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Giving Dropped 4.9% in 2009, Researchers Estimate

By *Nicole Wallace*

Americans donated \$217.3-billion in 2009, a decrease of \$11.2-billion or 4.9 percent compared to 2008, according to new estimates from researchers at the [Center on Wealth and Philanthropy](#) at Boston College.

The researchers are more optimistic about giving in 2010. They expect giving by individuals to range between \$222-billion and \$227-billion, an increase of 3 to 4.5 percent.

The estimates -- which exclude grants made by foundations and corporations and bequests from estates -- are based on a model that uses changes in economic data to forecast charitable giving. The model is designed to be modified every three months based on new data, such as price and market indices as well as information about income and net worth.

The researchers note that the 4.9 percent drop in 2009 was in addition to an estimated 6 percent decrease in 2008.

"It will be some time before we can reverse these declines," John J. Havens, senior research associate at the center, said in a written statement.

"Fortunately, charitable giving in the first two quarters of 2010 seems to be on an uptick. However, growth may not continue the rest of the year if the fiscal crisis in Europe brings a second recessionary dip to the United States."

A full report on the study will be published in the July/August issue of *Advancing Philanthropy*, a magazine published by the Association of Fundraising Professionals.

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