

UNHERALDED GENEROSITY:

# A 50-State Look at Anonymous Giving

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# Introduction

Those who give without being named or recognized have played a unique and irreplaceable role in the history of American civil society, and indeed in the history of America itself. The right of individuals to decide whether they want to be publicly associated with their favored causes is at the core of our civic freedom.

There are many reasons why individuals wish to keep their names out of the spotlight. They might want to minimize risks to personal privacy by having their personal information in the public domain. They might prefer all the attention go to the good work of the charity they support rather than themselves. Especially for high dollar donors who may provide a significant share of a charity's budget, the goal may be to avoid being seen as taking ownership of a cause or organization. Or, they may not want to be solicited by a multitude of other groups seeking the same support.

Some people belong to a religious tradition that favors anonymous giving. The Book of Matthew, Chapter 6:1 cautions: "Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven."

A donor's reason for wanting privacy may be even simpler. Arthur Brooks, an author and Harvard professor, cites studies that show anonymous giving leads to higher levels of happiness because "publicized gifts, in enhancing the donor's reputation in the eyes of others, can make a self-reflective donor doubt her own motivations, extinguishing the warm glow."<sup>1</sup>

Others may have—at least to outsiders—completely bizarre reasons for wanting



anonymity. Or they may have no particular reason at all. And it is not for anyone else—much less the government—to demand otherwise.

Anonymous giving goes hand-in-hand with free speech, which has been essential to democratic discourse since the founding of our republic. The ratification of the U.S. Constitution was primarily debated through a series of unsigned papers. Unfortunately, the current climate of cultural divisiveness has transformed the act of donating into a public and oftentimes politicized spectacle. Too often, average people, business owners, wealthy citizens, private foundations and corporations are publicly attacked because the recipients of their donations might have views or agendas that are considered anathema by others.

Additionally, in recent years, more states have passed laws that require exposing the identities of individuals, businesses, labor unions and nonprofits that spend money to participate in public dialogue. People are required to register with the government and file reports in order to speak their minds. An expanding disclosure regime is taking root. Its proponents claim to be countering political corruption but the regimes inevitably sweep up much charitable activity in the process. Donors to good causes who wish to remain anonymous are forced to disclose their personal information, making it all the less likely they will donate in the first place. These mandates have diluted public dialogue, invited harassment and retaliation against speakers and chilled speech and association. Although the U.S. Constitution protects private associations against compelled disclosure, lower courts have often failed to enforce those protections.<sup>2</sup>

These 50 case studies (one for each state) demonstrate the transcendent importance of the right to privacy, anonymity and civic association—all of which rely on freedom from unwanted and unnecessary disclosure. Some of the stories concern weighty and highly divisive issues of the day: abortion, civil rights, taxation and more. A few involve real dangers to personal privacy or even safety. Some might seem perfectly anodyne, with little apparent harm from disclosure, and the choice for anonymity is simply a personal preference. Yet in our constitutional system, the burden should not fall on the donor to provide a compelling reason for anonymity. The burden falls on the government to justify filing and disclosure requirements for the charitable sector—whether it’s a donation, membership lists or cumbersome paperwork.

Some case studies involve individuals supporting causes or organizations (e.g. Planned Parenthood, ACLU) that may not be well-received in most conservative “red” states; and, conversely, activity (pro-life, pro-traditional marriage) that would attract scorn, harassment and retaliation in more progressive “blue” states. The advent of social media and the practice of ‘doxing’—posting an individual’s address and contact info on the public web to incite harassment—means the distinction is blurred, if not erased, between local, state and national issues and controversies. Supporters of unfavored causes in one part of the country could be targeted by antagonists from another part of the country—either via social media or a crowd at their front doorstep.

The stories in this report illustrate:

- ◆ The innocuous nature of many anonymous gifts that happen in all forms, whether through a charity or directly to someone in need.
- ◆ Cases where citizens were targeted with harassment for their views or their donations, which would lead others to prefer anonymity rather than be exposed to the same treatment.
- ◆ Instances in which donors to charitable causes made anonymity a condition of their gift, suggesting implicitly that they would have been less likely to give if disclosure were required.
- ◆ The ongoing legal battle—victories and defeats—against waves of state legislation that would impose new requirements on decidedly non-political charities in the name of “transparency” and fighting “dark money.”

Ultimately giving a donation or joining a cause should be viewed for what it is—an act of generosity or expression of personal values and belief. As the following case studies show, protecting these essential freedoms requires constant vigilance and willingness to fight back—whether in the public arena or in court.



# Alabama

In the public arena, the right to anonymous association involves core constitutional protections, most notably the First Amendment. Fortuitously, the landmark case establishing this principle took place in a state whose name is first in alphabetical order, providing the legal and historical foundation for the accounts that follow in the remaining 49 states.

Beginning in 1956, in response to the U.S. Supreme Court's *Brown v. Board of Education* decision that ended school segregation, Alabama authorities used the state's foreign corporation law to investigate the NAACP. The statute gave state authorities the power to probe organizations that were not officially registered within Alabama. Although the NAACP established a local affiliate in Alabama in 1918 and created a regional office in the state in 1951, it was first incorporated at its national office in New York.

While the NAACP did comply with the state's request for its business records, including a list of the organization's officers and staff members, it refused to provide a list of its members. With the civil rights organization's active role in the segregated South, it believed the threat of potential reprisals against members was too high to comply with that request. The fear was that disclosing its member list would dampen the willingness of individuals to associate with the NAACP. After a circuit court ruling that resulted in a fine for the NAACP, the U.S. Supreme Court took up the case and ruled unanimously that the state of Alabama could not force the NAACP to reveal its members and donors because doing so would infringe on core First Amendment rights by exposing those individuals to "economic reprisal, loss of employment, threat of physical coercion and other manifestations of public hostility..."<sup>3</sup>

The U.S. Supreme Court opinion explained that the right of association and assembly, although spelled out in the First Amendment, "is [also] an inseparable aspect of the 'liberty'" that is protected by the due process clause of the 14th Amendment. Accordingly, the U.S. Supreme Court's decision expanded the scope of the rights of association and assembly to prevent states such as Alabama from discouraging citizens from participating in groups that were engaged in lawful activities.<sup>4</sup> As a result of the decision, in 1964 the NAACP was able to resume its work in Alabama.

This landmark decision has since been invoked by groups across the political spectrum to protect the confidentiality of their supporters.



# Alaska

Donors need not fear threats or reprisal to keep their giving anonymous. Nor does freedom of association—and from unwarranted disclosure—require a noble, history-making cause as its justification.

Like much of the country, the lives of the residents of Kenai, Alaska, were severely impacted, in some cases crushed, by the COVID-19 pandemic. Even with significant rental and food assistance, thousands of Alaskan families struggled to make ends meet. Of special concern were energy bills, no small thing in a state located near the Arctic Circle.

Then one Alaskan started a campaign to help struggling Kenai families with their gas, electric and water bills. Their donation of \$10,000 was matched by the local power company, which partnered with the United Way of Anchorage to launch the Warm Hearts/Warm Homes Utility Assistance Fund.<sup>5</sup> From the Warm Hearts website:

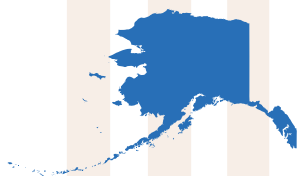
## WARM HEARTS

*Far too many Alaskans right now are experiencing financial hardships due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They may have received food and rental assistance. But there are few resources on hand to help struggling neighbors keep the lights on, the water running and heat flowing. These utility bills add up when folks have lost their jobs and their ability to keep up.*

*Your support through WARM HEARTS • WARM HOMES Utility Assistance Fund can help change that for families in Anchorage, Mat-Su and the Kenai Peninsula. And, thanks to the generosity of an anonymous donor and ENSTAR Natural Gas Company, your donation will be matched—doubling the good your caring can do.<sup>6</sup>*

In a case like this, disclosure of the donor's identity would, if anything, increase public esteem or affection for the giver. But in a small tight knit community, he or she may not want to hint at their level of income or savings. The donor may not want to be solicited with more charitable asks.

Possibly they might have given anyway if required to disclose their name. But our default should be to maximize incentives and opportunities for charitable giving for all, not enforce requirements that may create doubts and hurdles for some.





# Arizona

By 2010, the Phoenix Coyotes were a perpetually money losing professional hockey team. After falling into bankruptcy and being temporarily acquired by the National Hockey League, the bidding began between potential owners who would move the team outside Arizona. Due to the annual revenue lost each year, the NHL planned to move the Coyotes in the absence of a deal with the city for a new lease.

A consortium of investors led by a Chicago investor then reached a deal to purchase the Coyotes from the NHL along with a lease agreement with the town of Glendale, located in the Phoenix metro area. The bonds offered by the city council would have cost taxpayers up to \$340 million total. Additionally, the city would have been obligated to pay the owner \$97 million for “arena management.”<sup>7</sup>

The Goldwater Institute, an Arizona-based 501(c)(3) organization, considered the stadium corporate welfare at its worst. The Institute threatened a lawsuit over the legality of payments going to support the owners of the hockey team.<sup>8</sup> A lack of transparency about the deal was a major source of contention as the Institute pressed the city to provide copies of meeting minutes and other relevant internal documents.<sup>9</sup> That deal collapsed in late June 2011 due in large part to the efforts of the Institute, led by its president Darcy Olsen.

These actions were not well received by supporters of the stadium deal, some of whom were willing to go to extremes. Olsen and her colleagues were subject to threats and harassment. One message said, “You’re all going to pay, you’re all going to die.”<sup>10</sup>

One morning Olsen opened the front door to find a rabbit’s head, entrails and a pool of blood at her feet. Her home address was unlisted, and she concluded someone had followed her back from the Goldwater Institute.

“I walked away from this experience with a greater appreciation for being anonymous of having your information private,” she said later. “I was happy to bear the brunt of all that anger ... now imagine all of our 5,000 supporters; what would have happened if their addresses had been made public?”

Imagine, indeed.



# Arkansas

In recent years, monuments across the country have been removed by local officials and defaced or toppled by protesters. One monument in Little Rock, Arkansas, was targeted in a more legal way, as were the citizens who supported it.

A Ten Commandments monument was first installed on the capitol grounds in June 2017. It was immediately rammed by a vehicle and shattered into pieces. The American History and Heritage Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization, collected more than \$85,000 to rebuild the monument, eventually installed in April 2018.

Several groups sued, arguing the monument's placement on the capitol grounds counted as state endorsement of a particular religion. One set of plaintiffs, backed by the American Civil Liberties Union of Arkansas, consisted of four members of a walking and cycling group who were offended by the site of the monument visible from their regular travel route. The second group included followers of several non-Judeo Christian religions, including Buddhists and Wiccans. This plaintiff cohort was later joined by the Satanic Temple, which describes its mission as encouraging benevolence and empathy among all people. The Satanic group sought the placement of a 7½-foot-tall bronze statue of Baphomet—a deity that is part man, part goat—next to the commandments monument.<sup>11</sup>

The major issue was a list of more than 800 people and organizations who contributed to the construction of the statue through a GoFundMe campaign. More than 170 of those donors chose to be anonymous. The plaintiffs said access to the names of big donors was needed to show the purpose was to “express the state’s preference for a particular version of the Christian religion.” The foundation supporting the monument said if the religious or moral views of foundation members were publicly disclosed, it would hinder future fundraising and membership efforts. The records “are privileged and there is no legitimate purpose for their effort to intrude into personal financial information and to establish a religious ideology of contributors.”<sup>12</sup>

In September 2021, attorneys for both sides reached a compromise whereby the American History and Heritage Foundation would categorize the anonymous donors as either churches or individuals, without divulging any further identifying details.<sup>13</sup> The result was widely interpreted as a victory for supporters of the Ten Commandments monument—and an affirmation of the right to privacy in charitable giving.





# California

Proposition 8 was a state ballot initiative in 2008 that would have added language to the California constitution defining marriage as between one man and one woman exclusively. The proposition was filed by groups opposed to recognizing same-sex unions legally as equivalent to a heterosexual marriage. It was a contentious social issue—gay marriage did not then have the acceptance it does today. Passions ran high during the campaign, bringing attention and funding from across the country. Yet, even in the politically liberal state that California had become, Proposition 2008 passed with 52% of the vote.

Following the passage of the proposition, opponents obtained lists of people who had donated to the “Yes on 8” campaign. Activists published their names and called for boycotts of supporters’ places of work. Marc Shaiman, an influential Broadway composer, demanded that other gay artists boycott the California Music Theater over a \$1,000 personal donation made by the theater’s artistic director. The director later resigned. The LA Film Festival publicly distanced the organization from its own director, who had also contributed to the initiative and also later resigned.

The most famous case of retribution involved the El Coyote Café, a family business founded in 1931 and a popular landmark restaurant in Beverly Hills. Margie Christoffersen, one of the managers, had become a devout Mormon, a church that opposed gay marriage and helped fund the ballot proposition. Christoffersen never considered herself political. Nor did she advertise her views. As a matter of personal conviction and religious belief she donated \$100 in support of Proposition 8.

Her \$100 and name would later show up on public lists of donors. A boycott of El Coyote was organized on the internet, with activists trashing the restaurant on review web sites. Groups of protesters came shouting “shame on you” at customers, many of whom stopped coming. The El Coyote cut back hours and staffing for its more than 90 employees.

Christoffersen refused to quit and instead took a leave of absence. She later held a free brunch at the restaurant for activists in which she apologized for causing offense, but refused to renounce her support of the ban or, when asked, to contribute financially to the legal appeal against Proposition 8 (later overturned by the U.S. Supreme Court).

A *Los Angeles Times* columnist writing about El Coyote was a firm opponent of Proposition 8 and critic of its supporters in the Mormon and Catholic church. But, he added: “I didn’t like what I was hearing about the vilification of Margie Christoffersen and others in California being targeted for the crime of voting their conscience.”<sup>14</sup>



# Colorado

A long line of U.S. Supreme Court cases has determined that the First Amendment protects speech about public matters, including the privacy of speakers and those who finance that speech. It is true voters have a right to know who funds the campaigns of politicians in order to monitor their performance in office. But the government may not force citizens to divulge their views and contacts with other citizens. Or at least that's how it's supposed to work in the American system.

The principle was tested toward the end of the 2014 Congressional session when a nonpartisan 501(c)(3) group in Colorado—the Independence Institute—wanted to run two issue advertisements. The first advertisement asked citizens to contact Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper to initiate an audit of the Colorado Health Benefit Exchange. Another Independence Institute radio advertisement asked Colorado senators Mark Udall and Michael Bennett to support the Justice Safety Valve Act, a federal sentencing reform bill.<sup>15</sup>

By then state and federal campaign finance laws had created a new regulated category called “electioneering communications.” Colorado law required donor disclosures from any group spending over \$1,000 on television, radio or print ads mentioning the name of a state candidate within 60 days of a general election or 30 days of a primary election. Likewise, federal campaign law demanded the name and address of anyone who gave \$1,000 for an issue advertisement close to an election.<sup>16</sup> Inevitably non-partisan charities came under the purview of these laws, which effectively transformed free “issue speech” into regulated “campaign speech.”<sup>17</sup>

In a suit filed in September 2014 in federal district court, the Institute said the disclosure mandate violates a long-recognized Constitutional principle that “Effective advocacy of both public and private points of view, particularly controversial ones, is undeniably enhanced by group association.” The Institute’s suit against Colorado was unsuccessful at the district court and later its repeal was rejected by the appeals court. The related case against the Federal Elections Commission was ultimately unsuccessful as well. Other states would attempt to regulate issue speech, prompting further challenges to preserve the right of citizens to give to causes without giving up their privacy.





# Connecticut

In 2013, the Western Connecticut Health Network, a 501(c)(3) organization, received wonderful news in the form of a gift of \$10 million dollars to the Danbury Hospital from an anonymous benefactor. The donation went toward the construction of an 11-floor tower, which included a 35-bed surgical patient-care floor, a 30-bed state-of-the-art critical care unit and a 40,000-square-foot emergency department.

The anonymous donor committed an addition \$20 million to the hospital on the condition it was able to raise the additional \$10 million needed to fulfill a \$50 million capital campaign goal. The donor also agreed to reveal his name once the goal was met.<sup>18</sup>

In June 2014 the donor's name was announced. It was Peter Buck, founder and CEO of the Subway Restaurant chain, and long-time Danbury resident.

The new hospital tower would be named for Buck and his late wife, Carmen Lúcia, who died in 2003. Buck said it was his late wife's idea to support Danbury Hospital, which previously received gifts from the couple totaling \$8 million to fund a chair in surgery and a robotic-surgery center.

Buck's latest gift came after he received treatment at Danbury Hospital. But he denied that gratitude was the primary motivation for the donation. "I don't give back," he said. "I give."<sup>19</sup>



# Delaware

For years a group called Delaware Strong Families, a 501(c)(3) organization, regularly sent out communications to voters about the positions of candidates running in state and local races. The groups focused on issues deemed particularly important to those with traditional religious beliefs and social values. The Delaware voters' guide did not advocate on behalf of particular candidates. Doing so would have cost its tax-exempt status.

Then a new Delaware law, taking effect in January 2013, created a new form of regulated speech known as a "third-party advertisement." The law effectively treated groups like Delaware State Families the same as political parties, PACs and candidate committees when it came to filing and disclosure requirements, including information about its members and donors. The group would face stiff penalties for publishing the voter guides without abiding by the new law.<sup>20</sup>

Delaware Strong Families challenged the law in October 2013, claiming it violated the First Amendment by placing unconstitutional burdens on groups publishing nonpartisan voter guides. The Families lawsuit noted that without court intervention, the organization "will not publish and disseminate its voter guides in 2014, for fear of risking enforcement of the Delaware Elections Disclosure Act." Nicole Theis, the group's president, said, "There is nothing in the First Amendment that says that we need to beg the state for a license to speak."

The U.S. Supreme Court did not muster four justices to grant certiorari to the Delaware case. Justice Clarence Thomas filed a dissent. Acknowledging that the U.S. Supreme Court had considered disclosure requirements to be "the least restrictive means of curbing the evils of campaign ignorance and corruption," Thomas said the disclosures—including names of members and donors—required in this case were far broader than those of the past. The state's interest in an informed electorate might justify "a more tailored regime." But Thomas doubted it could justify the burdens on the First Amendment he thought this disclosure imposed.<sup>21</sup> Freedom from unnecessary and burdensome disclosure requirements would continue to be a principle argued in other state and federal courts.





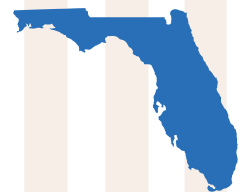
# Florida

The Florida Atlantic Union (FAU) High School is the only public, accelerated pre-collegiate program in which all students working toward a bachelor's degree and high school diploma simultaneously can do so free of charge and without debt. It also provides an example of two distinctly different approaches to donor acknowledgment and publicity.

In April 2018, Daniel Cane, the CEO and co-founder of Modernizing Medicine, provided a \$1 million gift to FAU High and the Alexander D. Henderson University School, a public elementary and middle school also on the campus of Florida Atlantic University, to establish the Cane Institute of Advanced Technologies. The new institute was to serve as the school's epicenter for research, education and technology transfer.<sup>22</sup> The appellation of the giver was not only announced, it was added to the name of the organization getting the donation.

A few months earlier, FAU High received another significant donation. It was part of a wider fundraising campaign to allow more students to join the dual-track degree program. A wealthy father whose daughter was attending FAU High asked for anonymity for his donation. In a statement he voiced excitement about the potential to “forever change the face of public education.”<sup>23</sup> But he also wanted to shield his daughter from undue attention from classmates, faculty and anyone else.<sup>24</sup>

Each approach fulfilled the best traditions of American giving. The public association with Cane benefited the institute in any number of ways by keeping the Cane family engaged and possibly getting access to more potential givers. The anonymous gift ensured a young woman did not get singled out for special treatment—favorable or otherwise—while expanding opportunity to other less fortunate students.



# Georgia

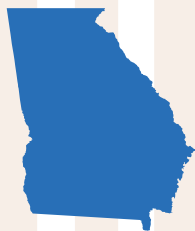
In 1997 an automotive parts warehouse in mid-town Atlanta was purchased by Coca-Cola heiress Ednabelle Wardlaw for \$1.3 million. She then donated the building to the Metro Atlanta Task Force for the Homeless. The resulting facility, Peachtree-Pine, at one point became the largest homeless shelter in the southeast United States, with a capacity of up to 1,000 people a night.<sup>25</sup> An average of between 500 and 700 homeless people stayed there every night. It also provided a variety of services, including finding more permanent shelter for its residents.

Peachtree-Pine had its share of critics, including other homeless advocates, city officials and even some residents. The shelter was accused of being unsafe and unsanitary. Atlanta city officials had long wanted to close the shelter by seizing its land via eminent domain. Downtown business leaders considered the shelter an eyesore and a nuisance. Nonetheless, to its supporters, the Task Force provided an invaluable service that, among other benefits, kept other homeless organizations from being overwhelmed.<sup>26</sup>

In September 2014, with the shelter behind on its water bill by nearly \$580,000, several anonymous donors stepped forward to pay off its debt.<sup>27</sup> This was after the city had declined a partial payment of \$100,000 from the shelter and threatened to cut off water.<sup>28</sup>

The shelter's director told local media that donors were kept confidential because "business leaders have put pressure against their contributors in the past" and "public officials have told their donors they wouldn't be able to do business with the city if they gave money." In 2008, the Whole Foods grocery store canceled a fundraising event for the shelter after being threatened with a boycott. Another major private donor, Bob Cramer, penned a letter in 2010 to the Atlanta Business Chronicle in defense of the shelter and called on the local business community to "call off the dogs."<sup>29</sup>

Ultimately the Peachtree-Pine shelter shut down in August 2017 following a \$9.7 million settlement in a decade-long court battle with various downtown civic and business organizations.<sup>30</sup> Its residents were distributed to other facilities around the city. Due to the generosity of individuals who wished to remain anonymous, it was able to provide services to the homeless for another three years.



# Hawaii

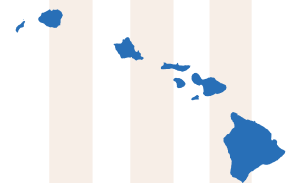
The COVID-19 pandemic initially resulted in a shortage of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and cleaning supplies throughout the world. Hawaii was uniquely threatened because of its relative isolation in the middle of the Pacific Ocean along with a very limited local capacity to manufacture PPE. The shortages eased over the course of 2020 but PPE supplies never became plentiful or cheap on the islands.

In April 2021, a donor wishing to remain anonymous provided a major gift of PPE to the University of Hawaii. The donation included more than 5,000 face shields and almost 1,400 containers of hand sanitizer valued at about \$200,000. A large portion of the donation, more than 1,000 face shields and about 4,600 containers of hand sanitizer, went to Kapi'olani Community College and was warmly welcomed by students and faculty in the emergency medical services, nursing and health sciences programs.

Kapi'olani's share of the donation was boxed up and transported in more than 10 pallets. Students and staff used forklifts and manpower to distribute the PPE across the campus. The Emerging Medical Technician program was one of the only programs that had face-to-face learning at Kapi'olani Community College, going through large quantities of PPE in the process.

"We are so grateful for the donation of hand sanitizer and face shields to help keep our students, faculty and staff safe. While the vaccine efforts are well underway, the need to use PPE and other safeguards for those on campus in the coming months will remain," said Lisa Radak, dean of health sciences. "This generous donation coupled with vaccinations will support campus operations and student learning activities without compromising the health of our ohana [family] at Kapi'olani Community College."<sup>31</sup>

While we do not know why the giver wished to remain private, the donor's self-effacing generosity should be celebrated.





# Idaho

The Community Food Basket has served the Idaho Falls area for more than 40 years. Since 2016 the charity was forced to move three times due to problems associated with renting space. Fed up with the costs and complications associated with renting, the Food Basket decided to purchase its current building outright. The 17,000-square-foot warehouse was bought in April 2021. It stores dry and refrigerated food items, along with a Diaper Bank, school pantry donations and a newly organized mattress program.

The mortgage payments put a strain on the finances of the charity. In July 2021 four local women, who were known only as “the Four Amigas,” agreed to match all donations up to \$100,000. This donation made it possible for the pantry to free up funds to go to programs for the roughly 2,000 families it helps every month.

The donors’ anonymity did not preclude them from issuing a news release: “We Amigas believe that Idaho Falls is indeed a community that cares about everyone. We could not pass up this opportunity to lessen the burden of debt for this outstanding group.”

The Food Basket’s director said: “There’s always going to be struggling people, we’re not going to solve that problem in its entirety, but we’ll always have a home to be able to get food out ... [to] people who need it.”<sup>32</sup>

The Food Basket hopes to pay off the building as soon as possible. The sooner they can pay off the building, the sooner they can put more money into new programs like a backpack program with the local school district. The Four Amigas will be matching donations until December 2022, choosing to remain anonymous as their generosity continues.



# Illinois

On Christmas Day 2021, Chicago police officer Tiffany Washington was walking toward her station when a car pulled up behind her. Given the hostility directed at police officers in recent years—including lethal attacks—this could have been a cause for alarm. Instead, a woman in the car leaned out and said: “Thank you for all you do. Thank you for being here on Christmas,” and handed Officer Washington an envelope.

Washington opened the envelope expecting a Christmas card with maybe a small gift card for food or coffee. Instead, she found \$1,000 in cash—10 \$100 bills tucked inside a card that read “CPD Person, Thank you for working on Christmas to serve and protect us. Merry Christmas!”

The card was signed only with first names. The gift was much too large to be accepted by a police officer. The police Board of Ethics requires that this kind of gift be donated to a qualifying nonprofit organization.

The \$1,000 donation will be used by Chicago Police Memorial Foundation to honor and help the families of fallen police officers who were killed or catastrophically injured in the line of duty. It will also support initiatives to improve protections for police, such as bulletproof vests.<sup>33</sup>

Regardless of why the donors here chose to remain anonymous, the freedom to give without recognition is at the core of who we are as a nation.



# Indiana

By the summer of 2020 nearly 40 homeless people had set up camp at a former Bureau of Motor Vehicles site in South Bend, Indiana. The property owner had no imminent development plans for the unused site in the city's Monroe Park neighborhood. But he considered the presence of the homeless—many with drug addictions and mental illnesses—to be a potential legal liability. Police had received reports of violence and fighting on the old BMV site. In mid-August the owner put up a “no trespassing” sign and began coordinating with the city government to evict the squatters.<sup>34</sup>

Then a private donor stepped forward. The name of the giver and the size of the contribution was not disclosed. But it was large enough to pay for at least 37 of the homeless to stay in local motel rooms for several months.

“We had some resistance from people who were angry and don't like change. For the most part, everyone was like, ‘Let's clean up our tent, let's go.’ They were very, very grateful,” said a local homeless advocate.

The donor's contribution was complemented by efforts by local residents, pastors, city officials and the neighborhood association. Understanding that the motel residency can't last forever, local leaders worked to coordinate food deliveries, bus passes and so-called “wraparound services”—including behavioral health and job training—to get the homeless individuals back on their feet.<sup>35</sup>

James Mueller, who succeeded Pete Buttigieg as South Bend mayor, pledged to double funding for homeless programs in the city budget. The motel program was able to continue through 2021 with \$500,000 in CARE act funding from the county. It all started with an anonymous gift.



# Iowa



In 1972 the U.S. Congress passed a law known as Title IX. Its text read: “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.” In essence, Title IX prohibits any and every institution that receives government money from treating women differently from men. That includes virtually all colleges and universities. The number of high school girls participating in athletics rose from less than 300,000 in 1971 to nearly 3 million.<sup>36</sup>

Maintaining these gains for women’s sports can still be an uphill fight. In 2020 the University of Iowa’s athletic department attempted to cut the women’s swimming team. In the football-crazy school, sports programs that didn’t attract big crowds or sponsorships were vulnerable when budgets got tight. A group of six Iowa female athletes—four swimmers, one rugby player and a university student who wrestled in high school—filed for an injunction to prevent the university from cutting the teams. The legal justification was Title IX.

An anonymous donor covered the legal costs of their court filing.

In October 2021 the University of Iowa agreed to a settlement. The women did not ask for damages but the university paid for attorneys’ fees and costs of nearly \$400,000. Some of that amount went to the donor—still anonymous—whose giving made the suit possible. Iowa pledged to maintain a women’s swimming and diving team for at least seven more years. It will hire an outside monitor to report publicly on how the Athletics Department is living up to the Title IX gender equity requirements.

The agreement also “memorializes certain assurance” on starting a women’s wrestling team, including that the athletic department post the head coaching job opening and conduct a national search. Recruiting for the wrestling team is ongoing and the first recruited athletes will start arriving on campus in the 2022-2023 academic year.<sup>37</sup> The lawsuit prompting these changes would never have happened without the initial anonymous donation.





# Kansas

It's common for philanthropists to donate large sums to hospitals. In response, there usually is a ceremony where they can be acknowledged and thanked. Their names may appear on a plaque or the side of a building.

In Pratt, Kansas, two people in January 2021 decided to give directly to the patients and receive no recognition in the process. They did so by paying more than \$95,000 in medical bills at Pratt Regional Medical Center.

According to the hospital, the donors reached out and wanted to give to something directly for patients rather than contribute to a fundraising campaign or assist with the purchase of capital equipment. The donors, who wished to remain anonymous, met with the hospital chief financial officer, and they decided to help two groups of patients.

Most of the 430 beneficiaries found out in the mail, receiving a letter from the hospital saying their remaining balance from unpaid bills had been wiped clean.

The first group was those with leftover balances of up to \$300 after all insurance settlements had been paid. This amounted to about 400 families, representing a total of nearly \$52,500. The second group included 30 families who had been making regular monthly payments faithfully on their account for many years, some as far back as 2002. The remaining balances on these 30 accounts was over \$42,000. The donors paid off these latter balances as well, bringing the total to \$95,000.<sup>38</sup>

These donors had a goal and a desire to help meet a specific need. Thanks to philanthropic freedom, this was possible.



# Kentucky

In June 2021 a nonprofit group focused on helping underprivileged African-American communities in Louisville received a six-figure donation. The donor was a white individual who had recently inherited family wealth on their 25<sup>th</sup> birthday.

After receiving the money, the individual began inquiries about where the family's money came from. It turned out their great-grandfather owned six enslaved people in Bourbon County. Because the great-grandfather did not record the enslaved persons' names, the donor couldn't track down the descendants of the people the ancestor had owned. They chose to wire money to Change Today, Change Tomorrow, a 501(c)(3) charity, after finding it on the internet.

The donor, who insisted on remaining anonymous, considered the gift a form of reparations to combat the inequity faced by descendants of enslaved people in that part of Kentucky. They are from the South but not in Kentucky. They issued a statement through the charity about the slave-owning ancestor: "He inflicted the trauma and violence of slavery on six people for his own monetary gain and did not even bother to record their names. Although no amount of money could ever right that wrong, their descendants deserve repayment for what was taken."<sup>39</sup> The donor also encouraged others to pay reparations, even if their families did not own slaves.<sup>40</sup>

The donor's request for anonymity may have stemmed from a desire to keep their family's association with slavery a secret. Or they may have considered it a more noble gesture without receiving public credit. In any case, the ability to give without disclosure played a role in the donor's decisions—as it does with many others.



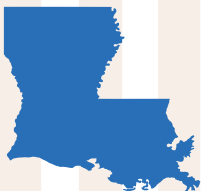
# Louisiana

Xavier University is the only Catholic Historically Black College and University (HBCU) in the country. It was founded in 1925 with a focus on science and human health. Roughly 75% of Xavier students are Black and 12% are Catholic, according to the school's website. About 65% of Xavier's students are eligible for federal Pell grants, a form of tuition assistance available to students whose families earn less than \$50,000 a year.<sup>41</sup>

The school is ranked first in the nation for the number of its African-American graduates who go on to complete medical school, according to 2019 data from the Association of American Medical Colleges. Xavier is also first in awarding bachelor's degrees to Black students in the biological and physical sciences.

In July 2020, Xavier received \$20 million—the largest private gift in the school's nearly 100-year history—from a donor who asked to be unnamed. According to media reports, "University President Reynold Verret said the school will use at least a portion of the money to invest in its endowment and to expand need-based scholarships for students who otherwise would not be able to attend Xavier or other private institutions."<sup>42</sup>

Later it was revealed the gift came from Mackenzie Scott, the ex-wife of Amazon Founder Scott Bezos.<sup>43</sup> Scott has written publicly about the importance of anonymous giving to keep the attention on the people doing the good work being funded: "I want to let each of these incredible teams speak for themselves first if they choose to, with the hope that when they do, media focuses on their contributions instead of mine."<sup>44</sup>



# Maine

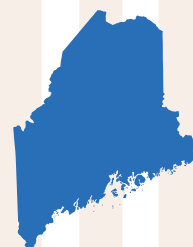
In March 2018, the University of Maine received the single largest capital gift in its history. It was a gift of \$10 million from the family of an engineering graduate. It helped construct the university's Engineering Education and Design Center.

The University of Maine System Board of Trustees approved acceptance of the \$10 million gift, which includes a naming option—one not taken by the givers.<sup>45</sup>

These donors wished to remain anonymous, preferring to focus attention on the need to educate engineers prepared to solve the world's most complex problems.

Ironically, just over a year later Maine would see one of the more aggressive and overreaching legislative attempts to intrude on donor privacy in recent years. A Republican legislator in March 2019 introduced a bill that would have required each nonprofit incorporated in the state to list every donor in its publicly available annual report.<sup>46</sup> The bill's intent was to uncover improper influence by donors on government-funded nonprofits—but would have dragged in many charitable organizations as well.

The bill went nowhere. Possibly because there is a strong tradition of anonymous giving in the state. In addition to the \$10 million donation mentioned earlier, the University of Maine Farmington campus later announced an anonymous donation of \$3.2 million.<sup>47</sup> Donor confidentiality is a major characteristic of generous gifts to universities in Maine—and, as these case studies show, across the nation.





# Maryland

Maryland has been one of the most reliably Democratic states with strong majorities favoring legalized abortion. In 1991, nearly two decades after the U.S. Supreme Court declared access to most abortions a constitutional right, the Maryland state legislature took the extra step of passing a law that forbid the state from interfering with a pregnancy choice within the boundaries established by *Roe v. Wade*.<sup>48</sup>

For most of that time, an active Planned Parenthood clinic operated on North Howard Street in downtown Baltimore. In early 2017 a local man—a pro-life activist— was praying outside the clinic when, according to his later recounting, he noticed a for sale sign on a long-abandoned 100-year-old building right next door. He wondered if the three-story structure could be turned into a pro-life pregnancy resource center as an alternative to the Planned Parenthood operation. He contacted the Center for Pregnancy Concerns (CPC), a nondenominational Christian nonprofit organization that operates four pro-life centers in the Baltimore metropolitan area. He offered to put up money to purchase the building for CPC.

After another anonymous donor stepped forward to match the initial contribution, the CPC's board of directors approved going forward with acquisition of the dilapidated brick building. The CPC submitted the winning \$94,500 bid — paid with the unexpected contributions — to purchase the property at auction.<sup>49</sup>

Over the next three years construction workers rehabilitated the building, which had been an electronics and jewelry store. The Center for Pregnancy Concerns spent almost \$1 million to convert the rundown Howard Street building into a modern health center, which includes a new sonogram machine donated by the Knights of Columbus.

In October 2020, the Howard Street CPC opened under the moniker Options@328. It provides private counseling, sonograms, training programs and extensive material assistance, including donated baby clothes, toys, diapers, books, furniture and other supplies. Gretchen Carney, the CPC's development director, said the Howard Street location gives her organization more direct contact with abortion-minded women. "We have the opportunity to reach a whole group of people we haven't been able to access before."<sup>50</sup>

The abortion issue will always be divisive and the ability to give anonymously allows donors to express their conscience without fear of retribution.



# Massachusetts

In December 2021, a police dog in Natick received an unexpected gift in the form of a canine protective vest. A local resident who wished to remain anonymous offered to fund a bullet- and stab-protective vest for Koda after reading about the shooting death of another K-9 in another town.

The protective vest has a value between \$1,700 and \$2,300. This particular vest was embroidered with the words: “Honoring those who served and sacrificed.” The canine body armor weights about five pounds and is custom-fitted and certified by the National Institute of Justice.

The donation came to Vested Interest in K9s, a 501(c)(3) organization that provides protective vests and other assistance to dogs of law enforcement and related agencies across the country. Since its founding in 2009, Vested Interest in K9s has provided nearly 4,500 vests to K-9s in all 50 states at a value of nearly \$7 million—all made possible by both private and corporate donations.<sup>51</sup>

This includes the gift of one local citizen who wanted their generosity to go unheralded.



# Michigan

On December 12, 2012, more than 12,000 people gathered outside the Michigan Capitol in Lansing to protest legislation about to become state law. It was a “Right to Work” bill that made paying union dues optional for public- and private-sector employees. Michigan would become the 24th state with this kind of labor law, which is typically opposed by Democrats and supported by Republicans and conservative free-market groups such as Americans for Prosperity (AFP).

According to a later news account, in Lansing the bill’s “opponents carried signs and passed around inflatable rats. They wore hardhats, work boots and emblems in proud reference to their local unions. They shouted, chanted and banged on locked doors. At times, their anger boiled over.”<sup>52</sup>

That anger would turn toward a small group of Right to Work supporters gathered by AFP in tents on the Capitol lawn. The tents were torn down and the AFP activists were forced to flee. Two days later Scott Hagerstrom, director of Americans for Prosperity-Michigan, spoke from the same location, recounting that several 911 calls were made during the attack but with little response. Hagerstrom estimated the value of the destroyed tents at \$10,000 each.

Others spoke, recounting how they were intimidated, harassed and assaulted by the protesters. They included Clint Tarver, a hot dog vendor who had some of his equipment destroyed while he was catering in one of the tents. Tarver’s wife alleged that “racially charged verbal attacks” were also directed at her husband during the chaos. Another speaker accused the union protesters of throwing rocks, beer cans and “swinging sticks” at the Right to Work supporters outside the tent. A message had gone out days earlier to retired Michigan Education Association (teachers union) members calling on them to “cause mayhem.”<sup>53</sup>

While no one was physically injured in this particular melee, it represents one more example illustrating why many Americans would prefer to keep their opinions and associations private. Consider the potential danger to the AFP activists if their personal information was made public and accessible by the unions. This case is yet another reason why the right to associate—and give—without disclosure remains so important to civil liberty.



# Minnesota

In July 2017, Gustavus Adolphus College received the largest gift in its nearly 160-year history. The donation was for \$40 million, a huge amount under any circumstance, but transformative for the small college of 2,200 students.

The givers asked to remain anonymous. The only identifying information was that the donors were an alumni couple who had been financially successful and wanted to give back to the institution they credited with playing a role in positioning them for success.

The Saint Peter-based liberal arts school, named after the famed 16<sup>th</sup> century Scandinavian king and military conqueror, was founded by Swedish immigrants and affiliated with the Lutheran church.

The commitment funds scholarships for incoming students and supported the renovation of the Nobel Hall of Science. The college president said, “This gift allows us to not only recruit and retain these talented scholars, but to provide state-of-the-art facilities for both classroom and hands-on learning.”

The bulk of the scholarship funding for high-achieving students goes to the Trustee and Promise Scholarship programs. These students typically have cumulative high school grade point averages of 3.9 or above. The Promise Scholarship focuses on gifted students who come from low- or middle-income families.<sup>54</sup>

These students may never learn the name of the two people who helped make their education possible, but that is how these and countless other selfless donors choose to give across America.





# Mississippi

Mississippi consistently ranks near the bottom of all states in terms of average personal income. In the town of Canton, about one quarter of residents live below the official poverty line (higher than the state poverty rate of 20%).<sup>55</sup> With the economic damage wrought by COVID-19 over the course of 2020, it was going to be difficult for many residents to pay for the basics of life, much less buy Christmas presents for loved ones.

In December, an individual walked into the Canton Walmart and asked to pay off all the items the store was holding for customers on layaway plans. Layaway refers to a deferred payment plan in which the customer pays for merchandise in installments. It is mostly used by people who cannot afford to buy an item outright.

Walmart did not say how much the donation came to, but it did result in paying off all 330 layaway tickets, allowing the customers to take ownership of the products immediately without any charge or debt. The donor insisted on anonymity.

A Walmart representative said after the items were paid off there was money left over with price adjustments so additional donations went to two local toy drives and to Feed America.<sup>56</sup>

The generosity of one individual is inspiring. We do not know why he or she gave privately, but those helped in this community benefited from this anonymous act. It is impossible to know if this would have happened had the individual been forced to disclose the gift.



# Missouri



People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) is not the most popular organization in parts of the Midwest, home to many of the livestock raising facilities routinely exposed and decried by the organization. For example, in 2012 PETA sued the Kansas State Fair for restricting its presence and communications at the annual agricultural trade show. The Fair sent a letter insisting that PETA could have a booth only if it shielded any pictures or videos “that depict animal slaughter, animal harvest, hide removal or show or depict live animals being decapitated, dismembered or butchered.” (Booth visitors could specifically ask to view them).

The PETA legal team replied with a letter saying the Fair’s decision violated the constitutional right to free speech in a government-sponsored forum. Eventually PETA and the Fair settled on an arrangement by which the video would be shown inside a tent.<sup>57</sup>

It would thus not be surprising that a local PETA supporter considering a major donation might want anonymity. Before the 2021 Super Bowl between the Kansas City Chiefs—based in neighboring Missouri—and the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, PETA received an anonymous donation of \$100,000. It was pledged on behalf of the Chiefs’ Tyrann Mathieu, who had already earned the PETA Humanitarian Award in 2020 as a result of his campaigns against dogs being left inside parked cars.

There was one important condition. The donor would only follow through with the full contribution if Mathieu had an interception in the Super Bowl. During the game the star safety appeared to pick off a Tom Brady pass in the second quarter. But the play was called back as a result of a defensive holding. The flag had a significant impact on the game as the Buccaneers scored a touchdown later in the drive on the way to a 31-9 win.

The donor, who remained anonymous, said they would give the \$100,000 to PETA because the referee’s call was “100 percent unfair.” The donor told TMZ “The dogs didn’t deserve that call and neither did Tyrann.” The money was earmarked for PETA’s fieldwork team, which provides free pet services to low-income communities.<sup>58</sup>

This is another example of how important the right to give privately is to those committed to causes that may be controversial in their communities.



# Montana

COVID-19 has arguably been the most politicized disease since the AIDS crisis of the 1980s. How citizens react to restrictions and requirements frequently depends on their political affiliations and where they live. Top-down mandates to get vaccinated are particularly unpopular in Republican states, which tend to view the vaccines as a personal medical choice.

However, many large companies across the U.S. have announced COVID-19 vaccines will be required for their employees to return to work in-person. Under a new law passed by Montana's state legislature, requiring vaccines as a condition for employment is deemed "discrimination" and a violation of the state's human rights laws.<sup>59</sup>

Private citizens have since stepped up to increase vaccination rates in voluntary ways. In mid-May 2021 an anonymous donor pledged to give residents of Yellowstone County \$50 for getting their first vaccination. This offer was limited to the first 400 residents ages 12 and older. A second donor, who also wanted to remain anonymous, stepped forward with \$20,000 to match the first donor's gift.<sup>60</sup>

That same month, another donor emerged in Butte-Silver Bow County. He agreed to provide up to \$500,000 for cash prizes to encourage Butte-Silver Bow residents to get vaccinated. The donor envisioned weekly cash awards in which those who were fully vaccinated would be eligible for drawings.

The donor's large gift would depend on the county putting comparable funds into a public awareness campaign to encourage vaccination funded by the CARES Act.<sup>61</sup> The county could use the money from its allocation on public service announcements and other vaccine awareness efforts.

The county commissioners in May 2021 voted overwhelmingly to spend \$500,000 on the vaccine awareness campaign to match the anonymous donor. The source of the gift—the Town Pump company—was revealed afterwards, but the purpose of the anonymous donation was accomplished.<sup>62</sup>



# Nebraska

The Nebraska Civil Air Patrol (CAP)—volunteer citizen fliers—consists of over 450 members at 17 locations around the state.<sup>63</sup> The CAP, a registered 501(c)(3), was founded in the early days in World War II, and went on to patrol the east coast of the U.S., hunting Nazi submarines before they sank allied ships.

Today, CAP provides emergency services, including search-and-rescue missions as directed by the Air Force. It supports state and local government with rescue operations, aerial photography, emergency transport of humanitarian supplies, blood, tissue or organs. CAP also provides aerospace education to members and the general public, including grade school courses on flight physics, dynamics and history.

One of the Nebraska CAP's former members was inspired enough by his experience to donate more than \$1 million to its endowment in August 2019. The gift included \$25,000 for a one-year challenge grant to increase unit fundraising in Nebraska.<sup>64</sup>

The donor, who served in multiple CAP wings as an adult, wanted to remain anonymous but did issue a statement: "Civil Air Patrol has been such a significant part of my life, starting when I was a cadet," he said. "I've been fortunate to do well within my career and to be able to ... support the Nebraska Wing, both now and in the future."

Thanks to his right to give anonymously, this generous donor was able to support a cause he cares deeply about, while remaining private.





# Nevada

The Salvation Army is active in more than 100 countries around the world working through charity shops, homeless shelters and disaster relief efforts. Of course, there is also the iconic red kettle used to collect donations, often with a Salvation Army representative dressed as Santa Claus standing by.

The loss of income and livelihoods resulting from the COVID-19 lockdowns have made more demands on the charity. None more so than in Las Vegas, which had its biggest income generators—tourism and hospitality—completely shut down for more than a year, resulting in massive layoffs of hotel and casino staff. According to a Salvation Army spokesperson, the organization helps about 75,000 people a year in the Las Vegas area.<sup>65</sup>

On December 23, 2020, Salvation Army officials in Las Vegas were sorting through the day's take of one of the red kettles—usually dollar bills, nickels, dimes and quarters—and found a one-ounce solid gold coin.

The coin was produced by the Royal Canadian Mint at a face value of \$50 Canadian, or about \$39 in U.S. currency. It turned out the market value of one ounce of gold is far greater, and varies day-to-day. This particular coin had a value of \$1,800 to \$2,000.<sup>66</sup>

Salvation Army officials expressed profound gratitude to the person who dropped the coin in the kettle, someone who chose to express generosity in an unusual and anonymous way.



# New Hampshire

A gasholder house is a type of structure developed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to store coal gas, which allowed for additional supply during peak energy demand. One such structure is the 133-year old gasholder building in Concord, New Hampshire. It holds a floating metal tank that contained up to 120,000 cubic feet of coal gas. The tank's weight provided constant pressure to force the gas out through pipes, where it was distributed to the public. The round building with a cupola atop its conical roof was built in 1888 when coal gas was a major source of light and heat. It was last used in 1953, but its original equipment remains.

The Concord structure was named to the National Register of Historic Places in 2018, one of the last of 14 known gasholders left in America that still has its inner workings intact, according to the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance.

The owner, Liberty Utilities, said the dormant building's poor condition made it a safety hazard. In December 2020 the company issued a statement: "Since we are a regulated utility company, and since this building does not serve any purpose for our customers, we cannot justify investing heavily to save it." The utility had been working with the city and the alliance on options for preservation and development. In the absence of a very expensive repair job the gasholder would need to be demolished. An analysis presented to the city estimated it would cost about \$3 million to restore, preserve and redevelop it into a historic attraction over several stages. Liberty had pledged \$400,000.<sup>67</sup>

In January 2021, during the week Liberty had planned to apply for a demolition permit, an anonymous donor stepped forward with \$500,000 to help save the Concord gasholder. This gift spurred further activism and donations.<sup>68</sup> The historic building's survival is by no means guaranteed, but it has gained new lease on life. Once again, we do not know the personal reasons this donor chose to remain anonymous. But clearly, a gift does not need to be associated with a politically-controversial cause to be private.



## New Jersey

New Jersey implemented some of the most severe lockdowns of any state during the COVID-19 crisis. A statewide curfew began almost immediately closing all casinos, gyms and movie theaters. Restaurants and bars were only allowed to remain open for delivery and takeout.

Some restrictions were lifted slowly but as of September 2020 most of the state's small businesses were still underwater and struggling to pay their employees or rent. Then businesses in Morristown received help in the form of \$250,000 from an anonymous donor.

The money was given to the Morristown Partnership to launch its Commercial Rent Relief Grant Program, which would distribute funds to local groups in \$20,000 increments. The grants covered rent for three months with the condition that the property owners would also reduce rent on the small business tenants.

"The turmoil of 2020 and its impact on our small-business community is a challenge no one, including the partnership, could have anticipated," said Jennifer Wehring, executive director of the Partnership. "We are hopeful that this grant program will provide much-needed relief to our downtown small businesses, as well as benefit the property owners, and bring all closer to a full recovery."<sup>69</sup>

A full recovery is some time away, but an anonymous giver eased the pain and may have saved some businesses for a critical stretch of time during the pandemic.



# New Mexico

In 2015, Santa Fe joined the cities of Albuquerque and Las Cruces to enact some of the most aggressive municipal donor disclosure laws in the country. The ordinance required charities to reveal contributors' names to the government whenever the organization spent more than \$250 to communicate with a certain number of voters about a ballot measure.

In May 2017, the residents of Santa Fe voted on a municipal ballot initiative (ultimately defeated) that would have increased sales taxes on sugary beverages—a so-called “soda tax.” The Rio Grande Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit based in New Mexico, is a small-government organization that opposed the soda-tax. The foundation decided to run a campaign encouraging Santa Fe voters to reject the ballot measure. It created an anti-soda tax web page and associated YouTube video, funded as an in-kind contribution by a third party. The web page and video provided basic information about the tax. It would double the price of a 12-pack of soda and applied broadly to all sugary beverages, including Starbucks drinks.

The Foundation's Facebook posts, website and video drew the attention of the Santa Fe city attorney. The month before the election, the Foundation received five different letters from the city which, combined with a citizen complaint, demanded a detailed account of spending on the soda tax and its donors. These demands culminated in a late April hearing before the Santa Fe Ethics and Campaign Review Board, where the citizen complainant presented evidence that the Foundation had spent more than the city's \$250 reporting threshold to oppose the soda tax. The Review Board came back and issued a formal reprimand against the Foundation, together with a renewed demand that the Foundation disclose its spending and its donors. The foundation complied with a city order and disclosed two relatively minor donations of \$7,700.<sup>70</sup>

The Foundation later sought to invalidate the city regulations, citing a “chilling effect” on political contributions and, thus, free speech. It filed suit against the city, a case that would go all the way to the 10th District Court of Appeals in Denver. In this case, the litigants seeking constitutional protection were unsuccessful. In August 2021, this particular federal court rejected the Foundation's request to invalidate city campaign finance provisions.

Foundation President Paul Gessing struck a defiant tone on the ruling, vowing to seek a rehearing. “We won't disclose our donors until or unless the court specifically demands we do so. We'll continue to protect our donors' privacy to the fullest extent of the law.”<sup>71</sup>



## New York

Charter schools are publicly funded but operated by independent groups. They don't follow the same regulations as traditional public schools, including the requirement of all teachers belonging to a union. As such, charters are the frequent target of public employee unions and their political allies.

The New Roots Charter School was started in 2009 in downtown Ithaca. Ten years later the SUNY Board of Trustees Charter Schools Committee placed the charter high school on probation due to dropping enrollment and the school's failure to stay current on teacher retirement contributions.<sup>72</sup>

Charter schools are tasked with recouping the cost of operating from the school district their students come from. New Roots leaders said they had trouble getting paid from some of their students' residential districts. The school also attributed the lower enrollment to a historically small freshman class, a smaller senior class and the impact of the New York State vaccination law. The 2019 law, which ended religious exemptions for vaccinations, led a handful of parents to withdraw their children from New Roots.

At real risk of being shut down, in January 2020 New Roots received an anonymous donation of \$200,000. The local donor's pledge supported school operations through the 2020-2021 school year. The school is projected to pay down the remainder of its debt to the retirement system in 2022.<sup>73</sup>

Since then, enrollments have increased and, according to the school, 100% of the last class of graduates were accepted to college or university. New Roots—and its students—received a new lease on life due to anonymous giving.





# North Carolina

James Arthur “Art” Pope is a North Carolina businessman and philanthropist. He is the CEO of Variety Wholesalers, a company that operates over 400 retail stores and employs approximately 10,000 people. He also served four terms in the North Carolina House of Representatives. As chairman of his family charity, Pope is a prolific giver to various philanthropic causes.<sup>74</sup>

In February 2016, Pope volunteered to testify on the witness stand in a federal courtroom. His giving to one organization in particular—the Americans for Prosperity Foundation (AFPF)—led to his participation in the trial. The case was a suit brought by AFPF in response to then-California Attorney General Kamala Harris, who had demanded the organization provide information about the charity’s major donors—including those who live outside California. AFPF declined to send the forms, saying doing so would dissuade people from donating and would violate the First Amendment.

Because of the organization’s association with the Koch Brothers, who had long been vilified by the political left, those who supported AFPF often became targets themselves. One of those major donors was Arthur Pope, whose business had already been targeted for boycotts by North Carolina teachers’ unions and other groups.<sup>75</sup>

Pope testified that the negative publicity regarding his association with AFPF had a damaging effect on his life: “It’s caused my family great concern for their safety, my safety. It’s led to a threat of assassination about me, its led to boycotts of my business.” A blogger on the progressive website BlueNC wrote that he was “thinking assassination” in a post about Pope showed to the court. Pope said he took the threat seriously enough that he called authorities, who declined to charge the blogger. “I was still concerned he would go off the deep end and do something or someone else would do something.”<sup>76</sup> Pope had considered quitting the foundation because he was worried about his family’s safety and the effect of protests outside his North Carolina stores.<sup>77</sup>

The AFPF suit would go all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court, which in July 2021 ruled 6-3 in its favor. The Chief Justice wrote for the majority: “The government may regulate in the First Amendment area only with narrow specificity, and compelled disclosure regimes are no exception. ... When it comes to a person’s beliefs and associations, broad and sweeping state inquiries into these protected areas discourage citizens from exercising rights protected by the Constitution.”



# North Dakota

In early 2004 billboard signs featuring simple, goodwill messages such as “Smile” and “Be Polite” began appearing next to highways across North Dakota—including Minot, Fargo and Bismarck—and parts of western Minnesota.

Newman Signs, the company that makes the billboards, said they were paid for by a businessman in North Dakota who wished to remain anonymous. The man approached the company manager and said he was driving down the road one day and thought to himself, “Wouldn’t it be nice to see a sign telling you to have a nice day.” Wanting to create a simple message that could speak to everyone, the donor began leasing the billboards in November 2003 and continued the project for the next three years. An average-sized billboard cost between \$500 and \$700 a month to lease.

Over the years, several other people and groups used the company’s billboards to get their message out. That included one sign that said: “Stay in North Dakota. Custer was healthy when he left.” Anonymous groups also promote the Ten Commandments on billboards in the Minot area.<sup>78</sup>

In these cases, the charitable act may simply have been bringing a smile to the face of a motorist—but the donor is no less deserving of privacy if they want to remain anonymous.



# Ohio

In October 2021, a group of 17 missionaries were kidnapped by a gang in Haiti where they were visiting an orphanage. An Ohio-based group, Christian Aid Ministries (CAM), said while two of the missionaries were released for medical reasons, three missionaries were released and the remaining 12 escaped after an anonymous donor paid a ransom for their release.<sup>79</sup> While the amount paid was not disclosed, the 400 Mawozo gang had demanded \$1 million each for the hostages release.

According to news reports, the anonymous donor was not affiliated with CAM and the organization does not know the donor's identity.<sup>80</sup> Yet, they were likely instrumental to the safe return of the hostages, including five children.

David Troyer, director of CAM, said at a news conference that, "people who sought to help us provided funds to pay a ransom and allow the negotiation process to continue."<sup>81</sup>

CAM describes itself as a channel for Amish, Mennonite and other Anabaptist groups to minister to physical and spiritual needs around the world, including in Haiti.

While the donor who helped free the hostages has not come forward, it is easy to imagine the legitimate safety concerns one would have with being public in this effort.



# Oklahoma

Oklahoma is not exactly mask country. In August 2021 the state legislature voted overwhelmingly to prevent school districts from imposing COVID-19 mask mandates on students. For those who needed and wanted protective face coverings, an anonymous donor had already stepped forward to ensure adequate mask supplies for adults and children of all ages in the public schools.

Four months earlier the state Department of Education announced it received more than 600,000 masks specifically earmarked for teachers, staff and students. The donation included 400,000 KN95 masks for teachers and staff, 60,000 adult-size surgical masks for older students, more than 100,000 youth-size surgical masks for students between the ages of 6 and 12 and 50,000 smaller surgical masks for students age 5 and under.<sup>82</sup> The masks were distributed to public schools across the state over the course of March.

“Throughout this pandemic, community partners and individuals have generously stepped up to support our schools many times over,” Bixby Superintendent Rob Miller said. “This donation is one more example of Oklahomans working together to make sure teachers and staff have what they need to remain healthy and well.”<sup>83</sup>

Private givers stepped up nationwide during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our communities benefited from the freedom to decide whether to be public in one’s giving.



# Oregon

The government-ordered lockdowns crushed small businesses across the country. In Oregon, a survey showed 40% of Oregon businesses temporarily closed during COVID-19—with higher impact in the rural counties. At some point, more than a quarter laid off employees and nearly half decreased hours.<sup>84</sup>

One especially impacted area was the Oceanside town of Yachats. For much of 2020, the Yachats Community Presbyterian Church provided what modest assistance it could to workers and businesses hurt by COVID-19 mitigation measures. By fall, the pandemic worsened again in Oregon and the state government ordered a two-week “freeze” on business and social activities. Most local restaurants immediately laid off workers; a few others closed again.

In early November 2020, a financial management company called the Yachats church pastor to ask for the church’s tax identification number. A \$50,000 check was on its way. “It was literally a check in the mail,” the pastor said. “It was completely anonymous. The only stipulation was that it be used for community relief.” To access the newly-donated funds, the church required individuals and businesses to fill out a form documenting their needs. Individuals can get up to \$300 a month; businesses will get up to \$1,500 a month. Not a massive sum, but enough to help with rent, food and gas in that part of the state.

The church announced the new effort at 10 a.m. on November 15, 2020 on the Yachats community Facebook page. Within minutes, they had two applications.<sup>85</sup>





# Pennsylvania

The Pennsylvania Prison Society, a 501(c)(3) charity, has been entering the state's correctional facilities at all levels for 235 years, taking up the cause of some of the least popular elements in society—those incarcerated for committing crimes. The Society helped inmates with visits, care packages, job assistance and more. The COVID-19 crisis brought these efforts to a sudden halt. For the latter half of 2020 Blair County prison society representatives were not permitted to visit county inmates at all. The society used one-on-one conferences with some inmates via Zoom video.

Conferences with society volunteers give the inmates a chance to talk about their problems, including issues with the prison management. Contact with the outside world is important, said a volunteer who was a local physician. "This is a way of really doing something for those who are forgotten in our society."<sup>86</sup>

Then in December 2020, an anonymous donor, who was not a volunteer with the society, provided \$6,000 to carry on the group's Holiday tradition of providing gifts to the inmates. The money was used to provide free phone time for each of the 230 inmates who were behind bars.

Each inmate received a prison commissary gift package of five stamped envelopes, a pad of 150 sheets of paper and notebooks enabling them to write to friends and family.

Traditionally, the society volunteers made a Christmas visit to the prison where they handed out homemade cookies and sang carols in each block of the prison. Due to the pandemic, the cookies that year were given to the corrections officers to distribute.

A donor choosing to stay anonymous made it possible for a bit of Christmas to penetrate the prison walls and ease COVID-19 isolation.



# Rhode Island

Several parishioners of St. Paul's in Blackstone, Rhode Island, in keeping with the Catholic Church's opposition to abortion and euthanasia, had for many years volunteered to support the pro-life movement.

But they believed a stronger and more visible statement of the parish's position on life was needed. They sought prayer and participation from more parishioners. The idea of a monument stating St. Paul Parish's goals for its pro-life position began to evolve and eventually was etched in stone.

One of the parishioners designed the monument with the help of the local Murray Monument & Stone Company, which then carved and installed it—all paid for by an anonymous donor. The monument was blessed in July 2019. It sits beside the church on a canopy-covered patio. A bench from another part of the property was moved there, forming a little prayer area.<sup>87</sup>

Abortion is one of the most hotly debated issues of our time. On both sides of the debate, supporters demonstrate the desire to remain private in support for their position.



# South Carolina

On May 13, 2017, a Greenville church with predominantly African-American members received a donation from a very unlikely source with a very unlikely message.

Two money orders for \$1,000 each were left in the mailbox of the Nicholtown Presbyterian Church. Included with the orders was a letter that began: “First, I am white and used to be a terrible racist.” It went on to say: “Thanks to Jesus and the Holy Spirit, acting through the Presbyterian Church, I have been cleansed of that.”

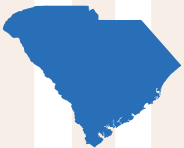
The donor, who did not reveal their name, also said they were “appalled at their former thoughts and words,” so they wanted to send the money “as a heartfelt apology to the African-American community.” One church member said the unexpected windfall was a miracle.<sup>88</sup>

Reverend Michael Sullivan, the church’s pastor, said the letter touched him and hailed the donation as a sincere gesture of kindness and faith. The pastor hopes the donor reveals himself at some point in the future.

The funds will go toward youth outreach programs and church costs. Evidently the donation came at the perfect time. The church was seeking a \$1,400 grant from the presbytery to help transport and feed neighborhood children going to the church on Sundays.<sup>89</sup>

The anonymous letter concluded: “If you were ever looking for proof that Jesus and the Holy Spirit are alive and well today, and that miracles, just as in Biblical times, still happen today, this is it!”<sup>90</sup>

Consciously or not, this donor reflected the long-standing tradition in Christianity and other religions that a gift is more sacred when the giver chooses humility through anonymity by not seeking credit or recognition. That is a tradition also protected—and to be honored and defended—in American law and civic life.



# South Dakota

South Dakota did not enact the kind of draconian COVID-19 restrictions seen elsewhere in the U.S. Nonetheless, many of its residents suffered. None more so than those at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder, including recent arrivals to the country in grueling low-wage lines of work.

In August 2020 a 501(c)(3) nonprofit serving many of the least fortunate immigrants, called the South Dakota Voices for Peace, received an anonymous \$500,000 donation. The gift more than doubled its Emergency Relief Fund for Immigrants.

The fund provided financial assistance to immigrant, refugee and undocumented individuals impacted by COVID-19. It helps those having trouble with rent and mortgage payments, utilities, food and other basic needs. The Voices for Peace director said because of COVID-19, “Immigrants across South Dakota ... are not back to work in full force and people are barely scraping by.”

By the fall the fund had received 1,200 applications and has disbursed more than \$300,000 to 620 households across the state. Applicants represent immigrants from more than 60 different countries.<sup>91</sup>

South Dakota politically may generally favor restrictions on immigration—illegal immigration especially. But that did not stop someone from stepping forward, under the cloak of anonymity, to provide some relief to those in distress far from their own homelands.



# Tennessee

In August 2021 some 17 inches of rain fell in Humphreys County in less than 24 hours, shattering the Tennessee record for one-day rainfall. More than 270 homes were destroyed and 160 took major damage.<sup>92</sup> The rushing waters picked homes off their foundations and moved them several streets away. Roads were completely washed out, dozens of businesses were destroyed and two Humphreys County schools were severely damaged. The county was strewn with debris from wrecked cars, demolished businesses and homes with a chaotic, tangled mix of the things inside. The 22 dead included twin babies swept from their father's arms and a foreman at country music star Loretta Lynn's ranch.<sup>93</sup> Several others went missing.

Millions of dollars from donors across the state and nation poured into Humphreys County in the wake of the floods. One individual from out of town took a more hands-on personal approach. According to William Brown, the manager of the county's funeral home, a man walked into his funeral home and said he would pay for the nine funerals the home was in the process of organizing. The man further agreed to pay for the funerals of everyone who died in the floods, going to other funeral homes in and around the county.<sup>94</sup> The giver remains anonymous.

When communities need it the most, the freedom to give privately encourages and fosters the generous spirit of American givers.





# Texas

*Roe v. Wade* started in Texas, and the state has been roiled by the issue of abortion ever since. In 2013, State Sen. Wendy Davis famously filibustered for 13 hours legislation that put new licensing requirements on Texas abortion clinics (the law eventually passed). The Texas Heartbeat Act is the strictest abortion law in the United States currently in force, though being challenged before the U.S. Supreme Court.<sup>95</sup> In addition to measures passed by the Texas Legislature, there have been pro-life efforts at the local level, with 30 Texas cities banning abortion.

There had been no Planned Parenthood presences since 2013 in West Texas, a socially conservative region of a very conservative state. More restrictive state legislation and efforts by activists to provide alternatives to abortion had contributed to shuttered clinics in Midland and San Angelo. Most of Planned Parenthood's 35 facilities are distributed across Texas—six of which perform abortions—in and around Dallas-Fort Worth, San Antonio, Houston and Austin.<sup>96</sup>

In April 2018, Planned Parenthood announced a donor would provide \$9 million to pay for two new facilities in West Texas.<sup>97</sup> Given the politics and passions associated with abortion in the state, it was understandable that the person making the huge gift chose to remain anonymous.



# Utah

Politically conservative states are not immune from the temptation to curb constitutionally protected speech and freedom of association. In 2013, the Utah legislature passed House Bill 43. It was sponsored mostly in response to a scandal involving a political consultant, nonprofits and donations from the payday lending industry. The bill passed overwhelmingly in the state Senate and House.

The law compelled nonprofit organizations to publicly disclose the personal information of their donors if they spent more than \$750 on so-called political activity in a single year. Though passed to prevent abuses, the sweeping law created a substantial chilling effect. The president of the Utah-based Veritas Institute explained:

*Organizations such as ours engage in a number of public interest activities, such as holding public forums, publishing educational materials and conducting original research. This is our primary purpose; by law, political advocacy on our part can be and is only a limited aspect of our overall effort.*

*Now imagine our donors, who have no interest in supporting our lobbying efforts. Mr. Smith might give \$10,000 toward our general operations as a supporter of an aspect of our work, and neither he nor we intend to use that money for a political purpose. Nevertheless, under current Utah law, should our organizations spend more than \$750 in a given year on any unrelated political advocacy, we must also disclose Mr. Smith's identity and personal information. As you might imagine, this law chills speech about government. It forces our organizations to remain silent in order to protect the identity and wishes of our donors who support our non-political work.*

In November 2015, Veritas and the Utah Taxpayers Association sued the state in federal court seeking to have the law overturned. The groups eventually settled with the state receiving assurances that no prosecutions would be brought forward based on HB 43.<sup>98</sup> While the law stayed in place, the ability to give to a favored cause without fear of disclosure is protected in Utah, at least for now.



# Vermont



School lunches can be a burden for some families in Vermont. Coming in at just over \$3 per student per day, family meal accounts sometimes go into the negative. In fact, the Union Elementary School in Montpelier was facing just over \$2,000 in student lunch debt before the 2019 holiday season. The school budget provides some support, but the food services department is responsible for the majority of costs.

An anonymous donor called asking about the student lunch debt. According to the principal, the donor said “OK, we’ll cover it,” and came in to write a check, requesting the gift remain unnamed.

The principal said: “As a school, we talk a lot about kindness, but we know the best way is to model it. And so for us to have a community member go out of their way and contact us and do something like that, I think it kind of sets the tone for our school and community and Vermont in general.”<sup>99</sup>

The grace and humility displayed by making the donation anonymous set an important tone as well.



# Virginia

The trial of Kyle Rittenhouse, the 17-year old tried and ultimately acquitted for shooting three individuals during civil unrest in Kenosha, Wis., riveted and divided the country for much of 2021. It also illustrated, once again, the risks ordinary citizens take in making donations to a controversial cause when anonymity is not secure.

In September 2020, William Kelly, a Norfolk, Virginia police lieutenant, made a \$25 donation to the Rittenhouse defense fund on the Christian crowdfunding website GiveSendGo. Kelly later explained his donation. “I was interested in giving him the chance to defend himself in front of a jury. I know that lawyers are expensive, and it’s hard sometimes to get the message out there. I wanted to make sure that he had the means necessary to make his claim in court.”<sup>100</sup>

In April 2021, an organization called Distributed Denial of Secrets, which describes itself as a “transparency collective,” hacked into GiveSendGo and revealed the identities of some of those who had donated to the Rittenhouse fund. Using the website’s anonymity feature provided no protection to donors in this case. Kelly, a two-decade veteran policy officer, was placed on administrative leave. The Norfolk city manager castigated Kelly and said an investigation found the \$25 donation violated city and departmental policies. Kelly was later fired.<sup>101</sup>

Kelly was not the only American targeted for his contribution to Rittenhouse. After a paramedic in Utah made a \$10 donation, a local journalist knocked on his door seeking information. The reporter’s tweet about the incident went viral, and his actions were roundly condemned because of the blatant invasion of privacy.

After Rittenhouse’s acquittal, Kelly spoke out: “I was like a sacrificial lamb. Like they were willing to discard me in an effort to make the pressure from certain parts of the public go away.”<sup>102</sup> Kelly’s lawyer said if the Norfolk Police Department doesn’t reinstate the lieutenant, his law office will file a federal lawsuit.

A similar fundraising effort began on behalf of Kelly, raising more than \$250,000.<sup>103</sup> So far, the anonymity of those donors has been respected.



# Washington

Bainbridge is a city and island in Kitsap County, located in Puget Sound near Seattle. By spring of 2021 two increasingly irreconcilable factions had dug in with respect to future development of its scenic parks.

One side favored building new mountain bike trails in its Grand Forest North area. They argued a growing number of mountain bikers on or around the island needed a place to ride. While they share all the trails on the island with other users, supporters said the bikers needed their own facility—similar to skateboard parks and tennis courts.

The other side said that Grand Forest North, when it was purchased, was supposed to be for wildlife and remain in its natural state as much as possible. And trails there, just like everywhere else on the island, should be all-inclusive.<sup>104</sup>

The dispute led to increasingly contentious sessions of the Bainbridge parks commission. Stalemate had set in as the Park District tried to find ways to add bike-specific trails without alienating those who wanted to keep the area in its original “passive use.”

Then, in May 2021, the Bainbridge Island Parks Foundation received a \$1 million private donation to buy 10 additional acres of land to use for bike trails. The parcel had existing trails and land contours for mountain biking. The donation was also used to expand the existing dog park and for land conservation, important priorities for those opposed to the bike trail proposal.<sup>105</sup>

This “win-win” approach, expanding recreational opportunities and ending an increasingly fractious impasse, would not have been possible without one public-spirited donor who continues to stay anonymous.



# West Virginia

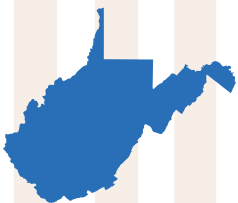
For more than a century, the town of Blue Field has conducted a Community Christmas Tree Program—known as “Little Jimmie”—to provide toys to hundreds of area children. Sponsored annually by the *Bluefield Daily Telegraph* newspaper, the Little Jimmie goal for the 2021 holiday season was \$40,000. Reaching that total proved challenging after a year of lost jobs and lower incomes caused by COVID-19 shutdowns.

A month before Christmas, the fund had barely reached the goal’s half-way mark. Then three people stepped in to close the gap, donating a total of \$15,000. This pushed Little Jimmie above \$30,000 by the first week of December.<sup>106</sup> The donors asked to stay anonymous.

Due to the pandemic, there was not a traditional Little Jimmie party. Instead, organizers used an online registration and voucher system allowing parents to shop for their children’s gifts from the Bluefield Walmart.<sup>107</sup> The morning of Tuesday, December 14, people lined up outside Walmart’s Garden Center and received their vouchers. After choosing their children’s gifts, they came back to the center and checked out at reserved cash registers. About 500 children received presents through the 2021 Little Jimmie campaign.<sup>108</sup>

By the day of the Walmart event, the fund had passed \$37,000, still a bit short of the goal, but more than 40% bigger than would have been the case without the anonymous donors. As of this writing, the fund is still accepting donations and may yet meet its target.

This serves as further evidence that not every generous individual desires public recognition for their donations.





# Wisconsin

In 2008, two elderly, wealthy siblings gave \$10 million to the village of Mt. Pleasant in southeast Wisconsin. The village administrator said the brother and sister, who he had never met or heard of, came into his office one day and said they wanted to make a donation.

The donation would build a new municipal complex for this village of about 25,000 people. All the donors wanted in return was for the village to pay their funeral expenses of no more than \$20,000 each. And the siblings wanted their gift to remain anonymous.

The donation was announced at the village's board meeting and, though welcomed, it also raised suspicions. The amount of money and the fact it was anonymous made some people wonder whether there was a self-serving agenda—economic or political.

The local newspaper filed a request under the state public records law and found the names. The village administrator asked the newspaper not to identify the siblings to allow them the anonymity they had been promised. The donors also sent the paper a letter asking it not to reveal their names.

"We have made this donation to the village of Mt. Pleasant with no expectation of anything in return. We are not now nor have we in the past been developers," they wrote.<sup>109</sup>

The editor still decided to publish the article with the names. A reporter tried to contact the siblings at their residence. The brother was angry and said "I'm not talking and that's it."

Despite the public disclosure, the Mt. Pleasant administrator still refuses to acknowledge their identity out of respect for their wishes. No immediate tangible harm came to the donors due to the violation of their privacy as donors. But they were unhappy with the result—just the opposite of how those who give generously should feel about the result.



# Wyoming

A woman named Sarah came to Gillette, Wyoming, toward the end of 2020. She was fleeing an abusive relationship and knew her ex-partner didn't know anyone in that town. Sarah had no money, no job and few prospects. She also had no car or any other means to get around a sparsely populated rural state.

On January 18, 2021, Martin Luther King Day, Sarah received a call from a representative of the Gillette Abuse Refuge Foundation (GARF), a local 501(c)(3) organization that provided shelter for victims of family and sexual violence. She had stayed with GARF her first month in town and the group had helped Sarah ever since. It turned out someone donated a car to GARF, and the car would be hers.

The car was old—a 2004 Chevrolet Malibu—but no clunker. The donor had the oil changed, added new brakes and tires and cleaned the car's interior. He also left \$200 for registration and tags and a gift card to buy gas.

Sarah wanted to meet and thank her benefactor, but he wanted to remain anonymous. The donor later told a reporter he hoped other people might follow his lead: "If people have vehicles, they might be able to get a little bit of money out of them, but you can do a lot more good in the world by getting those vehicles in the hands of people who need them." From his perspective, there was more value in changing someone's life than the cash an old car might put in his pocket. "We fail to establish our civic duty in this country more often than not, so whatever you can do to help your fellow man is a good thing."<sup>10</sup> His message resonates loud and clear, while he chooses to remain anonymous.





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## About Philanthropy Roundtable

Philanthropy Roundtable is a nonprofit organization dedicated to building and sustaining a vibrant American philanthropic movement that strengthens our free society. To achieve this vision, the Roundtable pursues a mission to foster excellence in philanthropy, protect philanthropic freedom and help donors to advance liberty, opportunity and personal responsibility.

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