



## **Greater Green Bay Community Foundation survey: Northeastern Wisconsin nonprofits hit hard by recession, but hopeful**

**Most say demand up, donations down in 2009**

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The recession led to a rough 2009 for many local nonprofits, but leaders say they are optimistic about the future.

Sixty-five percent of nonprofits responding to a recent survey by the Greater Green Bay Community Foundation said demand was up for their services in 2009, while 46 percent reported a drop in donations, according to a new survey.

More than one-fourth said they trimmed staff in 2009 to save money, and 43 percent said they tapped emergency cash reserves or borrowed money to make ends meet last year.

They blame changes on the economy, saying many donors couldn't afford to give because they had lost jobs or hours, and that corporations also trimmed gifts because of the economic hardships. At that same time, more people needed help securing things like housing, food, transportation or medical services.

"It has not been a pretty picture," foundation President and CEO David Pamperin said Wednesday at a news conference.

"Nonprofits cut staff at a time when demand was up. They reached out to existing donors who gave more, but had a harder time finding new donors."

The Nonprofits and Economy Survey was commissioned in January as a follow-up to a similar survey last year. Seventy-four Northeastern Wisconsin nonprofits responded to the 46-item questionnaire. The survey looked at four areas: overall financial health and future outlook, fundraising and donor relations, social capital as defined by the nonprofit's ability to recruit and retain talent and demand for services and capacity to meet the community's needs.

Nearly one-fifth of the nonprofits who responded said they continue to experience chronic financial problems, and 3 percent said they don't know how they'll survive through 2010.

But many feel optimistic about the future, Pamperin said. Almost a third say they are financially healthy, and 60 percent expect to expand services in the next three years.

Pamperin said the tough economy forced many organizations to re-evaluate how they operate, and because they streamlined staffing or programming, or chose to focus on certain goals, they may feel more confident about future stability.

Steve Harty, president and CEO of the Greater Green Bay YMCA, said the nonprofit saw a decline in membership and an increase in financial scholarship appeals because of the recession. But early registration for summer camp this year is strong, and he said requests for financial assistance have leveled off.

"We're hoping the area has seen the worst of it," he said.