

CFC donations up over previous year

But number of donors is down

By Elise Castelli

Federal Times

The poor economy did not seem to hurt the Combined Federal Campaign last year.

For the fourth year running, feds donated more to the charities in 2008 than they did the previous year. That's the good news.

The bad news: For the fourth year in a row, the percentage of employees participating dropped. The decline is directly tied to the retirement of longtime employees, who are dedicated CFC contributors, without an increase in participation from younger employees, said Mark Lambert, director of the CFC operations office at the Office of Personnel Management.

"We see our biggest area for improvement in terms of participation as being the newly hired, who tend to be younger donors," Lambert told *Federal Times*.

"We need to reach out more." David Wycinsky, a spokesman for the federal employee group Young Government Leaders, agreed.

"There is a general lack of awareness [about CFC]," Wycinsky said. It takes time for young employees to realize that CFC is an annual event and that they can give to the campaign through a payroll deduction, rather than a lump sum, he said.

Because younger government employees are paid less and are saddled with student debt, "there isn't as much disposable income," Wycinsky said.

In addition, younger employees demand more from charities than their veteran co-workers. "They want more transparency. They want to take a more active role than writing a check," he said.

Charities and campaigns should tap social media tools — such as Facebook, YouTube and Twitter — to show younger feds how

their CFC dollars are put to work, Wycinsky said. Communicating to donors in forms younger employees recognize will raise awareness, he said. Charities can also use the social networks to encourage another form of donation: time.

"Younger folks have more time to give than they can give money because they don't have kids or aren't taking care of aging parents," Wycinsky said.

A donation of time now could result in a donation of money in the future, he said. Lambert said local CFC campaigns can use the same strategy to engage young employees. Every office has a key employee to coordinate events and collect pledge cards.

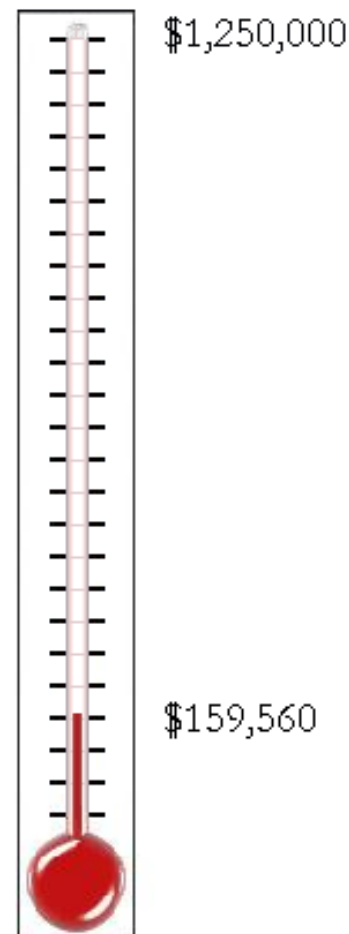
While a young employee may not have the financial means to give to the CFC today, CFC organizers can build a relationship with a young fed by getting that employee involved through the donation of time. That in turn will encourage the employee to give monetarily down the road, Lambert said.

When young feds are able to give financially, they can do so in a manner they're comfortable with, including donating online or using a credit card, Lambert said. Many campaigns now offer contributors the option of pledging on the Web, rather than filling out a paper form.

OPM has also allowed some campaigns to pilot a program that lets employees charge their donations, he said. OPM agreed to the pilots after hearing from local offices that younger workers wanted to charge their gifts to earn credit-card reward points.

The National Capital Area CFC is tapping everything from OPM's online tools to social media to reach out to younger federal employees, said Wendy Beach, communications director for Global Impact, which oversees CFC's National Capital Area campaign.

Going for the Goal



The Cincinnati Metro Area CFC would like to thank the following for their sponsorship of the 2009 Campaign:

Government Employee Insurance Company (GEICO)

Greater Cincinnati Federal Executive Board

CFC Testimonial: Helping families achieve financial stability

"This CFC organization was just a blessing to us," says Yvonne Carson. She and her husband, Lamar, had owned their suburban home nearly five years. Then, persuaded by a predatory lending practice to refinance to an adjustable rate mortgage, they soon became unable to handle the payments on Lamar's disability retirement income. They were three months behind on payments when they approached a CFC organization. They were threatened with foreclosure, but the agency was able to help negotiate with the lender for a loan modification they could handle. "Now the Carsons have a fair loan that is both affordable to them and profitable for the lender," says Bill Hanks, a CFC organization foreclosure counselor.

2008 Results:

- 1,851 individuals obtained jobs through a local CFC federation's workforce programs



- 80% of families receiving foreclosure counseling from this CFC organization avoided foreclosure
- 65,910 individuals/families received food that met their basic needs
- 1,063 families leaving emergency shelter maintained their permanent housing for at least six months

Troops in war zones step up CFC contributions

By Karen Jowers

Federal Times

Troops deployed with U.S. Central Command — which includes operations in Iraq and Afghanistan — stepped up their giving to the Combined Federal Campaign in 2008, according to a campaign official.

While overall donations to the CFC increased by 1 percent in the 2008 campaign, troops connected to CENTCOM donated 4 percent more — \$5.6 million, up from \$5.4 million in 2007, said Lou Torchia, voluntary campaign management office director for the Defense Department.

Donations from deployed troops have steadily increased since the 2004 CFC campaign, when the total was \$3.1 million.

The participation rate in 2008 for deployed troops was 23 percent, compared to the overall 29 percent participation rate in the Overseas CFC.

"So 23 out of 100 still manage to dig into their pockets when bullets are flying over their heads," Torchia said.

That lower participation rate "is a reflection not so much of their desire to give, but of the challenges associated with getting campaign materials to troops in the field," he said.

And this year, a pilot program conducted overseas that allows online giving will become permanent for deployed troops and all overseas military and civilian personnel.

This year's Overseas CFC campaign period begins Oct. 5 and continues through Dec. 4.

The average donation in 2008 from deployed troops was \$133, an increase of \$11 over 2007's average gift of \$122.

Deployed troops are part of the Overseas CFC, which includes military personnel and Defense Department civilians, who gave \$15.8 million in the 2008 campaign, a slight increase of about \$56,000 from 2007.

Officials do not track exact numbers of giving to the CFC in the overall military community, but Torchia estimates that service members and defense civilians pledged about \$100 million in 2008. That's more than a third of the \$276 million pledged overall in 2008 to CFC.

Torchia said the Overseas Combined Federal Campaign's pilot online e-giving program has been so successful over the past several years that it received the "Innovators Award" in June from the federal Office of Personnel Management.

Upcoming Campaign Kick-Offs

- Oct. 12** IRS—Human Capital Office, Personnel Security (Treasury)
- Oct. 12** Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) (Labor)
- Oct. 16** US Customs & Border Protection (Homeland Security)
- Oct. 18** Transportation Security Administration (TSA) (Homeland Security)
- Oct. 19** Food & Drug Administration, Cincinnati District Office (Health & Human Services)
- Oct. 19** Food & Drug Administration, Forensic Chemistry Center (Health & Human Services)
- Oct. 19** Ohio Air National Guard, 123rd Air Control Squadron (ACS) (Defense)
- Oct. 19** US Army Reserve, 478th Engineer Battalion (Defense)
- Oct. 19** General Services Administration (Independent Agency)
- Oct. 23** **US Postal Service** (Independent Agency)
- Oct. 26** Social Security Administration—Hamilton (Independent Agency)
- Oct. 26** Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Cincinnati Technical Center (Labor)
- Nov. 1** Office of Thrift Supervision (Treasury)
- Nov. 1** US Air Force ROTC - UC (Defense)

Charity Navigator Tip #3: Determine how charities were selected

In its third installment in a series that examines advice given by Charity Navigator, the *Campaign Chronicle* explains how organizations are selected for inclusion in the Campaign's charity list.

Charity Navigator's tip regarding this point reads as follows:

Not all workplace giving campaigns use the same criteria for selecting charities. Some simply compile a list of all the charities providing services to your community. Others restrict eligibility to those charities that have met general financial standards. Still others limit participation based on the charities' missions.

Thus, the charities provided to you may not necessarily meet your giving standards. It is up to you to conduct a review of each charity's programmatic and financial accomplishments. Start your research by using Charity Navigator's website to quickly review the financial health of thousands of America's largest charities. Look for those charities that are efficient fundraisers, spend a high percentage of their budget on programs, are steadily growing their revenue and programs over time, and have enough liquid assets on hand to survive a crisis. Then, either explore the charity's website or give them a call to learn more about the organization's mission, goals and accomplishments. Good charities will be eager to share their successes with you.

In the case of the Combined Federal Campaign, the criteria for selecting charities are set by the Office of Personnel Management and carried out by the Local Federal Coordinating Committee. These criteria are presented in Title 5 of the Code of Federal Regulations. These regulations are intended to allow widest possible participation of charitable organizations without sacrificing fiduciary accountability. Some of the criteria include the following:

Be a tax exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. According to the IRS, these organizations must be organized and operated exclusively for exempt purposes as set forth in the code and none of its earnings may inure to any private shareholder or individual. In addition, it may not be an action organization, i.e., it may not attempt to influence legislation as a substantial part of its activities and it may not participate in any campaign activity for or against political candidates.

Be appropriately accountable for its funds. Most organizations are required to submit audited financial statements prepared by an independent certified public accountant in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards which certify that they conform with generally accepted accounting principles. Only organizations with annual receipts less than \$100,000 are not required to have an audit; however, they must certify that they have appropriate measures in place to account for their funds.

Annually prepare an IRS Form 990, Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax. Organizations that are not required to file an IRS Form 990 are still required to submit a *pro forma* Form 990 for the purposes of CFC application. This document reflects the financial situation of the organization, as well as a listing of its Board of Trustees. It is also the form from which the Administrative and Fundraising Rate (AFR) is calculated.

In addition to these general requirements, each organization's certifying official must make other certain certifications as to the worthiness of the charitable organizations. These include:

- the organization is directed by a responsible governing body
- the organization's fundraising policy prohibits the sale or lease of its CFC contributor list

Charity Navigator's Five Tips for CFC Donors

1. Examine your values to determine which causes you want to support.
2. Review your personal finances to determine how much you can afford to give.
3. Learn how the participating charities were pre-screened and back it up with your own research.
4. Find out what percentage of your donation is going to the charities you've chosen.
5. At the end of the year, find out how your donations were put to use.

- the organization is faithful to its stated mission and that CFC contributions are to be used for their stated purpose
- the organization's publicity and promotional activities are truthful and non-deceptive

Finally (and most importantly), applications to the Combined Federal Campaign are adjudicated and decided on by Federal employees, making the CFC truly a Campaign by and for the employees. For more information on how you can participate as an Eligibility Committee Panelist for the 2010 Campaign, contact the CFC Office.

The applications for local charities, to include their audited financial statements and IRS Forms 990, are available and open to any Federal employee that wishes to examine them.

As always, the Cincinnati Metro Area CFC stands ready to assist any Federal employee with questions concerning the Campaign. Feel free to contact the CFC Office at (513) 684-2515 or cincycfc@gmail.com.



CHARITY NAVIGATOR
Your Guide To Intelligent Giving