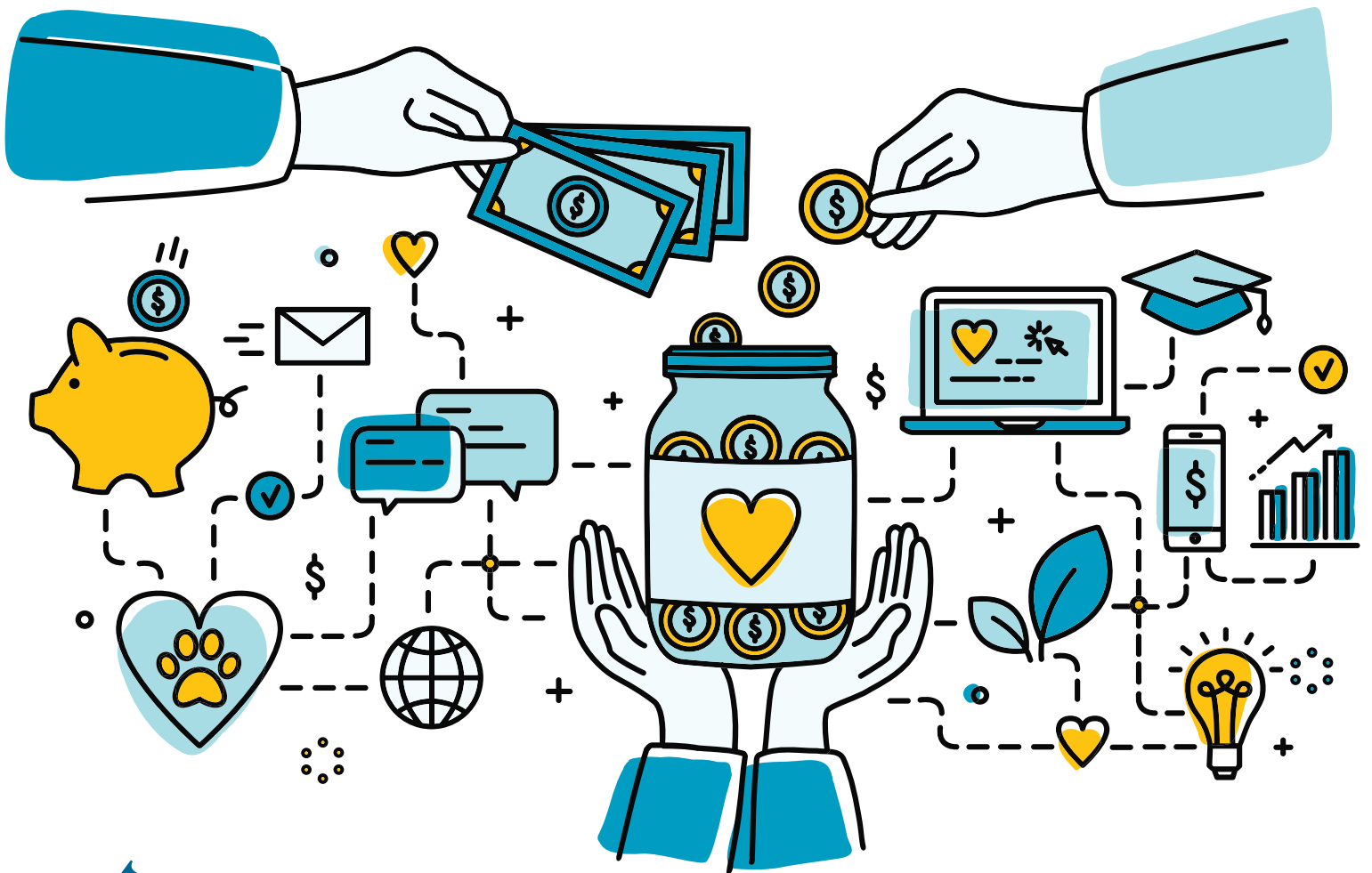


# WISE GIVING™

GUIDE

BBB WISE GIVING ALLIANCE : WINTER/HOLIDAY 2019

## DAYS OF GIVING





A Publication of the  
BBB Wise Giving Alliance

The *Wise Giving Guide* is published three times a year to help donors make more informed giving decisions. This guide includes a compilation of the latest evaluation conclusions completed by the BBB Wise Giving Alliance.

If you would like to see a particular topic discussed in this guide, please email suggestions to

[guide@give.org](mailto:guide@give.org)

or write to us at the address below.

#### WINTER/HOLIDAY ISSUE 2019

BBB Wise Giving Alliance  
3033 Wilson Blvd.  
Suite 710  
Arlington, VA 22201  
(703) 247-9321  
[www.give.org](http://www.give.org)

*Wise Giving Guide* Layout and  
Production — art270, inc.

Publication No. 11-24-503

Copyright 2019  
BBB Wise Giving Alliance  
The name Better Business Bureau is a registered  
service mark of the International Association of  
Better Business Bureaus

# INSIDE

## 2 Days of Giving

## 9 List of Nationally Soliciting Charities

How to Read the  
List of National  
Charities **7**

Q&A about the  
Wise Giving  
Guide **51**

National Charity  
Seal Program **51**

BBB Standards  
for Charity  
Accountability **52**

### BBB Wise Giving Alliance Board of Directors

#### Mark Shamley – Chair

*Vice President, Global Social Impact  
Tupperware Brands Corporation • Orlando, FL*

#### Char Mollison – Vice Chair

*Senior Fellow, Center on Nonprofit  
Management, Philanthropy and Policy,  
George Mason University • Fairfax, VA*

#### Bonnie Benhayon – Treasurer

*(retired) Environmental Business Development  
Executive, Bank of America • Boston, MA*

#### Beverly Baskin

*(retired) Interim President & CEO, Council of  
Better Business Bureaus • Raleigh, NC*

#### Chuck Bean

*Executive Director, Metropolitan Washington  
Council of Governments • Washington, DC*

#### Warren Clark

*President & CEO, Better Business Bureau of  
Upstate New York • Amherst, NY*

#### Robert Diggs

*Program Coordinator, Pennsylvania Consortium  
for the Liberal Arts • Lancaster, PA*

#### Andras Kosaras

*Arnold & Porter LLP • Washington, DC*

#### Janice R. Lachance

*Executive Vice President, Strategic and  
Operational Excellence, American Geophysical  
Union • Washington, DC*

#### Al Lenhardt

*(retired) Acting Administrator, United States  
Agency for International Development  
Washington, DC*

#### Elizabeth Mong

*Executive Director, Ardor/Nxt Group  
Lancaster, PA*

#### Anne Schelle

*Managing Director, Pearl TV • Washington, DC*

#### John Seffrin, Ph.D.

*Professor of Practice, Indiana University,  
School of Public Health-Bloomington  
(former CEO, American Cancer Society)  
Atlanta, GA*

#### Patrichi Shah

*President & CEO, Flourish Talent Management  
Solutions • Washington, DC*

#### Prabhash Shrestha

*Executive Vice President and Chief Digital  
Officer, Independent Community Bankers  
of America • Washington, DC*

#### Lori Wilson

*President & CEO, BBB serving the San  
Francisco Bay Area and Northern Coastal  
California • Oakland, CA*

#### H. Art Taylor – Ex-Officio

*BBB Wise Giving Alliance*

### BBB Wise Giving Alliance Staff

#### H. Art Taylor

*President and CEO*

#### Bennett M. Weiner

*Chief Operating Officer*

#### Kelley Bevis

*General Counsel*

#### Elvia Castro

*Manager, Regional Charity  
Reporting*

#### Danielle Fezell

*Research Analyst*

#### Edward Loftin

*Research Analyst*

#### Holly Parker

*Research Analyst*

#### Julie A. Rizzo

*Director, Development &  
Charity Seal Licensing Program*

#### Shawn Van Gorder

*Director, Charity Evaluation*

#### Ezra Vazquez-D'Amico

*Research Analyst*

#### Shakila Wilson

*Administrative Coordinator*

# president's MESSAGE

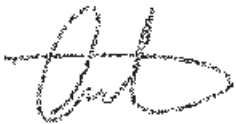
---

**A**s the biggest giving season of the year arrives, donors will soon be opening their hearts and wallets to contribute to the charities supporting the causes they care about most. In recent years, days of giving such as Giving Tuesday have kindled even more interest in holiday giving. In this edition of the *Wise Giving Guide*, we'll look at how days of giving work from the perspective of both donor and charity.

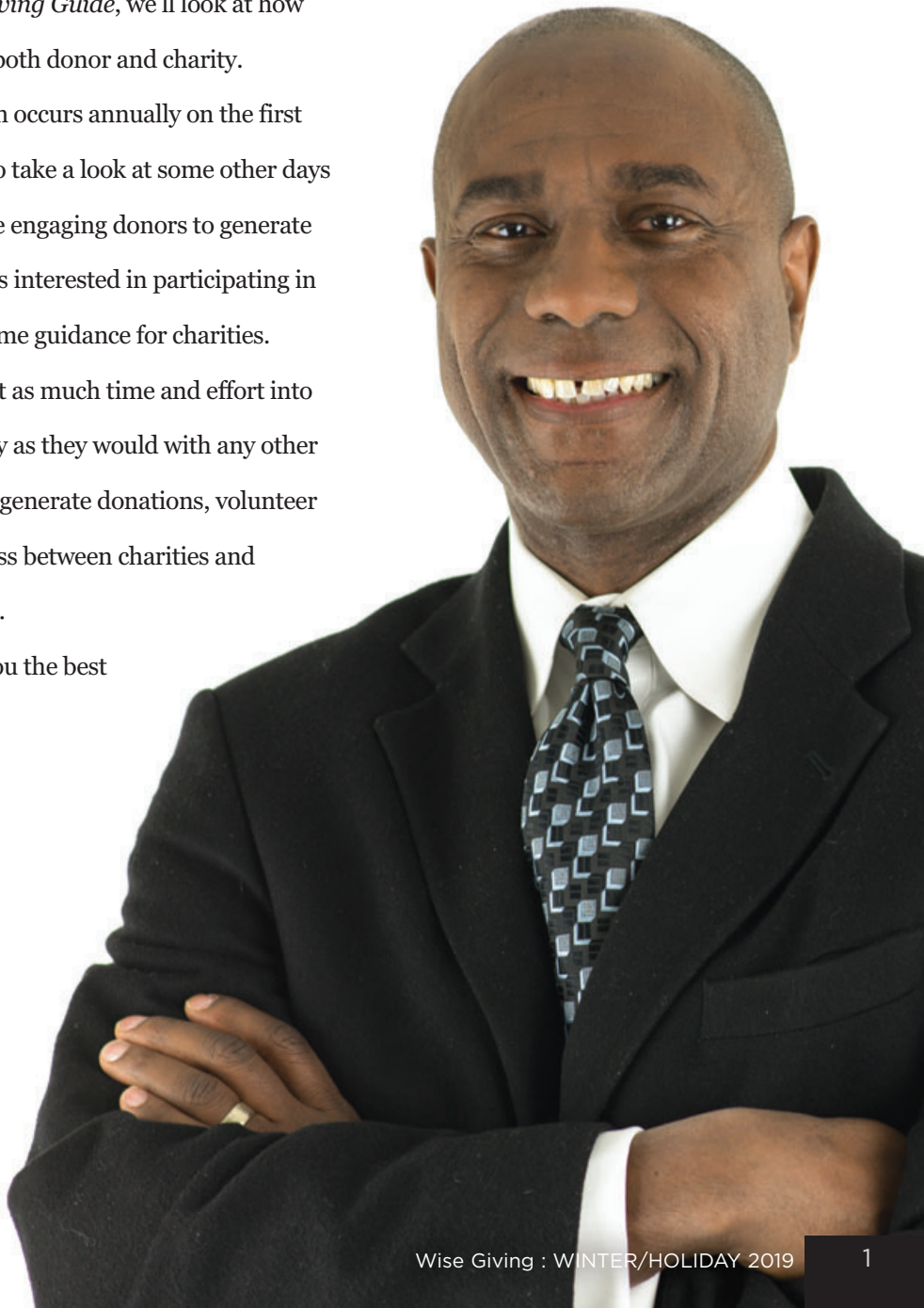
First, we look at *#GivingTuesday*, which occurs annually on the first Tuesday after Thanksgiving. We also want to take a look at some other days of giving and creative ways organizations are engaging donors to generate support. We'll also offer some tips for donors interested in participating in a giving day this holiday season and offer some guidance for charities.

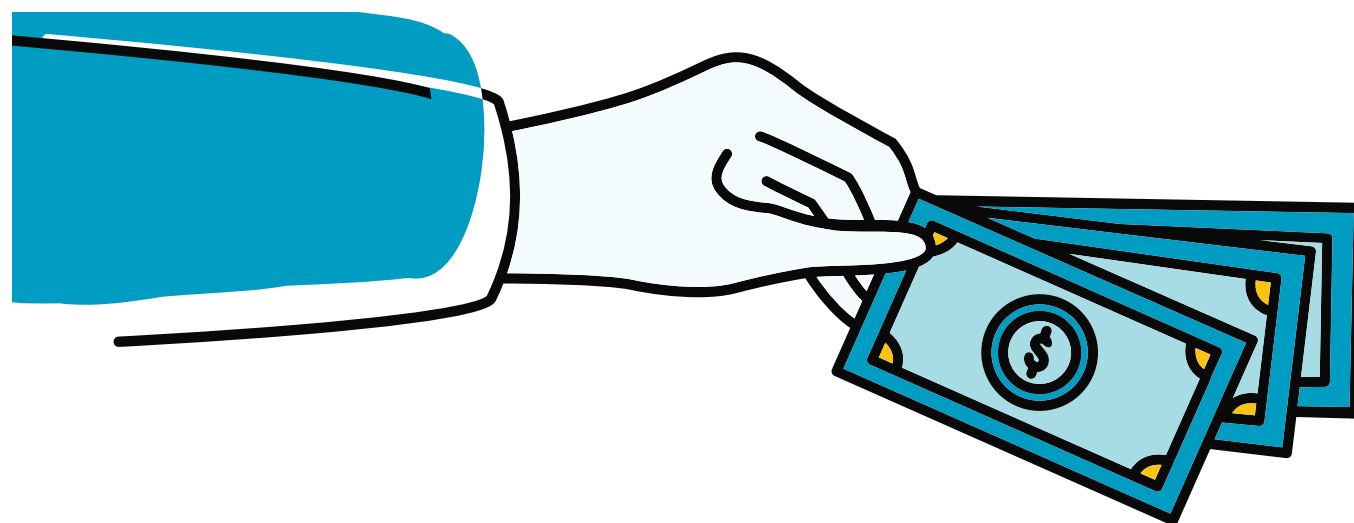
Our hope is that our readers will put just as much time and effort into making their giving decisions on a giving day as they would with any other fundraising appeal. A day of giving can help generate donations, volunteer hours, goodwill, and a sense of connectedness between charities and donors, but it is always critical to give wisely.

We appreciate your support and wish you the best this holiday season and beyond.



H. Art Taylor, *President & CEO*





# DAYS OF GIVING

*By Edward Loftin*

While filled with family, friends and special events, holidays also come with added financial pressures for families. According to Deloitte's 2017 Holiday Survey, American shoppers spent over \$1 trillion during the 2017 holidays. In the midst of this holiday spending, however, the last months of the year are also a critical fundraising period for charitable organizations. In recent years, days of giving have become a popular way for charities to ask for support and bring awareness to their causes. Often driven by social media, giving days serve charities both big and small, foundations and schools, to name a few, and many take place during the holidays.

**W**hat better time for BBB WGA to take a closer look at the phenomenon of giving days? First, we will examine #GivingTuesday, which was developed as a response to such consumer-oriented shopping days as Black Friday and Cyber Monday and has occurred on the first Tuesday after Thanksgiving since 2012. We'll also examine some examples of other giving days and look at how they work. Additionally, we will take a look at some of the challenges giving days present charities and donors, as well as offer some guidance to donors considering participating this holiday season, with the hope that our readers give wisely.

## #GIVINGTUESDAY

"Fueled by the power of social media and collaboration," #GivingTuesday was started by 92nd Street Y, a New York City cultural and community center, in collaboration with the United Nations Foundation. What began as a philanthropic meme quickly became an annual ritual and global phenomenon. In July 2019, #GivingTuesday became its own separately incorporated charitable organization. #GivingTuesday reports that the movement has now surpassed the \$1 billion mark for online charitable giving in the U.S. since its inception, with over

\$380 million of online donations raised in the U.S. in 2018 alone. Beyond donations, #GivingTuesday is an opportunity for charities to attract new donors, and hopefully collect information that can foster consistent, sustained support. In 2018 alone, #GivingTuesday reported 14.2 billion social media impressions, illustrating the power and reach of the campaign.

The spirit behind #GivingTuesday was to seed the concept and “let the crowd run with it.” The movement is a notable example of “hashtag activism,” in which Twitter users Tweet hashtags for the purpose of Internet activism or to show support for a cause. How individual donors, businesses or charities participate in #GivingTuesday is largely up to them. Social media innovator Facebook and online payment giant PayPal partnered in 2018 to match #GivingTuesday donations up to \$7 million. Small informal community groups organized around causes are also active on



#GivingTuesday. Beyond businesses and charities, #GivingTuesday encourages individuals to participate, and not just by donating money or in-kind gifts, but through volunteerism, activism, or by inspiring others in their communities or on social media. Many social media users post “UNselfies” highlighting causes they support on their social media feeds.

## THE POWER OF FLEXIBILITY

Perhaps one of the strongest elements of #GivingTuesday is its flexibility. As Henry Timms, who helped develop #GivingTuesday while he was with 92nd Street Y, points out in *New Power*, his book coauthored with Jeremy Heimans, the concept of #GivingTuesday was designed to be “adopted and then mutated by those who carried it forward.” While 92nd Street Y and their partners came up with the idea, much is left to charities and their partners to decide how to maximize their donations. Charities use themed website landing pages, email campaigns, social media, contests or competitions, and volunteer opportunities to attract supporters. Others partner with likeminded organizations to pool their efforts or might tie #GivingTuesday to their year-end fundraising campaigns. #GivingTuesday can also be an opportunity for an organization to tell their story or focus on results to connect with donors. The sky’s the limit.

In North Carolina, SHARECharlotte, a charity dedicated to helping Charlotteans get involved with local nonprofits, adapted #GivingTuesday into #GivingTuesdayCLT. In 2018, #GivingTuesdayCLT, which partners with over 400 nonprofits, reported \$4.1 million of financial impact and 21,000 volunteer hours pledged and served. 23% of donors to #GivingTuesdayCLT were new donors.

As reported by #GivingTuesday, an Iowa environmental charity hosted a #GivingTuesday trivia night for their supporters while volunteers filled shopping carts for a local food bank in Virginia. In Seattle, a homelessness prevention charity partnered with two other nonprofits on #GivingTuesday to distribute donated hats, coats and scarves at local businesses. Big business gets in on the act too. During #GivingTuesday 2018, Amazon made it possible to donate to Marine Toys for Tots Foundation through its Alexa virtual assistant, and matched each toy gifted. TOMS Shoes delayed opening their stores until 1PM so their employees could spend the morning volunteering. Coca-Cola matched donations from nonprofit partners in Atlanta that provide professional resources to help women overcome barriers to success.



The democratic nature of #GivingTuesday means almost anyone with Internet access can participate. However, many organizations need outside expertise to run an effective campaign, which often comes at a cost to charities. Giving platforms such as Blackbaud or GiveGab offer a variety of services and tools to help run campaigns, along with donation processing, but donors need to be aware of associated processing fees, typically a percentage of the donation. There are ways to get around paying such fees, such as giving directly to a charity or looking for services such as PayPal's Giving Fund which waves fees for participating charities.

## OTHER DAYS OF GIVING

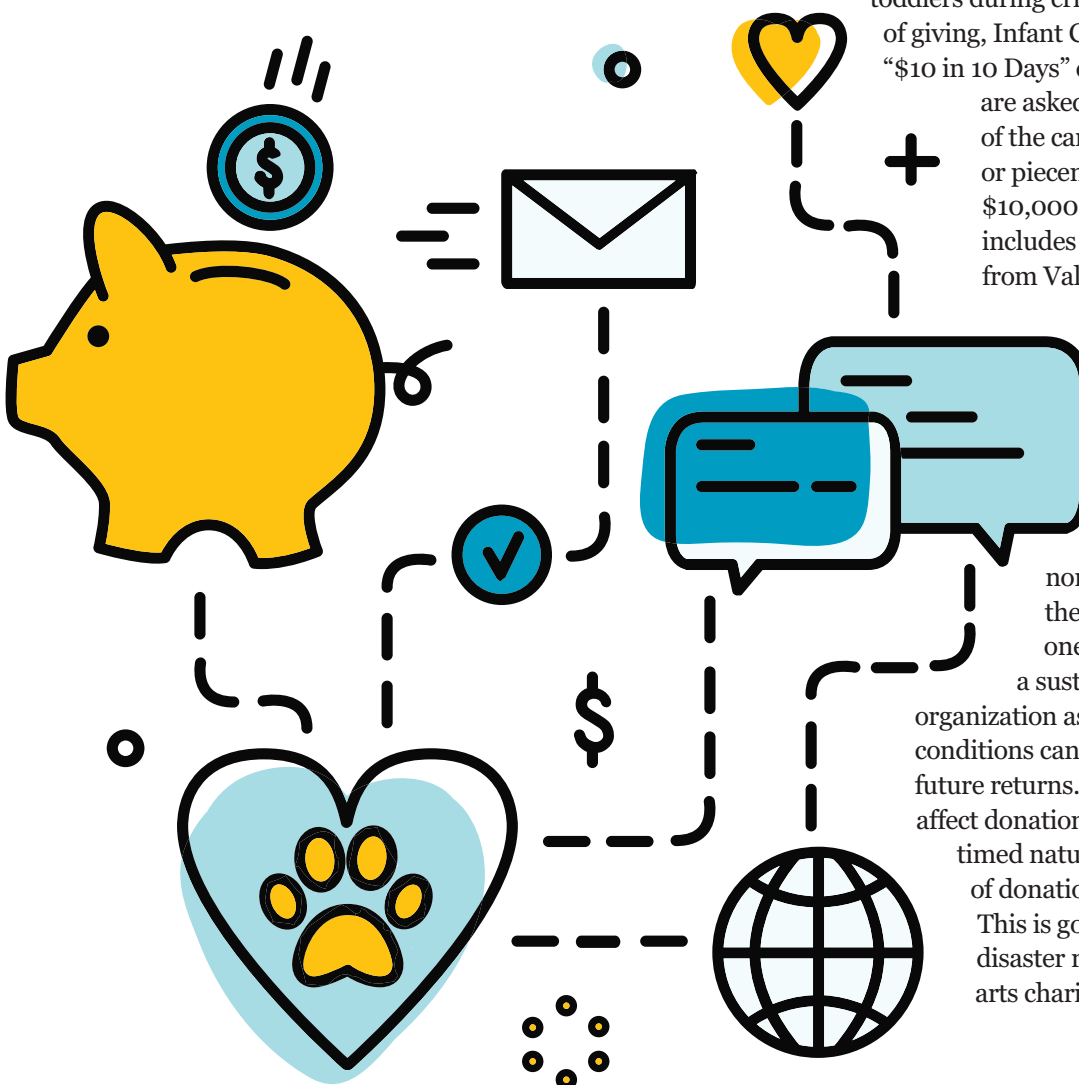
There are many other regional and cause-related days around the country doing their part to support charitable missions. Two notable examples come from Texas. Amplify Austin Day was created to support local nonprofits in Central Texas, and raised over \$10 million in 2018. The event, which occurred between 6PM on February 28 and 6PM on March 1 in 2019, was started

by Austin-based I Live Here, I Give Here, a charity dedicated to promoting philanthropy in Central Texas. Over 700 charities benefited from Amplify Austin Day in 2019, including organizations supporting the arts, animal welfare, children, mental health, and many others. As with #GivingTuesday and other giving days, Amplify Austin Day received matching support from foundations and businesses. St. David's Foundation, which addresses health issues through grantmaking, provided \$1 million of matching funds during Amplify Austin 2019, and Tito's Handmade Vodka matched gifts up to \$10,000. The Nonprofit Council of San Antonio, Texas provides another example of a successful giving day. The Big Give supports local nonprofits in 15 South Texas counties and has raised over \$25 million since 2014. There is a fee for participation in the Big Give, but the fee includes training opportunities for participating organizations' staff and board members, marketing materials, and an online toolkit.

A creative spin on giving days comes from Infant Crisis Services, a charity in Oklahoma City which provides formula, food and diapers to babies and toddlers during crises. Instead of a single day of giving, Infant Crisis Services created the "\$10 in 10 Days" campaign whereby donors are asked to give \$10 over the course of the campaign, either all at once or piecemeal. The goal is to raise \$10,000 during the campaign, which includes matching of up to \$5,000 from Valliance Bank.

## CHALLENGES AND EVOLUTIONS

Giving days have been a hot fundraising technique for several years, but nonprofits need to recognize the limitations. Overreliance on one annual day of giving is not a sustainable way to run an organization as unforeseen events or conditions can make it difficult to project future returns. An economic downturn could affect donations across the board, or a closely timed natural disaster may funnel the bulk of donations to disaster relief charities. This is good for groups that provide disaster relief but may not be good for an arts charity, for example. Donor fatigue,



in which people stop giving to charity for one reason or another, is a concern for all charities. Individuals may not have the means to offer continued support, become frustrated by being bombarded with fundraising appeals, or sense that their donation is not doing any good. For these reasons, charities should err on the side of caution and have diverse funding sources.

Technological failure can also be a concern on giving days. In May of 2016, Give Local America, a national matching day that supports the work of community foundations, was disrupted when donation forms were slow to load or failed to load altogether. Kimbia, the Texas software firm who began Give Local America, was apologetic, but the organization's reputation took a hit and potentially millions in donations were lost. During #GivingTuesday 2018, some organizations that relied on cloud software firm Blackbaud's Online Express, a product which helped solicit and process donations, experienced temporary service outages. It's unclear how many donations were affected, but the message for charities and donors is that it's good to have a backup plan. The volume of donations being processed during a short time period such as

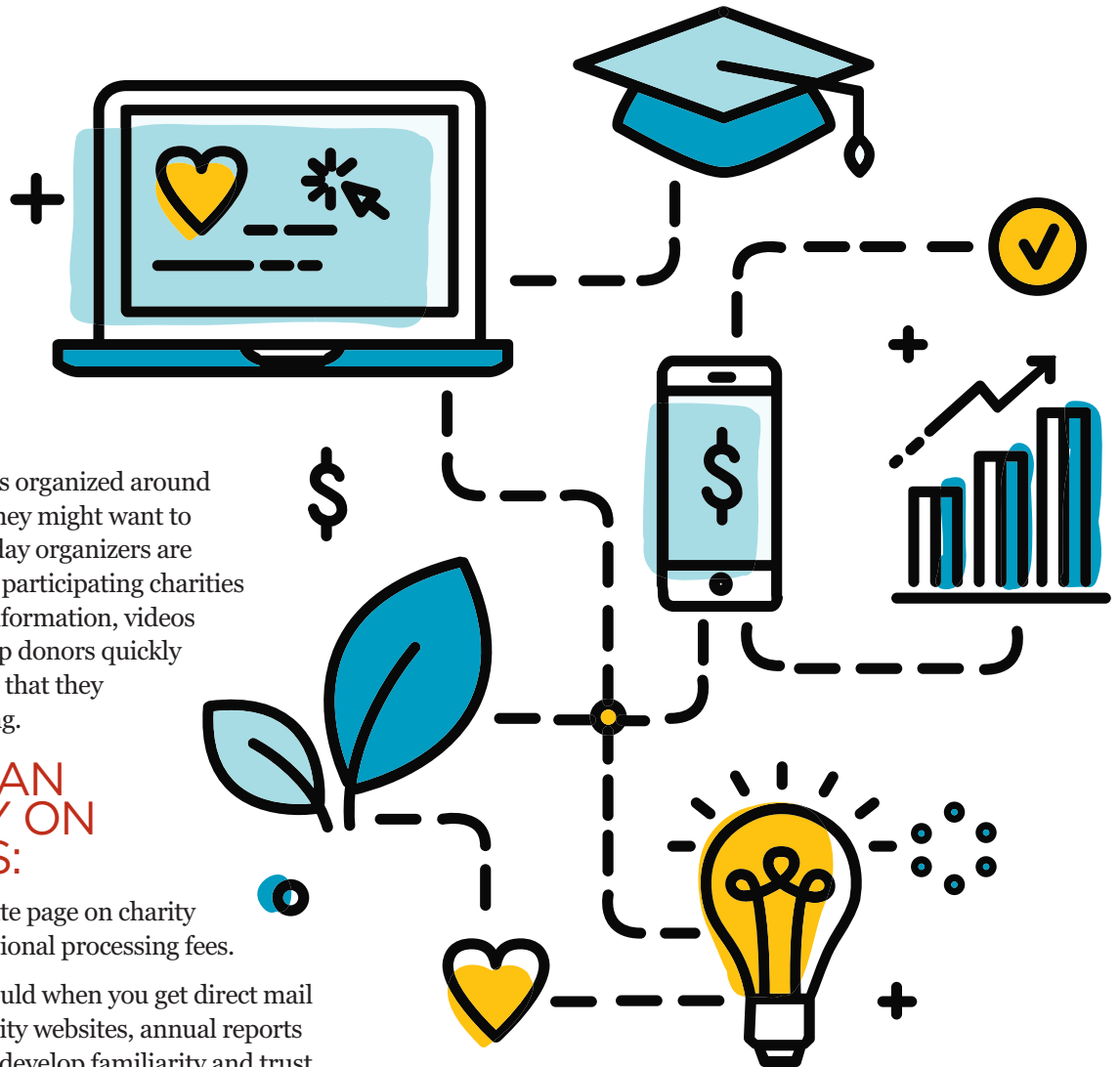


a giving day makes it likely that glitches will occur in the future. Some charities participating in giving days are offering longer windows for donating to avoid the rush of having to process so many donations in one day, and it might be good for donors to consider taking advantage of the extra time too.

Beyond the challenges, charities should keep abreast of new trends that can enhance their giving day campaigns. A *Chronicle of Philanthropy* article from April 30, 2019 mentions several giving day trends to be aware of. Mobile-friendly appeals and payment processing are something for charities to keep an eye on given the popularity of tablets and smartphones. Online shopping carts can enable donors to give to more than one organization at a time, and charities should be on

## TIPS FOR CHARITIES PARTICIPATING IN A GIVING DAY

- **Get the facts from the organizer.** Will there be participation or processing fees? What is the window in which donors can give? Are there any special events associated with the giving day?
- **Look at the history.** Find out how long the giving day has been around and ask about past results.
- **Plan ahead.** To get the most out of a giving day, a charity should plan and organize well in advance.
- **Set goals.** What does the charity seek to achieve by participating in the giving day? Increased exposure? Raise a targeted amount of funds? Increase the donor base? Attract volunteers? Outlining what a charity hopes to achieve will help them measure success.
- **Strategize a social media plan.** Many giving days are focused on the benefits of social media. A charity should plan how to present their giving day participation on these platforms. For example, it should find out the best time to Tweet and/or post but be careful not to overdo it.
- **Diversify.** There are plenty of potential benefits to giving day participation but be cautious of overreliance on one day for funding.
- **Seek outside help.** If a charity has never participated in a giving day, it should not hesitate to seek advice or help from experts.



the lookout for giving days organized around specific causes in which they might want to participate. Some giving day organizers are offering online profiles of participating charities which include financial information, videos or other facts that can help donors quickly learn about organizations that they are considering supporting.

## HOW YOU CAN GIVE WISELY ON GIVING DAYS:

- Go directly to the donate page on charity websites to avoid additional processing fees.
- Vet charities as you would when you get direct mail appeals: Examine charity websites, annual reports and other materials to develop familiarity and trust and visit [give.org](http://give.org) to see if the organization is a BBB Accredited Charity.
- Avoid the rush: See if the giving day offers a window to give before the actual day of the event to avoid any processing hiccups.
- Get your boots on the ground: See if there are volunteer opportunities or ways to participate that can deepen your connection to the mission of your charity of choice or the cause you care about most.
- Read the fine print: When you come across a giving day promotion on social media, read the fine print. Make sure giving day promotions link to legitimate charity websites or third-party platforms you're comfortable with. If you aren't sure, ask friends, family or experts.

Charities can benefit from donations, donor information, volunteer hours, exposure, and collaborative relationships by participating in giving days. Like the old saying goes: you get out of it what you put into it. For charities, careful planning well in

advance is critical. Does the organization want to rely on corporate matching? What about spurring competition among nonprofits or donors for a #GivingTuesday campaign? Will organizations use outside specialists to help run the campaign? There may be little cost to putting a #GivingTuesday logo on your organization's website, but to maximize your return, charities should think ahead and think collaboratively. [givingtuesday.org](http://givingtuesday.org), [classy.org](http://classy.org), [blackbaud.org](http://blackbaud.org), and [givegab.org](http://givegab.org) are just a few resources to get charities started.

This year's #Giving Tuesday takes place on December 3. We encourage donors to take some time away from shopping and the stress of the season to consider giving to the causes most important to them. Whether it's giving time or money, giving days can be an excellent way to enhance your relationship with charities. As always, BBB WGA encourages you to first do your due diligence by verifying the trustworthiness of charities before making your giving choices. ■