

# ANNUAL REPORT 2014



give.org



BBB STANDARDS  
FOR CHARITY  
ACCOUNTABILITY



## BBB Wise Giving Alliance

SHAPING THE FUTURE OF CHARITIES



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President & CEO

*BBB Wise Giving Alliance*

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## Letter from the BBB Wise Giving Alliance President



H. Art Taylor

During 2014, BBB Wise Giving Alliance (BBB WGA) worked to create greater awareness and understanding of the unique methods we employ to assist donors in making informed giving decisions and to identify charities that have earned donor trust. The annual report focuses on two initiatives that reflect this objective: BBB WGA created a new website at [Give.org](http://Give.org); We expanded our media outreach, which included a promotion for wise giving during *Giving Tuesday* — the designated national day in December to support philanthropy.

The work we did this year helped us to refine our core messaging. The donors and institutions that rely on BBB WGA can now more clearly appreciate how we seek to identify trustworthy charities and the rigorous, yet holistic “BBB Standards for Charity Accountability” that we use to evaluate them.

When I say “rigor,” I mean to emphasize that we review much more than a charity’s Form 990, the annual financial form filed with the IRS. Our experienced team reviews audit reports, annual reports, governing body information, charity websites, privacy policies, cause-related marketing campaigns and, as needed, direct mail appeals and telephone fundraising scripts. No other organization in our space reviews such a diverse mix of information.

By “holistic” BBB Charity Standards, I refer to the wide range of issues the standards cover. Each of the 20 standards requires behaviors and practices that, when fully implemented, enable a charity to demonstrate its trustworthiness. Succeeding in one area — or even a few areas — is not sufficient to earn trust.

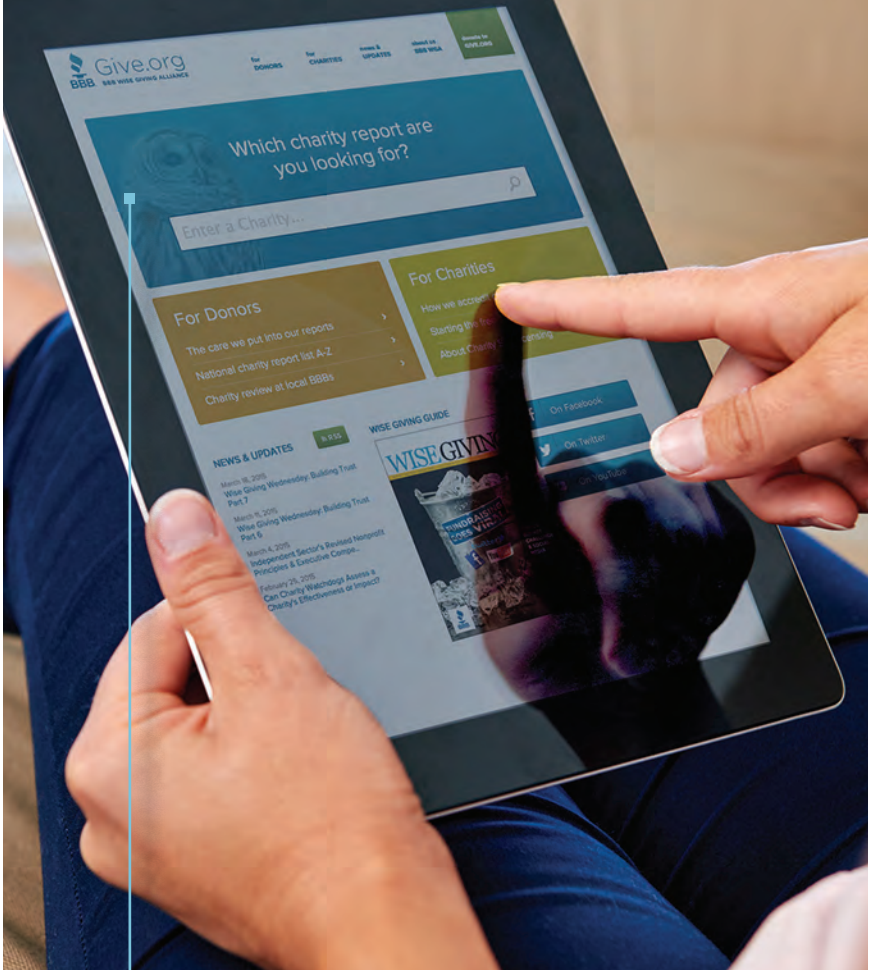
We strive to provide donors with the comfort they need when making a gift to a charity. We seek to assure that each charity we accredit is one you can trust to deliver on its promises. As always, we appreciate your generosity and encourage you to let us know how we can better serve your needs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Art Taylor', written in a cursive style.

H. Art Taylor  
*President & CEO*

# Give.org Website Launched



23%  
INCREASE

AVERAGE TIME SPENT  
BY VISITORS ON  
GIVE.ORG

CUMULATIVE NUMBER OF PAGE VIEWS PER MONTH

193,287 BEFORE LAUNCH

375,973 AFTER LAUNCH



**In October, BBB Wise Giving Alliance (BBB WGA) launched the new Give.org website**, which incorporates significant design, technology and content improvements. The site is directed at two audiences: the donating public and charitable organizations. While BBB WGA has always served both of these communities, this is the first time that the website provides specific features that target each audience.

The website's homepage features a charity report search function, providing a prominent way for visitors to find the most popular content on the site. Visitors have free access to reports on national charities produced by the BBB Wise Giving Alliance and regional charities created by local BBBs.

The site also provides a list of the 57 local BBBs that have a charity-reporting program, along with a link to the charity page. The spotlight on BBB evaluations of local charities is intended to bring more public attention to the charity reporting work conducted by BBBs nationwide.

The newly redesigned site is already seeing an increase in overall visitors, page views and in the average amount of time spent on each page. These statistics suggest visitors are more engaged, an important step forward in improving BBB WGA outreach with the donating public.

## BBB Standards for Charity Accountability

**One of the key distinctions between BBB WGA and other charity monitoring organizations is the holistic BBB Standards for Charity Accountability.** These standards address charity governance, results reporting, finances, fundraising, and appeal accuracy. They serve as the basis for rigorous evaluations completed by BBB WGA research staff.

BBB WGA wanted its new website to help donors and charities better understand the rationale and application of BBB standards. For individual donors, there is a website version that provides a brief explanation of the importance of each standard. For charities, a parallel version is offered that provides technical details on the specific application procedures employed by BBB WGA staff when reviewing each standard.



## Expanded Media Outreach – BBB WGA Promotes *Giving Tuesday*

**BBB WGA expanded its wise giving message** in 2014 with a coordinated outreach effort with local BBBs across the country.

While planning for these new initiatives, BBB WGA further refined its core message, which is to help the public verify the trustworthiness of charities through rigorous evaluations in relation to 20 holistic “BBB Standards for Charity Accountability.”

Research has shown that most donors already have a charity in mind when they seek out additional information. In fact, many are responding to fundraising requests and want to verify that the charity they are considering is a sound choice.

BBB WGA sought to build on this point by including a question in a 2014 Porter Novelli survey of 4,530 individuals that asked: What do you consider the most important factor to determine if a charity is trustworthy?

The survey results and infographic show people often rely on charity finances to verify trust, even though finances alone don't provide an adequate picture of a charity's performance.

An infographic detailing these results was distributed through a coordinated media campaign to local BBBs. The survey results were also displayed on the PR Newswire digital bulletin board in Times Square in New York City. The infographic media effort resulted in reaching 22 million people in all 50 states.



Another highlight of BBB WGA's expanded media outreach was leveraging an established day of giving. The Tuesday after Thanksgiving in the U.S. is known as *Giving Tuesday*, a day meant to highlight charitable giving at the beginning of the holiday season. For Giving Tuesday, BBB WGA prepared a media toolkit for local BBBs to use in a coordinated social media campaign to encourage the public to make wise giving decisions.

The combination of BBB WGA's infographic and Giving Tuesday media campaigns generated 140 million impressions. These impressions included national and local press ranging from *Marketwatch* to *The Chronicle of Philanthropy* to a blog written for *The Huffington Post* by BBB WGA President and CEO, H. Art Taylor.

## 2014 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Financial Summary for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2014:

### Revenues and support:

Charity Seal fees .....	\$ 1,743,588
Contributions .....	251,171
Software contribution from CBBB .....	179,415
Publications .....	9,837
Interest and Other .....	<u>3,430</u>
<b>Total .....</b>	<b><u><u>\$ 2,187,441</u></u></b>

### Expenses:

Program services .....	\$ 1,422,388
Management & general .....	203,042
Fundraising .....	<u>58,612</u>
<b>Total .....</b>	<b><u><u>\$ 1,684,042</u></u></b>

Revenue exceeding expenses .....	\$ 503,399
Beginning net assets .....	441,884
Ending net assets .....	945,283

*Audited financial statements available on Give.org and on request*



**BBB Wise Giving Alliance**

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