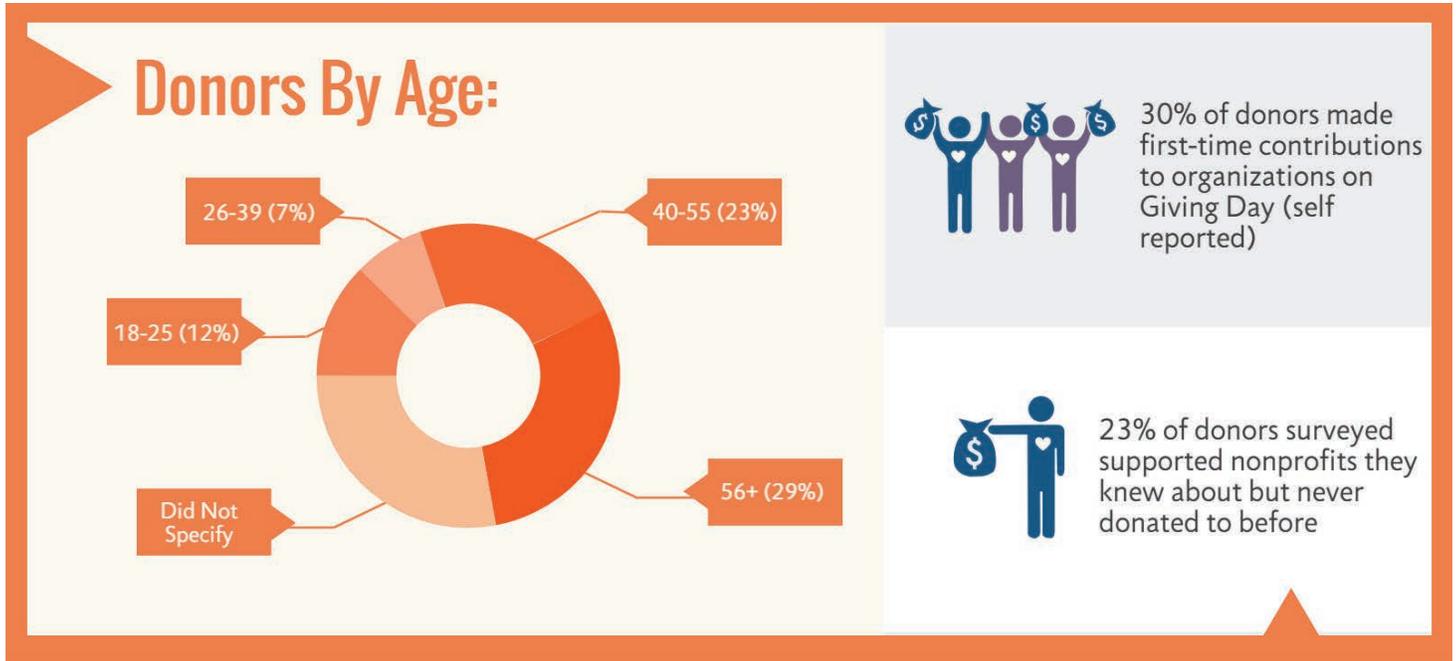
1. Child Advocates of Connecticut
2. Inspirica, Inc.
3. The Newtown Foundation

The donor experience

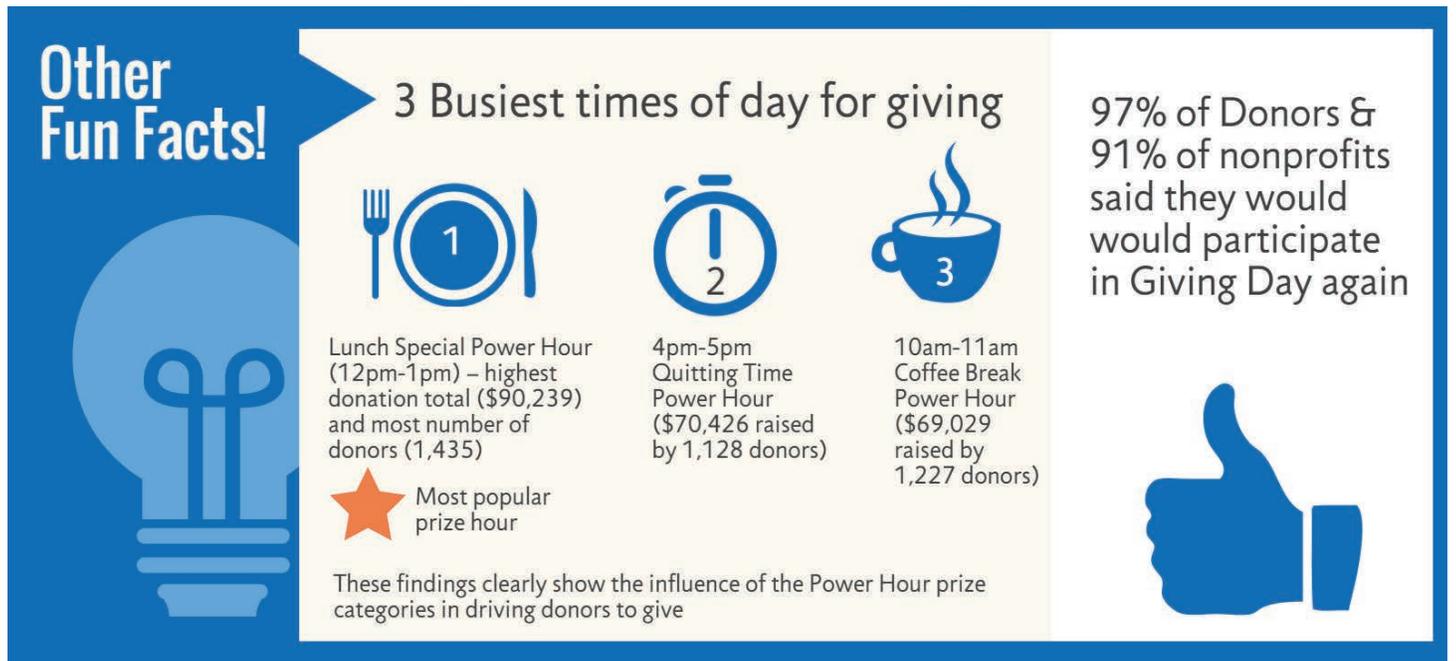
Key findings from Giving Day indicate a highly enjoyable experience from the region's community of givers. Not only did more people make donations this year compared to 2014, their average gift size increased by 56.76%.

Donors represented all towns and cities in Fairfield County. And, the campaign did not go unnoticed in other states and countries. Donations were received from 46 states and 4 countries.

While donors young and old shared in the excitement of Giving Day, the majority were over 40. Findings show that Giving Day offered an entry for donors to learn about and support new organizations.



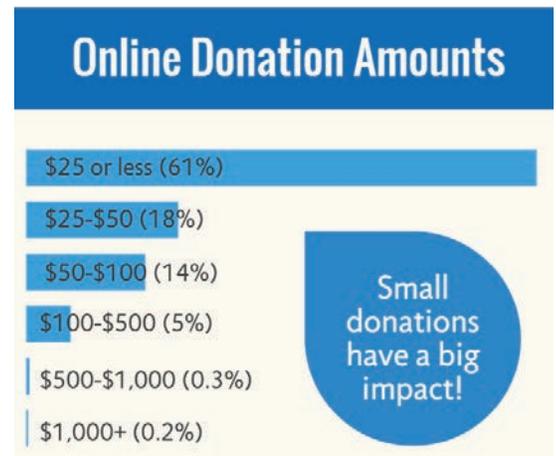
Donors rallied around prize hours to help their favorite nonprofit win additional funding. Donors caused spikes in giving for each of the 6 power hours, with the 3 below receiving the most traffic.



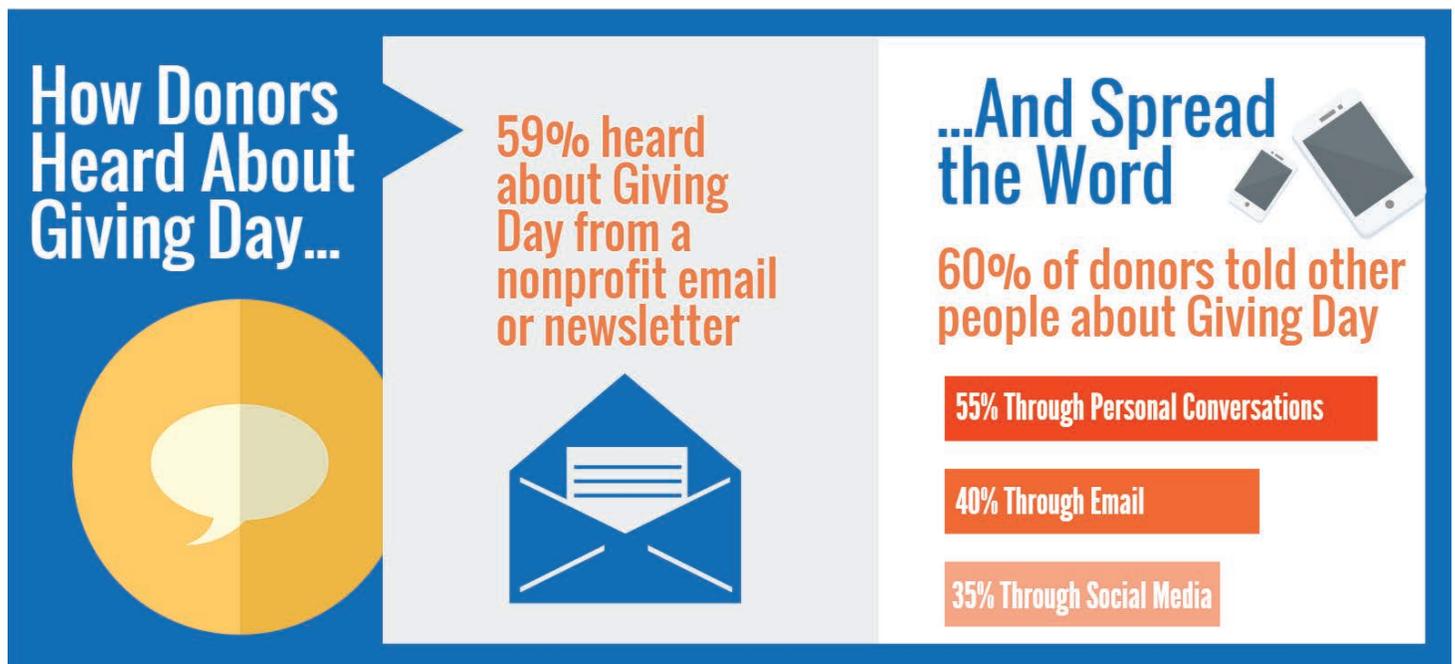
The donor experience (continued)

Giving Day encourages all community members to participate with as little as a \$10 donation. This is a win-win. Community members of all economic status are empowered to financially take part in a regional fundraising campaign while learning about nonprofit work in their communities. Nonprofits reach people they otherwise would not have access to, and engage new donors who can turn into long-term supporters and champions for their cause.

As shown on the right, 93% of donations were \$100 or lower. The average gift size was \$62.86.



While Giving Day awareness was amplified through diverse media and marketing sources, the majority of donors learned about Giving Day directly from nonprofit organizations. This finding underscores the influence and power of the nonprofit sector in communicating to supporters and directly increasing awareness about Giving Day. Donors were also very willing to share Giving Day news with others in their networks.



Technology powered Giving Day



Marketing creativity of the nonprofit sector

There were ample opportunities for participating organizations to use social media not only to market themselves, but to attract new followers, as well as compete in prize challenges. Some of the creative talent produced by the nonprofits reflected an ability to deftly communicate their mission, especially in ways they had never done before. Giving Day offered nonprofits a platform to think and communicate differently, and mostly to have fun and engage their audiences. Here is a sample of some of the creativity that motivated an entire community to give and have fun while doing it.

The **Keeler Tavern Museum** created an amusing and memorable campaign around the need to raise funding to restore two priceless 19th century wool rugs. They posted these “scandalous” photos on Facebook, and also used print and email to increase awareness for their campaign and Giving Day.



Daniel Trust Foundation focused their social media messaging on Twitter, tweeting multiple times/daily with original content and photos, and sharing the Community Foundation’s tweets.

Adopt -A-Dog engaged supporters on Instagram with cute photos of animals, using lots of hashtags to increase their searchability.



Throughout the day on March 5, **Family and Children’s Aid** posted on Facebook more than 25 photos and quotes with the theme “reasons to give.”



On Facebook, **International Institute of Connecticut** posted a series of photos that pictured staffers explaining why they were passionate about the work they do.



Nonprofit profiles

It's no secret that the more an organization put into their Giving Day planning strategy and efforts, the more they got in return. Following are profiles of nonprofits that performed well during Giving Day, raising funding and awareness for their mission. Below, they share their strategy and activities.

AI's Angels in Westport

Q & A with AI DiGuido, President & Founder

Operating Budget size: \$279,059

Giving Day outcome: 2015: \$7,130 from 78 gifts / 2014: N/A

What was your strategy? First, we wanted to make sure that all of our current Angels knew about this event...via email and social media. We had to plan for general awareness leading up to March 5, then more frequent communication on March 4 and 5.

Second, we wanted to acquire NEW participants. We did that exclusively through social media and it was successful in bringing us another 10 new donors to our organization.

Approximately how many hours did your team spend on Giving Day activities? 20+ hours

What was your goal? Our goal this year was to take advantage of all of the awareness associated with Giving Day and our recent fundraising event. Since we just raised over \$70K from a recent event, we weren't confident of raising a large amount on Giving Day-\$7,000 was a GREAT result.

Who was involved in your planning process? I led our planning process with support from a few other team members.

When did you start planning your campaign and strategy? As soon as our registration was approved in February.

How have you communicated with donors after March 5? Printed thank you notes and all new donors were placed in our database to receive regular communications from us about outreach volunteer efforts and other fundraising activities.

Lessons learned? We need to put greater focus on attracting new donors next year. Also, we will do much more preparation to ensure that we have the largest collection of our donors make a contribution on Giving Day.

Family & Children's Agency in Norwalk

Q & A with Janina Serrao, Director of Development

Operating Budget size: \$13,698,203

Giving Day outcome: \$11,595 raised from 258 donors / 2014 \$10,555 raised from 507 gifts

Prizes won: \$1,000 (Launch Prize)

When did you start planning your campaign and strategy? First week of February

Who was involved in your planning process? Primarily our VP of Development and Director of Development, as well as our Manager of Communications, with feedback from our entire Development Department.

How many new donors did you secure through Giving Day? New Donors: 63 / Lapsed Donors Recaptured: 6

What was your goal? To surpass what we raised last year and increase the # of donors, as well as be one of the organizations to win the 25 donors of \$25+ (launch prize).

Approximately how many hours did your team spend on Giving Day activities? Approximately 20-25 hours, as well as the entire day of Giving Day working to spread the word.

What was your strategy? We utilized email and social media to promote our cause and secure support. Additionally, we asked that our staff, Board and Junior Board share the emails with their networks, and some of our Board members made calls to other Board members, Junior Board members, and key volunteers the day of March 5 to encourage giving.

We also focused on just a couple prize categories (launch and # of unique donors) to avoid spreading ourselves and resources too thin.

After encountering some issues with the platform last year, we decided not to include step-by-step instructions in emails to constituents until we knew exactly how the donation platform worked this year.

Nonprofit profiles (continued)

Ben's Lighthouse in Newtown

Q & A with Kelly Paredes, Program Manager

Operating Budget Size: \$100,000 or less

Giving Day outcome: 2015: \$7,407 raised from 186 gifts / 2014: NA

Prizes won: N/A

When did you start planning your campaign and strategy? On Jan. 14th, the day of the Community Foundation's info session.

Who was involved in your planning process? With a staff of one - our board of directors was extremely supportive in the planning process. In addition, our grant/fundraising consultant generated ideas and timelines for the campaign.

Approximately how many hours did your team spend on Giving Day activities? We spent around 8-10 hours planning for the campaign in addition to all day on March 5.

What was your goal? We created a monetary goal of \$10,000.

How many new donors did you secure through Giving Day? We were very surprised by the number of new donors that contributed to our organization; over one hundred new donors!

How have you communicated with donors after March 5? Immediately following the campaign we reached out to personally thank every one of our donors for their support. We are including them in our ongoing correspondence so they have the opportunity to see how their donations are being put to work supporting our organization.

What was your strategy? As a first time participant, we were not sure exactly what to expect. We decided on a two-pronged approach. First, we used social media to get our message across. We utilized the lighthouse as a theme - posted several times a day with clever and creative ties to the lighthouse.

Second, we decided to connect with our board and volunteers and asked them to create their own personal statement about why they are involved with our organization. We then asked them to reach out and share this with their friends, family and co-workers. We asked those folks to give small and help big.

On March 5th, we received a matching donation from a local business owner, for an evening time frame which really helped to generate buzz and bring us to the next level.

Bridgeport Neighborhood Trust in Bridgeport

Q & A with Liz Torres, Executive Director

Operating Budget size: \$1,643,524

Giving Day outcome: 2015: \$6,245 raised from 159 gifts / 2014: \$4,602.36 from 101 gifts

Approximately how many hours did your team spend on Giving Day activities? 125 hours

When did you start planning your campaign and strategy? January

Who was involved in your planning process? 8 volunteer committee members, 5 consultants offered support (grant writer, communications, special events coordinator) and 3 staff including myself

What was your goal? Raise \$7,500

How many new donors did you secure through Giving Day? Half of donors were new.

How did you promote your Giving Day participation?

- Email: e-blast requesting people to like us on facebook, emails requesting BNT partners to support us by becoming our Giving Day Champions (several organizations signed on!), short e-blasts to 3,000 list serv leading up to event and the day of event (creating different messages for different audiences), All staff revised signature line in email to include a blurb about Giving Day
- Facebook: participated in the Facebook Photo Contest and regularly posted messages on March 2-6
- Website- changed static site banner to focus on Giving Day and we created a Giving Day Champion section on March 5th
- Texts and calls to current supporters
- Events at local businesses to reach community members including a midnight gathering at a local bar/restaurant where people donated \$25 at 12:01 am on March 5 to win a Launch prize, after work event at Fire Engine pizza, and an all-day promotional event at Fruta Juice on March 5th

How have you communicated with donors after March 5?

Thank you email, thank you print letter with pictures, and facebook thank you message. I shared with donors the progress we made from 2014 to 2015 because although we didn't win lots of prizes, it's not always about winning, in some ways we did win, we made progress!

Lessons learned? Getting others to adopt BNT as our Giving Day Champ was a great way to get business community involved. To increase our success, we need to secure more Facebook friends and get more board engagement.

Wildlife in Crisis in Weston

Q & A with Amy Jenner, Director of Development (volunteer)

Operating Budget size: \$160,968

Giving Day Outcome: 2015: \$55,890 raised from 327 gifts / 2014: \$19,743.95 raised from 645 gifts

Prizes won: \$21,000 (\$20,000 – Most Dollars Raised; \$1,000 – Launch Prize)

Who was involved in your planning process? A group of volunteers whose principal role is fundraising.

Approximately how many hours did your team spend on Giving Day activities? About 40 hours.

What was your goal? We set two goals: 1) raise \$50,000; 2) increase awareness around the importance of our mission by increasing our donor base by 5% through increasing FB “Likes” and “shares”.

How new donors did you secure through Giving Day? 130

What worked the best in promoting your cause and securing support?

My 3 strategic points included:

1. Connecting Giving Day to a specific outcome, not just general support
2. Focusing on a few tactics and executing them flawlessly
3. Engaging the community through posters and flyers and connecting the community to the community foundation. We are all in this together. That is how we got to and stayed at #5 all day.

What was your strategy?

- We used the weekly tips that were sent out by the Giving Day organizers and implemented many of them.
- We participated in the Facebook Photo Contest which significantly boosted our photo “likes” and our page “likes”. So, on giving day, we had increased our FB base by about 10%.
- We did take the suggestion of the QR code and printed both posters and take-aways for the local businesses, who were all so gracious about displaying our material.
- We sent two emails and a Facebook announcement mobilizing our supporters around giving day, and reiterating the toll the winter was having on our animal patients, and our food and medicine budget.
- We received promises for support from a substantial number of our core supporters
- We focused on only a few target hours for giving day – Launch (which we won), and three power hour prizes. The launch contest was the only one we (WIC) mobilized/orchestrated by asking 30 of our supporters who promised their support (above).

Curtain Call in Stamford

Q & A with Lou Ursone, Executive Director

Operating Budget Size: \$932,948

Giving Day outcome: 2015: \$54,203 raised from 1,160 gifts / 2014: \$30,675 raised from 1,890 gifts

Prizes won: \$25,000 (1st place for most unique donors), \$2,000 (2 power hour prizes), \$1,000 (Launch prize)

When did you start planning your campaign and strategy? November

Who was involved in your planning process? Myself, staff and Board of Directors

How many new donors did you secure through Giving Day? 320 of the 1059 were new! At least 14 were lapsed.

What worked the best in promoting your cause and securing support?

The oldest adage in fundraising still holds true: People give to people, not causes. And we are a people-friendly organization.

What was your goal? \$50,000

Approximately how many hours did your team spend on Giving Day activities? Most of the time was mine - and I would say 100 hours +/- . My Board members were on site talking about Giving Day at each performance the last two weeks leading up to Giving Day.

What was your strategy? To get as many contributors as possible. As a small arts organization (3FT staff/ 3 PT) we don't have tons of benefactors with deep pockets. But asking friends, and friends of friends for \$25 - or even just \$10, seemed like a way to get many.

We promoted Giving Day in our E-News (CLUB CURTAIN CALL NEWSLETTER) and first mentioned Giving Day in November. The Giving Day message was in a total of 6 newsletters, and two were dedicated solely to Giving Day. I also wrote HUNDREDS of personal email requests to constituents starting the week before through to the day of.

Sources: This report was prepared by analyzing information gleaned from various sources, which included:

Google Analytics, Kimbia (donation platform provider), and two surveys (donor and nonprofit) that were optional and anonymous.