2019 LARGEST CHARITABLE GIFTS

$227M Total, 61 Gifts; OC Steps Up

By PAUL HUGHES

Some say “Give Till It Helps,” while others use the old school cry “Give Till It Hurts.” Orange County donors simplified that a lot last year.

“Just Give.”

The Business Journal’s list of the biggest giving last year is higher than year-ago levels by every metric:

- Total giving: $227 million, up 54%
- Average gift: $3.7 million, up 9%
- Total gifts topping $1 million: 61, up 42%

And the most important measurement: more people helped.

Recipients of OC’s largest largesse spanned hospitals to housing, education to the arts.

Most of the biggest giving last year went to big recipients: three hospitals and two schools:

- $45.5 million on 16 gifts to Chapman University
- $25.1 million on three gifts to Hoag Hospital Foundation
- $22.5 million on 140 gifts, an average of $6.25 million, to Foundation of Caring Fund

The cumulative $144.2 million from those 45 gifts were 63% and 75% of the list’s totals, respectively.

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- $25.1 million on three gifts to Hoag Hospital Foundation
- $20.4 million on 10 gifts to CHOC Children’s Foundation
- $17.8 million on seven gifts to St. Joseph Hospital-Orange

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The top five gifts last year were all in the eight-figure section; and include:

- $116.9 million by Beall Family Foundation to UCI (see story, page 30)
- $12 million from John Whelan for Hoag
- $10 million from an anonymous donor to Chapman
- $10 million from Argyros Family Foundation, also to Chapman
- $8.3 million by Bill and Shelley Hoss for Chapman

Giving, Give, Give

The Argyros family, like other OC philanthropists, gives outside OC as well. Last year’s donations from the family foundation included $10 million for scholarships to Ho- ratio Alger Association and $1 million apiece to St. Luke’s Hospital in Ketchum, Idaho, and the Argyros Performing Arts Center in Sun Valley.

Another notable listee—also a certified under-the-radar giver—is Dean and Gerda Koontz, with $9.1 million to Hoag.

Dean Koontz is the global mega-best-selling horror-thriller novelist known for setting several of his stories in OC. The Koontz’s gift was No. 6 by total amount last year and starts the “seven-figure section” of the list.

Some 80% of the list are for gifts of $5 million or below; one-fourth are exactly $1 million, the minimum amount for inclusion here.

This year’s growth comes after last year’s giving gains when the total—$148 million—also rose, excluding outliers from the year before.

Remember 2017?

That was the year that saw Henry and Susan Samueli pledge $200 million to UCI, a $120 million campaign for St. Michael’s Abbey in Silverado with countywide support and strong participation by Paul and Mary-belle Musco; as well as Dale and Sarah Ann Fowler backing Chapman with their second eight-figure pledge; $45 million for a new engineerinng school, atop a previous $55 million for the law school, both schools bear the family name.

Chapman and Hoag that year picked up another $36 million combined on four other gifts.

The total across the three years of the list, based on Business Journal research: $875 million on 140 gifts, an average of $6.25 million in that time.