

OTHER VIEWS

Wealthy Americans improve lot of the less fortunate

Jo Anne Chester Bander is executive director of The Donors Forum, an association of 100 foundations and corporate-giving programs in South Florida.

A platinum era of charitable giving is at hand. Boston College researchers recently estimated that wealthy Americans will transfer \$41 trillion to \$136 trillion to their descendants between now and 2055. Some \$16 trillion to \$53 trillion of that will flow on to charities.

If South Florida gets a proportionate share, it will mean \$500 billion in new charitable assets.

These are not fantasy projections; the impact of the transfer is already being felt in South Florida. Indicative was the recent \$49.1 million raised by Miami-Dade United Way. The campaign was fueled by gifts of \$26 million.

Susan and Leonard Miller, who have established both the Miller Family Foundation and The Lennar Foundation, are long-standing philanthropists. She, a United Way volunteer, is responsible for inspiring many of its million-dollar donations. He, a past chair of the University of Miami's board of trustees, now chairs the board of the South Florida Annenberg Challenge, a five-year \$100-million effort to improve public education in Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach counties.



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Vacuum cleaners provided Herbert W. Hoover Jr. the resources to support his philanthropy. After taking up permanent residence in South Florida in 1966, he funded scientific studies that led to substantial modifications in the Turkey Point nuclear plant to limit thermal pollution and the campaign that led to establishing Biscayne National Park.

Today his legacy lives through the activities and grants of the Herbert W. Hoover Foundation and its chair, daughter Lacey Hoover Chase, who is promoting an environmentally sensitive redevelopment plan for the Homestead Air Reserve Base.

John S. and James L. Knight were pioneering newspaper publishers, whose independent foundation is now the largest in Florida with more than \$1.2 billion in assets. The foundation makes grants throughout the United States, focusing on communities where the Knights published newspapers. It has a particular commitment to journalism, including support for the Inter American Press Association, mid-career fellowships and university journalism programs.

Stephanie and Jules Trump, developers of Williams Island, immigrated to the United States from South Africa in 1974. Committed to giving back, they established the I Have A Dream Foundation and guaranteed college educations to 107 current seventh graders at Drew Elementary School in Liberty City. Preparing children for college means providing special tutoring and assistance to their families. Their efforts have inspired other philanthropists to adopt two more classes at Drew.

Ethel and George Kennedy adopted six children in their lifetimes. Upon her death in 1967, he established a foundation in her memory. After he died in 1986, their children changed the name to the Ethel & W. George Kennedy Family Foundation. The foundation is run today by the four daughters and is moving into the third generation of family leadership. It is a major source of grants that support care, education, health and rehabilitation for children and families in Miami-Dade County.

Transfers of wealth to charities and foundations clearly have great potential for improving the quality of life for all South Floridians, though money alone isn't enough. Those making a real difference do so by example as well, transferring their values and visions of a better world to new generations. That's what ensures that American philanthropy will continue to be a force for societal good.