



RISE

Alexander Haas
TRANSFORMING INSTITUTIONS THAT TRANSFORM LIVES

Results in Independent Schools E-newsletter
Shining a Light on Fundraising

April 11, 2023



from the desk of
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Here We Go Again — But Still . . .

Nearly every year, there are local, regional, national, and global events that disrupt our equilibrium and upset our sense of well-being. Be they catastrophic weather events, political upheaval, public health crises (think COVID, AIDS, the opioid crisis), war, bank failures, economic uncertainty – the list goes on – these disruptions can unnerve us and undermine our sense of safety and security. As distressing, or even disastrous, as such episodes are or can be, they almost always elicit a response that is heartwarming, that restores our faith in humanity, and that reminds us how very generous the human spirit is and how powerful philanthropy is.

There are countless definitions of the word “philanthropy.” It is described variously as charitable acts or other good works that help others or society, or altruistic concern for the welfare of others and society that usually is manifested by **doing** something – donating money or property or volunteering time or effort. It also means the desire to promote the common good, often accomplished through donating money. Our individual definition of philanthropy notwithstanding, those of us privileged to work in fundraising, development, philanthropy, advancement, or whatever label we choose to call our profession, know what a formidable force it is.

I am constantly amazed at the generosity of people, particularly in the U.S. Regardless of political, religious, ideological, or cultural differences, people often are united by the desire to make a difference, to have a positive impact, to solve problems, to provide relief. The countless not-for-profit institutions and organizations that exist to bring art, music, and theatre to communities; to provide services, disaster relief, education; to conduct research; to battle hunger and homelessness; to rescue animals; to protect the environment; and that advance myriad other important causes simply could not fulfill their missions without the generosity of the millions of people who, in the aggregate, donate billions and billions of dollars each year.

It is no surprise that economic conditions have an impact on the ability and willingness of individuals and organizations to support charitable causes. It also is no surprise that some are more significantly affected by the economy than are others. What I do **not** find at all surprising is that, if a charitable organization effectively tells its story, demonstrates the

positive impact of its work, consistently exhibits responsible stewardship of the money it receives, and has leadership that operates with integrity and transparency, people who care about the organization and its work will support it no matter the external disruptors that might shake our confidence. The magnitude of individual gifts might be affected, but people still give. They still care. They still want the causes that touch their hearts and minds to be able to fulfill their missions.

[Our Team](#)

Independent Schools See Drop in Assets

Independent schools reported an average decline of 11.3% on their endowment assets in fiscal year 2022, a sharp drop compared with the 25.8% returns bolstered by a surging stock market in FY2021.

Based on information from independent schools representing approximately \$11.4 billion in combined endowment assets, the annual report from the **Commonfund Institute** found the annual return on FY2022 endowment assets to be the largest decline since FY2009, which saw a year-over-year drop of 18% following the global financial crisis of 2008 and 2009.

Key Findings

- **The larger the endowment, the smaller the investment loss**, as schools with assets exceeding \$50 million reported an average decline of 10.6%, while those with assets under \$10 million reported an average decline of 12.6%.
- **Long-term returns remained mostly unchanged**, showing an annual increase over 10 years of between 7.8 and 8.3% compared to 8.2% in FY2021.
- Institutions reported that an **average 6.1% of their operating budget in FY2022 was funded by endowments—virtually unchanged from the previous year—and that U.S. equities accounted for 32% of asset allocation, a year-over-year decrease of 2 percentage points.** In addition, the allocation to non-U.S. equities jumped to 18% from 2% in FY2021.

PND, 3-20

New Surveys Cast Doubt on Giving

Two recent surveys show that confidence in the economy is declining. One found that the share of donors who plan to give less this year than last is the highest it's been since 2020.

Dunham+Company recently released its donor confidence survey, which in January polled people who had donated \$20 or more in the previous year. In 2021, 80% planned to give the same or more, but that dropped to 76% in 2022, and then down to 70% this year. The nearly 25% of donors who plan to give less is the highest percentage recorded in the past three years – including the 2020 poll, which was taken in July, near the height of pandemic uncertainty and job loss.

A **Gallup Poll** was conducted during the same time frame, but for the general public – not just donors. The poll found 50% of Americans said they were worse off financially than they had been a year ago. Gallup says the last time that many Americans felt worse off financially was during the Great Recession in 2008 and 2009.

In the Gallop survey of donors, people who said they plan to give less cited three primary reasons: personal finances (62%), the economy (17%), and inflation (16%). This changed from the 2022 survey, when 35% cited inflation as the reason they would give less, and 41% blamed personal finances.

More info on [Dunham](#) and [Gallup](#). COP, 4-4

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King Blog for Giving USA

David King, our President & CEO, is a featured writer in Giving USA's Member's Insight Blog. In his entry, David discusses the warning signs that organizations need to be aware of in 2023 as they face challenging headwinds to philanthropy.

[The blog can be found here.](#)



[Our LinkedIn](#)

Fundraising Professionals Celebrate an Icon's Legacy at the Be Haas Awards

On March 28th, the Woodruff Arts Center in Atlanta was filled with accolades for the lasting impact Be Haas has had on the philanthropic and fundraising communities and those that work in the organizations that serve them, when the Be Haas Awards Ceremony was held. The event was hosted by the Association of Fundraising Professionals, Greater Atlanta Chapter. Alexander Haas is the presenting sponsor of the relaunch of this award, in cooperation with AFP.

This year's event is especially significant as it marks the 30th anniversary of philanthropist and community leader Beatrice "Be" Haas being awarded the organization's Lifetime Achievement Award. Alexander Haas President & CEO, David King, addressed the audience and spoke of his beloved former colleague and those individuals that best represent the aims she stood for.



This year's Be Haas Award recipients are:

Birgit Smith Burton, Founder and Executive Director of the African American Development Officers Network and former Executive Director of Foundation Relations, Georgia Institute of Technology.

Kathryn H. Graves, Senior Associate Dean of Development and External Relations, Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University.

Randy Redner, Chief Strategy and Philanthropy Officer at Rainbow Village and retired

President & CEO, Community Foundation of Northeast Georgia.

“It’s a privilege to be able to uplift those who have helped create change and breathe new life into philanthropy in the greater Atlanta region,” said AFP Greater Atlanta Chapter President **Kate McNeely**. “Philanthropy doesn’t happen in a vacuum, and we believe that leaders like these help to drive impact—and empathy—in our communities.”





We Know Independent Schools

For more than 35 years, Alexander Haas has been a fixture in the nonprofit community. We are honored to have worked with so many remarkable independent schools, both secular and non-secular, across the country that help mold today's adolescents into tomorrow's leaders. Take a look at our list of independent school clients, past and present.

[Our Clients](#)

A Fresh Approach to Fundraising

Our services aren't cookie cutter. We don't operate with a boilerplate, merely changing names and locations. We craft each and every service we provide to match your organization's unique needs, wants and abilities. We work hard and expect you to do the same. Together we can help you transform your institution, your fundraising, and the community you serve.

Whether your need is in Capital Campaign, Annual Fund Campaign, Major Gifts, Leadership Annual Giving, Planned Giving or all of the above, we take a fresh approach to nonprofit fundraising.

[Our Services](#)



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