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**MONTANA GOVERNOR'S TASK FORCE
ON ENDOWMENTS AND PHILANTHROPY**

www.EndowMontana.org

June 2008

Dear Reader,

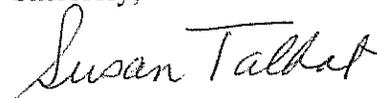
Montana: The Current Philanthropic Environment documents the growth, change and challenges experienced by our state in developing "homegrown" philanthropic resources. The Governor's Task Force on Endowments and Philanthropy (GTF) has found this report to be a valuable "snapshot" of the current situation in which many of us in Montana's nonprofit, foundation and donor world work. I believe that it will be helpful for people in associated fields such as government and education, as well.

Montana: The Current Philanthropic Environment was produced by the Futures Committee of the GTF, which was asked to make recommendations for the GTF to consider in determining its future programmatic and organizational direction. The committee recognized that philanthropy and the nonprofit sector in Montana had significantly evolved from when the GTF was first formed in 1994. It wanted to begin its deliberations by documenting this new environment.

I want to especially thank the Big Sky Institute for the Advancement of Nonprofits (BSI) for making *Montana: The Current Philanthropic Environment* available on its website. BSI has been a strong supporter of the GTF. We in turn appreciate their on-going programs to strengthen nonprofits and philanthropy in Montana, as well as other Philanthropic Divide states.

If you have questions concerning this report, please contact Bill Pratt, chair of GTF's Futures Committee, and Projects Coordinator, Big Sky Institute for the Advancement of Nonprofits, at 406-443-5860 or bpratt@bigskyinstitute.org.

Sincerely,



Susan Talbot, Chair
Governor's Task Force on Endowments and Philanthropy

c/o Montana Nonprofit Association, P.O. Box 1744, Helena, MT 59624

**Governor's Task Force
on
Endowments and Philanthropy**

-- Futures Committee --

Montana:

The Current Philanthropic Environment

March, 2007

Montana: The Current Philanthropic Environment

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1. Introduction:

The 12-year old Governor’s Task Force on Endowments and Philanthropy (GTF) charged its Futures Committee with making recommendations for the GTF to consider in determining its future programmatic and organizational direction. The members of the Committee were:

- William B. Pratt, Chair - Projects Coordinator, Philanthropic Divide Initiative, Big Sky Institute for the Advancement of Nonprofits
- Sidney Armstrong, Consultant and former Executive Director, Montana Community Foundation
- Brian Magee, Executive Director, Montana Nonprofit Association
- Josh Turner, Principal, Turner and Associates

The Committee recognized that philanthropy and the nonprofit sector in Montana has significantly evolved from when the GTF was first formed in 1995, and it wanted to begin its deliberations by documenting this new environment. Building on the excellent briefing paper prepared by Josh Turner of Turner and Associates for the November 15, 2006 Governor’s Conversation on Endowments and Philanthropy, the Committee examined the state of philanthropic and nonprofit development, conducted an in-state “environmental” scan of related aspects, and identified other national and international factors as follows.

2. The Montana Reality:

A. Population, Economy and Civic Engagement

(1) Montana’s population: aging and involved.

- Many young people are leaving the state to seek employment.
- Western MT is seeing an in-migration of retirees, as well as recreation and 2nd home buyers, and the creation of gated communities. With this growing population come different values and expectations. There is increased pressure on a fragile rural environment and increasing arguments about its use, e.g., public access to streams.
- Eastern MT, traditionally heavily dependent upon agriculture and gas, coal and oil production, is losing population.
- Montana has a gender imbalance with there being more women than men.
- As with the majority of Philanthropic Divide states, Montana is significantly older than the average U.S. population, with the over-65 population growing by 98 percent between 2000 and 2020. According to the Montana Geriatric Education Center, this group will make up 24.5% of the state’s population by 2025. Demand for services and occupations are expected to rise dramatically, with a diminishing workforce. According to futurist Andrew Zolli of Z+ Partners, the U.S population will grow 40-45% in the next 50 years and 43% of that growth will be in the South and

West. In addition, there will be many more younger and older people with far fewer people of middle age at the peak of their earning years to support them.

- Montana ranked 2nd in the nation in social capital and civic engagement according to a national study done by Harvard more than five years ago. It has also been reported recently that Montana has risen to seventh in volunteerism with nearly 38% of state residents volunteering compared with a national average of 27%. In addition, eight of the ten Philanthropic Divide states rank among the top 19 states for volunteerism.

(2) **Montanans struggle to make ends meet.**

In 2004, Montana ranked 49th in income. In addition, Montanans, like wage earners in the great majority of Philanthropic Divide states, must hold two or more jobs – each usually at a low wage -- in order to make a living. It is also instructive to note that according to the Northwest Federation of Community Organizations of all Native American households in Montana; only 26 percent have an annual income that equals a living wage for a family of three.

B. Montana's Nonprofit Sector

- (1) **Montana has one nonprofit per 158 people**, while the national average is 324 people per nonprofit, according to 2005 Census figures and the most recent nonprofit statistics about from the National Center for Charitable states. Montana is home to more than 5,922 charitable nonprofits, many with no full-time paid staff, and 67% with annual revenues of less than \$25,000. Nationally, Montana has the most nonprofits per capita, except for the District of Columbia, which hosts many national nonprofit organizations. **In fact, seven of the ten Philanthropic Divide states are in the top ten states with the most nonprofits per capita.** Additionally, most volunteer and staffed nonprofits are clustered in Montana's population centers. Rural and Native American communities often have very few or no nonprofit organizations and have limited funding and organizational capacity. Nationally, Native American groups receive less than 1/20 of 1 percent of foundation dollars.
- (2) **Montana nonprofits are a major employer.** The state's nonprofit sector is the 3rd largest source of wages in the state – right behind local government and retail trade, and the sector is growing. Montana's 501(c)(3) public charities increased 77 % between 1994 and 2004, compared with a U.S. growth rate of 53.5 %. \$1.1 billion in wages were paid in a 12 month period. In addition to accounting for 58% of the employees, large hospitals and health care organizations represent 73% of the wages paid (\$690 million). All other 501(c)(3)s pay the balance of wages.
- (3) **Role of Montana nonprofits.** Typically government devolution has placed a reliance on the nonprofit sector to deliver essential and quality of life

services. Unfortunately, in Montana nonprofit is often considered synonymous with “charity,” or “volunteering,” with little awareness about the need for adequately paid staffing for these organizations. As fundraising is always a challenge in this thinly resourced state, the limited professional and support staffs are stretched, underpaid, and often receive few benefits. In addition, there is little nonprofit infrastructure support, especially in rural communities and on Indian reservations.

- (4) **Earned income a major revenue source.** Service/program fees are the major source of revenue for Montana’s nonprofits with annual receipts over \$25,000. Health, education, and human services organizations receive the lion’s share of annual receipts in Montana, and in the United States as well. However, Montana’s health organizations (including public hospitals) receive ten times as much as education. Nationwide, the ratio is just over 2:1. Smaller organizations are much more dependent upon contributed income.
- (5) **Technical Assistance Opportunities Grow.** More availability of training for the nonprofit sector is part of a nation-wide trend to help them use financial and human resources more effectively and efficiently, and to recognize philanthropy as a professional field. In addition to existing organizations, which primarily support the work of development directors, e.g., AFP’s Chapter in Billings, Western Montana Fundraisers Association, and Montana Hospital Association’s development affiliate group, there has been the creation of local nonprofit self-help collaborative networks in Missoula, Kalispell and Helena.

There also has been the growth in formal educational opportunities about the field of philanthropy at a number of Montana’s colleges and universities including the Office for Civic Engagement at the University of Montana, which provides a Minor in Nonprofit Administration, as well as in a variety of community and private four-year colleges in the state. These training programs have broadened the role of the university in building philanthropy, community and the nonprofit sector, and expanding its focus beyond its own development needs. In addition, the Montana Society of CPAs and the Montana Bar Association have also been providing more nonprofit support through their programs, and the Montana Nonprofit (MNA) recently hired an education director to oversee a significant expansion of MNA’s training and technical assistance support for nonprofits, including increasing their fundraising capacity.

C. Charitable Contributions, Foundations and Endowments

- (1) **Montana’s Generosity Index steadily improves.** According to the Massachusetts-based Catalogue for Philanthropy, Montana is 49th in state income rank and 45th in giving. From 1995 to 2004

the average annual giving of itemizers grew from \$1,989 to \$3,120. During that time period Montana's Generosity Index(GI) increased from 24th to 21st. The GI is calculated from IRS data on Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) and Itemized Charitable Contributions (ICC), for each state and for the nation. See:
www.catalogueforphilanthropy.org/cfp/generosity_index/.

- (2) **Intergenerational transfer of wealth holds promise for Montana philanthropy.** According to Boston College's landmark study – *Millionaires and the Millennium*- the U.S. is in the midst of the largest intergenerational wealth transfer in its history. These researchers conservatively estimate that during the first half of the 21st Century \$41 trillion will pass from the current generation to the next. Montana is part of this trend, and because its population is amongst the oldest in the U.S., which is also true of most other Philanthropic Divide states, this transfer of wealth will occur earlier and faster than in many other states. A study commissioned by the Montana Community Foundation estimates that between 2005 and 2055 the total transfer will be approximately \$38.1 billion, and between 2005-2015 the transfer will be \$6.9 billion. Capturing only 5% of the latter transfer in charitable contributions would provide \$343 million to Montana nonprofits. However, active efforts to capture these philanthropic dollars will be necessary to prevent them from going out of the state to heirs, taxes and other charitable purposes.
- (3) **The number of Montana's foundations grew, as did their assets and grantmaking, but we still trail the nation.** In-state foundations, including a number of community foundations, grew from 101 in 1992 to 183 in 2004. From 1994 in-state foundation assets increased nine-fold, but other states had a much greater growth in actual dollars. Montana ranked 48th nationwide in foundation assets in 2004 and dropped to 49th in 2005. This was also reflected in the fact that while Montana foundations have tripled their grantmaking, we still remain 49th nationwide in grant dollars awarded. From 1994 to 2004 Montana foundations with assets over \$2 million grew from seven to 29, but the state dropped to 49th in the number of foundations of this size. In 2004 Montana's 183 foundations held more than \$404 million in assets and granted nearly \$21 million. However, in 2006, there are still no major private foundations, even fewer in-state corporate grantmakers than in 1994, and only a handful of regional and national foundations with strong commitments to the state.
- (4) **Endowments and community foundations have proliferated.** Since 1994 there has been an increase of 1,200 endowments, with the greatest growth in those held by the Montana Community Foundation. Compared with a handful of mostly small local community foundations (LCFs) in 1994, today more than 50 Montana communities boast a local foundation. These LCFs were created to benefit the nonprofits in a specific geographical area,

usually a community or county. Over 40 LCFs are affiliated with the Montana Community Foundation, while the balance have their own 501(c)(3) status, and some have both. A number of LCFs have an endowment at MCF and other endowed funds that they manage themselves. Currently, the Montana Community Foundation and Big Sky Institute for the Advancement of Nonprofits are playing an LCF development role, though at this time a formal network of Montana LCFs does not exist.

Overall, there has been an increase in knowledge about endowments and planned giving because of the work of the Governor's Task Force on Endowments and Philanthropy, MNA, BSI, university and hospital development directors, Philanthropy Northwest, as well as the assistance of professional associations such as the Montana Society of CPAs and the Montana Bar Association. In addition, the Governor's Task Force, in cooperation with the Yellowstone Boys and Girls Ranch Foundation, has sponsored two Lunch and Learn series about the Endowment Tax Credit and other state and Federal legislation. Another series is planned for the fall of 2007.

- (5) **Increased collaboration among Montana foundations.** In recent years, Montana foundations have begun to work together, e.g., through the Montana-Wyoming Funders Group that includes members of Philanthropy NW, and which has been discussing creation of a funders tour, slated for September of 2009, to familiarize foundations with nonprofit organizations in the two states. In the fall of 2006 there was a professional development opportunity for nonprofits sponsored by two Bozeman-Livingston area foundations and the United Way of Gallatin County. In addition, a number of family foundations are collaborating Big Sky Institute for the Advancement of Nonprofits in the development of a Grantmaking for Effective Organizations project, which will use pooled funds to support capacity-building grants to nonprofits. Another example of a foundation taking a broader look at charitable concerns is the co-sponsorship by the Washington Foundation of the 2006 Governor's Summit on School Readiness in Montana, a government/business alliance to explore education issues in the state.
- (6) **Increased Communication in Philanthropic Community.** Philanthropy Northwest has been funded to create a communications correspondent position for Montana and Alaska to document what is happening in the foundation and philanthropic communities in these states and to distribute information back to those communities, as well as to Philanthropy Northwest's own membership.
- (7) **The State of Montana involved in philanthropy.** The Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks helped to create the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Foundation. In addition, the Montana State Fund, the

agency that governs the Montana's Workers Compensation Fund, established a charitable giving program. The State also has seven of other trusts as well, e.g., the Coal Tax Trust Fund and the Treasure State Endowment. As of June 30, 2004 they were valued at \$1.3 billion providing more than \$85 million per year to fund state government, with three trusts created since 1994. In addition, Montana Governor Brian Schweitzer is actively seeking private money for post-secondary scholarships.

- (8) **New Federal Endowment.** Montana's commitment and experience with endowments encouraged the federal government to create Montana Fish and Wildlife Conservation Trust from sales of cabin sites on public land at Canyon Ferry Reservoir. A portion of the earnings generated from the \$20 million resulting from the sale provides funding for the restoration and conservation of fisheries and wildlife habitat; enhance public hunting, fishing and recreational opportunities; and/or improved public access to public land.
- (9) **Workplace Giving.** Many people use periodic payroll deductions at their workplace to make a portion of their charitable contributions. According to United Way of America, these drives rely heavily on non-itemizers, usually low and moderate income individuals, which represent 86 million people, or two-thirds of all taxpayers. Contributions to a variety of Montana workplace giving programs continue to increase, mirroring national trends.

On the whole, contributions to United Ways in Montana are keeping up with or slightly exceeding inflation, which is generally the situation nationally. Montana Shares, a 20 year old alternative giving campaign serving 36 nonprofits across the state, experienced a 14% increase in giving in 2006. The National Alliance for Choice in Giving, of which Montana Shares is a member, reported that in 2003 its 40 local federations raised \$14 million. This grew to 54 members and \$100 million raised in 2005. The Montana State Employees' Charitable Giving Campaign has grown steadily over the last decade. In 2005, it exceeded its goal by \$29,000 and in 2006 raised \$403,000. The average gift size continues to increase though the number of givers and gifts has stabilized. In addition, on-line contributions have steadily grown and have now reached 30 percent of givers.

D. Organizations dedicated to the growth of philanthropy and the nonprofit sector

- (1) **The Montana Community Foundation,** established in 1988, now has assets of more than \$55 million and holds almost 500 funds. These are primarily endowments for the benefit of other nonprofit organizations. MCF provides donor services, makes grants, assists in local community foundation development, and has developed a variety of special purpose endowments including the Fund for Tolerance and the Montana Women's

Foundation. MCF recently commissioned a study of Montana's Intergenerational Transfer of Wealth, as well. MCF helped to develop the Governor's Task Force on Endowments and Philanthropy and from 1995 to 2006 it provided fiscal sponsorship for the Task Force, a role now played by the Montana Nonprofit Association. In addition, MCF is working with MNA, the Big Sky Institute for the Advancement of Nonprofits and others to advise and implement the Council on Foundation's three-day Forum on Rural Philanthropy. The Forum is co-sponsored by Montana Senator Max Baucus and will be held in Missoula in August, 2007. It will provide an opportunity for foundations, which are currently funding in rural areas or interested in doing so, to explore the opportunities and challenges of supporting the often thinly resourced organizations that do essential work in Rural America.

- (2) **Big Sky Institute for the Advancement of Nonprofits (BSI).** This Helena-based research and development organization for the philanthropic and nonprofit sectors was established in 1999. BSI incubated the Montana Nonprofit Association in its early years, and after documenting the increasing disparity between those states with the greatest amount of foundation assets and those with the least, coined the term *The Philanthropic Divide* to describe this complex situation. BSI brought this disparity to the attention of national foundations, national organizations which support the health and development of the nonprofit sector, and to Montana's senior Senator Max Baucus, who as chair of the Senate Finance Committee has championed the development of rural philanthropy. In addition to its national organizing and research related to the Philanthropic Divide, BSI is also taking a leadership role in local community foundation development in Montana, gathering resources to enhance capacity- building grantmaking, raising the level of Montana's consulting capacity, and participating in Native American philanthropic and nonprofit infrastructure development.
- (3) **Montana Nonprofit Association's** appearance on the scene five years ago and its resultant success has constituted a major sea change for the nonprofit sector. MNA is an association of over 430 members that promotes a stronger nonprofit sector, a supportive public climate, and the ability of nonprofits to accomplish their missions through:
- Advocacy
 - Discount goods and services
 - Training, professional development, and technical assistance
 - Research, education, communications, and networking
 - Leadership and convening on issues of sector-wide importance

MNA's members address a broad array of missions in education, health and human services, arts and culture religious and spiritual development, environmental protection, animal welfare, economic and workforce

development, and more. MNA is a member of National Council of Nonprofit Associations, a network of similar state and regional nonprofit associations serving over 20,000 members in 41 states and the District of Columbia.

E. Public Policy

- (1) **The Montana Charitable Endowment Tax Credit.** Since it first passed into law in 1997, with both broad bipartisan and rural/urban support, the Montana Department of Revenue estimated that through 2006, the tax credit has generated more than \$88.3 million in permanently endowed assets for the state's charities both from planned and outright gifts made by individuals and business entities. The tax credit has also served as a model for similar legislation in Nebraska, Iowa and North Dakota. In 2007, Montana's Tax Credit was re-enacted and extended to 2013.
- (2) **Montana updates endowment management legislation.** In 2007, the Montana Legislature passed into law the Uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act, replacing and updating the Uniform Management of Institutional Funds Act, originally adopted in the 1970s. This was done in response to the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws' recommendation for a major revision of established rules for the management of endowment funds and to bring the law governing charitable institutions in line with modern investment practice. NCCUSL is an organization which drafts and promotes enactment of uniform laws that are designed to solve problems common to all the states.

A major provision of UPMIFA allows endowment managers to make prudent distributions from an endowment's income, growth or principal, even if the total assets of the fund fall below its historic value. This enables an endowment to continue to support a charity even during times of significant market decline and enables the endowment to maintain a diversity of investment, which will allow it to fully participate in the market when it rebounds.

3. The National Scene:

A. Senator Baucus urges more foundation giving to rural America.

In 2006, Max Baucus, Montana's senior Senator, and current chair of the Senate Finance Committee (SFC), challenged the members of the Council on Foundations(COF) to double funding to Rural America within 5 years. With the Council, he co-sponsored a Forum on Rural Philanthropy held in Montana in August 2007, which is the first of several planned to be held around the country sponsored by the COF. Note: The COF has recently published the first issue of a Journal of Rural Philanthropy designed to capture some of the best ideas from leaders working in rural philanthropy. In addition, the SFC has created a new

position, Policy Analyst for Tax-exempt Organization, which will focus on rural philanthropy, as well as other tax-exempt concerns.

B. Major Foundation Commitment:

Both the W.K. Kellogg and Northwest Area Foundations have made a long-term commitment to Montana to fund programs, which address the root causes of poverty. Other foundations are also beginning to use grants to make systemic change, to address how to sustain rural communities, to explore capacity building strategies, as well as ways to boost the philanthropic asset base, e.g., creating and building LCFs.

C. IRA Charitable Rollover Beneficial.

2006 legislation allows donors 701/2 and older to make non-taxable rollovers directly to nonprofits in 2007. In addition, efforts are underway to expand and extend the IRA Rollover, which would significantly increase contributions available to nonprofits. MNA is assessing the impact of this opportunity on Montana nonprofits.

D. Vacuum in leadership.

Recent research points to a looming leadership crisis as baby boomer nonprofit executive directors begin to retire and there is inadequate succession planning necessary to replace them. In addition, there is the changing structure of the work itself and differing generational expectations. According to the Chronicle of Philanthropy (3/22/07), a survey of young nonprofessional workers reports that long hours and low pay are the key reasons few expect to stay in the charity world throughout their professional careers. The great majority don't ever expect to direct a charitable organization. In addition, younger generations have different job and lifestyle priorities. See also: *Generations*, Fieldstone Alliance and *Daring to Lead 2006*, www.compasspoint.org/daringtolead2006.

E. Nonprofit societal role expands.

Federal and state governments continue to expect local nonprofits, which already face increasing resource challenges, especially in terms of funding and staff, to take care of activities formerly funded by government.

F. Demand for accountability and transparency.

- (1) States have begun enacting new laws, particularly regarding donor-advised funds and Type 3 supporting organizations, responding to publicity about fraud, self-dealing, and executive overcompensation in the nonprofit sector.
- (2) The Senate Finance Committee proposed a package of stringent regulations, several of which were approved by the U.S. Senate in late 2005 as part of its FY 2006 Tax Reconciliation bill. Some reforms were included in the pension reform bill (HR4) signed into law August 17, 2006 by President Bush.

- (3) Corporate donors are seeking greater accountability for their charitable dollars. In the 2006 Conference Board survey of corporate philanthropy, by far the biggest challenge cited by respondents was measuring real outcomes and results.

G. Increased Scrutiny.

Philanthropy's growth has increased the appetite of outsiders to scrutinize philanthropy activities, while changes in media and communications have made it far easier to do so, and to then disseminate the results. For example, Internet access to Guidestar makes immediately available all IRS Form 990s, which must be filed by nonprofits with annual revenues of \$25,000 or more. Increased scrutiny, accountability and requirements have increased pressure on boards and staff. It requires the use of scarce resources and requires additional attention by board members.

H. A new kind of philanthropic leader.

People who have had stellar careers in national, regional, and local public life or the business world are moving to the philanthropic sector as paid executives. These include, for example, Tim Wirth, former Colorado Congressman and Senator, now CEO of the United Nations Foundation; Steve Gunderson, former U.S. Congressman from Wisconsin, now CEO of the Council on Foundations; and John McCarter, formerly Senior Vice President of Booz Allen & Hamilton, Inc., President of DeKalb Corporation, and Budget Director of the State of Illinois under Governor Richard B. Ogilvie, now President and CEO of the Field Museum in Chicago.

I. Recovery of foundation giving.

Foundation giving continues to recover from the market down-turn of the first years of the decade, but is still only slightly ahead of inflation. Modest gains in the stock market, new gifts, and new foundation establishment helped sustain incremental growth.

J. Robust growth of community foundations.

Community foundations, the fastest growing area of philanthropy, have experienced robust growth in existing assets and a continued infusion of new gifts. They constitute one percent of all U.S. grantmaking foundations and account for about ten percent of giving.

K. Declining corporate and corporate foundation giving:

Annual corporate foundation giving fell by one percent in 2005, after holding steady in 2004. Corporations are beginning to replace a portion of their direct giving with employee volunteerism or contribution of products instead of funds.

L. Giving patterns change.

New trends in giving have emerged including broadening of ways of giving, e.g., donor advised funds and giving circles, as well as more specific strategies and

expectations. There has been a shift in donor interest from the general support of institutions to specific support of programs and projects. In addition, an “investor” orientation has developed, which is more focused on outcome and returns. In some cases, high net worth donors have banded together in organizations such as Social Venture Partners, which has higher expectations for their charitable dollars and may seek personal involvement on the boards of directors of beneficiary organizations.

M. Volunteerism Challenges:

According to recent government research by the Corporation for National and Community Service, as reported in the May 3, 2007 issue of the Chronicle of Philanthropy, nonprofit groups face significant challenges in keeping their local volunteers, attracting new people to help their causes, and providing leadership and executive talents. Although overall volunteerism rates remain high, the report’s findings illustrated the need for charities nationwide to improve their recruitment and management of volunteers.

4. Some International Factors:

A..Globalization.

There is an upsurge of interest in philanthropic solutions to global challenges. The global economy and global communications are influencing a younger generation that is very engaged in global issues.

B. The worldwide shift of wealth into private hands.

This worldwide shift has generated new wealth for philanthropy and has brought many new players and perspectives to charitable giving.

C. U.S., a model for philanthropy.

Large, primarily American, foundations are supporting the development of community foundations in Europe, Africa and Latin American in order to build local financial and human resources to enhance permanent community assets. The Montana Community Foundation has participated in this effort by hosting an information exchange for representatives of a number of South African community foundations, which were created by private U.S. foundations.

Montana Philanthropy Highlights

- 1940 First independent foundation established in Montana – Heisey Foundation
- 1982 First corporate foundation established - First Interstate Bank of Commerce Centennial Youth Foundation
- 1985 Central Montana Foundation established
- 1988 Montana Community Foundation (MCF) established
- 1994 First State-wide Governor’s Conversation on Endowed Philanthropy held at the request of MCF – Hosted by Governor Marc Racicot
- Governor’s Task Force on Endowed Philanthropy established
- Ford Foundation’s Rural Development and Community Foundations Initiative with MCF leads to explosive growth of local community foundations statewide
- First Montana community foundation established by an Indian Tribe (Blackfeet Community Endowment)
- 1995 Charitable Endowment Tax Credit legislation first introduced; failed to pass
- 1996 First local Conversation on Endowed Philanthropy held (Missoula, MT)
- 1997 Montana Legislature passed Charitable Endowment Tax Credit
- First Lunch and Learn sessions about the Charitable Endowment Tax Credit presented for professional advisors and nonprofits, co-sponsored by MCF and Yellowstone Boys and Girls Ranch Foundation
- 1999 Big Sky Institute for the Advancement of Nonprofits established
- Legacy Montana established
- 2000 Governor’s Conversation on Endowments and Philanthropy – Hosted by Governor Judy Martz
- “Philanthropic Divide” coined by Big Sky Institute for the Advancement of Nonprofits to describe the growing gap in foundation assets between the states with the least assets and those with the most.
- 2001 Montana Nonprofit Association established
- 2002 Article on the Philanthropic Divide published for national audience in *Foundation News and Commentary*
- 2006 Governor’s Conversation on Endowments and Philanthropy – Hosted by Governor Brian Schweitzer
- Montana foundations and grantmaking public charities reach \$565.0 million in assets and make \$41.8 million in grants

- 2007 Park County Community Foundation hired full-time professional staff; the first in state to do so
- Indian Nonprofit and Philanthropy Group held first organizing meetings
- Montana-Wyoming Funders Group established
- Philanthropy Northwest (Regional Association of Grantmakers) hosted its annual meeting in Montana, and subsequently hired part-time communications director for Montana
- Council on Foundation and Montana Senator Max Baucus co-hosted first national rural philanthropy conference (Missoula, Montana)
- 2008 Local Community Foundations in Montana have accumulated \$18 million in assets
- Organizational Effectiveness Grantmaking Program established by Big Sky Institute in collaboration with Montana foundations
- Montana-Wyoming Funders Group plans fall 2009 study tour of Montana for Regional and national funders
- Montana Nonprofit Association exceeds 530 members statewide
