

Organization maintains giving in 2009

By Ginger Livingston

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The Greater Greenville Community Foundation maintained its giving in 2009, despite drops in both giving and its endowment funds, the organization's chief executive officer said.

However, the organization's leaders continue to work with area charities and nonprofits to prepare for possible budget cuts.

The organization gave more than \$500,000 to about 75 nonprofits and charitable groups and gave scholarships to more than 100 students by late October, said Melissa Spain, the foundation's CEO and executive director. The money was given by the 50 charitable endowment funds managed by the organization, she said.

"The foundation's donors have been more generous than ever because they are still willing to allow money to be distributed from their funds," Spain said.

However, charitable foundations like Greater Greenville are facing difficult futures.

"We're following what economists say," Spain said. "We are looking at really long-term effects on charitable organizations."

Endowment participants who have given thousands of dollars in the past are cutting their donations by 50 percent to 75 percent because of huge losses in their investment portfolios and retirement funds, Spain said. Numerous middle-income donors, people who would give \$500 to \$1,500 annually to charities, are now using the money to pay off debt, re-establish their retirement funds or for daily living expenses.

Spain said national statistics predict that more than 50 percent of the nation's charities and nonprofits will be out of business by 2011.

"This is beyond imaginable as charities and the act of charitable giving has long been one of the very things that sets our nation apart from others," she said.

Spain didn't want to provide specifics about Greater Greenville's asset losses but said it's close to the 30 percent loss in basic assets experienced by charitable foundations nationwide.

Last year foundation leaders talked with local groups, preparing them for donation reductions, she said. Although more than 90 percent of the groups received the full amount of money requested this year, the foundation continues to warn charities to be prepared for possible reductions, Spain said.

The foundation has a responsibility to not only meet current needs but to keep its endowments viable for future programs, she said.

"The sad truth is that although funding goes down, the needs go up and rise tremendously," Spain said. "Especially the areas of job loss, hunger, homelessness and domestic violence."

While the foundation is noted for its work to help individuals, groups and businesses establish endowments, Spain said the foundation helps smaller donors ensure their money is directed to where it can do the most good.

With the holiday season approaching, individuals may want to consider making a donation in the name of a person or family, she said. The foundation will send them a card notifying them a donation was made in their honor or in memory of someone.

Individuals seeking information about the Greater Greenville Community Foundation's work or becoming a donor can visit its Web site, www.ggcfnc.org.

Contact Ginger Livingston at givingston@reflector.com or (252) 329-9570.

The Greater Greenville Community Foundation gave more than \$500,000 to about 75 organizations through October. Below are some of the organizations that received money. Others are not listed because the donations were anonymous, said Melissa Spain, Greater Greenville Community Foundation CEO and executive director.

United Way

Music Academy of Eastern Carolina

Ronald McDonald House
Building Hope
Boys & Girls Club Jarvis Unit
Village of Yesteryear
Relay for Life
Boy Scouts East Carolina Council
Historic Bath Foundation
Pitt County 10-year Homelessness Plan
In His Wakes
Communities in Schools
Greenville Learning Center
Children's Miracle Network
East Carolina University Friends of Theatre
Operation Sunshine
Care Net Counseling
Greenville Community Shelter
Four Seasons Chamber Music
Family Violence Center
Little Willie Center
American Red Cross
Habitat for Humanity
Eastern Carolina Vocational Center
ECU School of Art & Design
Boys & Girls Club's new facility
Kiwanis Book Project
Pitt Community College Horizons
PCC Visions
STRIVE
ECU Medical and Health
Lewisville Historical Society
Woodberry Forest School
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Lesley University
PCC, Kiwanis Nursing Scholarship
ECU, Kiwanis Nursing Scholarship
Dawkins Scholarships
Barnhill Scholarships
First Christian Church of Robersonville
First Christian Church of Everetts
Leo Jenkins Cancer Center, **Beau's Buddies**: CD players
Pitt County Memorial Hospital Pediatrics, **Beau's Buddies**: movies for pediatrics
Pitt County Memorial Hospital Pediatrics, **Beau's Buddies**: Wal-Mart gift cards
PCMH Foundation, **Beau's Buddies**: Camp Dove
Chris Carter Scholarship Fund
Children's Miracle Network
PCMH Pediatrics
PCMH, **Beau's Buddies**, Pediatric Cancer Treatment for Family
Ayden-Grifton High School
Ayden-Grifton High School, early childhood program
Boys & Girls Club wellness project
Building Hope, a mentoring program for girls
Carolina Pregnancy Center
Greenville Alumnae Chapter Delta Sigma Theta
Life Strive

Once Lost Now Found
North Pitt High School
Pitt Community College
Rocking Horse Ranch
Source: Greater Greenville Community Foundation

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