



GIVE *Big* KERN

5.2.17

One day to celebrate the
giving spirit of Kern County.

2017
Report to the Community

The “Five W’s” and the “H” of Give Big Kern 2017, A Component of the Nonprofit Strengthening Initiative of:

KERN COMMUNITY
F O U N D A T I O N

Growing community.
Growing philanthropy.

Who: The Kern Community Foundation, a 501(c)(3) public charitable nonprofit.

What: Conducted the online crowd funding event called Give Big Kern, whereby 101 nonprofits registered with the Foundation had an opportunity to receive donations and pledges of volunteer support from community members, supporters and sponsors through a web-based giving portal. **The effort brought in close to \$150,000 in donations and 15,000 pledged volunteer hours.**

When: For the second year in a row, this happened on the first Tuesday in May to coincide with the national ‘Give Local America’ movement. The online giving was concentrated during the 24-hour period from 12:00 a.m. to 11:59 p.m. on Tuesday, May 2; however, people could start giving more than a month out from giving day, as the online portal went live on Saturday, April 1. Several classroom and webinar trainings to help participating nonprofits prepare for Give Big Kern began in January and lasted through April.

Where: Charity dollars sought through Give Big Kern are intended to help local efforts in Kern County, but because Give Big Kern is an online-based giving marathon, agencies are able to receive credit card donations from beyond Kern, California, and even the United States. The web portal, created and managed by online giving platform design and hosting firm GiveGab, is housed at the Internet address **GiveBigKern.org**.

Why: Give Big Kern is part of a national movement designed to ignite the spirit of giving by greatly increasing visibility and awareness of important community causes. The Kern Community Foundation uses Give Big Kern to strengthen local nonprofits by helping them receive **unrestricted dollars** through crowd funding and competitive prizes, as well as **volunteer pledges**. Give Big Kern also aims to give Kern County residents, allies and corporate sponsors of local nonprofits the opportunity to support causes they care about.

How: Give Big Kern is to 21st Century fundraising and philanthropy what the telethons of the 20th Century used to be in the days before the Internet. Then folks dialed in and pledged their donations over the phone. Now they do so online, via their computer, smart phone or tablet, donating by using a credit card, or pledging volunteer hours by using their e-mail and telephone contact information. **Kern Community Foundation provides promotional materials for Give Big Kern free of charge to participating nonprofits.**

The Story

At midnight on May 2, 101 nonprofits launched into Kern County's 2nd annual Give Big Kern – an online giving day designed to raise unrestricted funding dollars and volunteer hours that are donated directly to local nonprofit organizations. With a goal of increasing engagement and reaching 8,000 donors and volunteers — roughly 1% of Kern County's population — nonprofit staff and board members, volunteers, and community partners rallied to expand philanthropy in the region. Ninety agencies ended up receiving donations of money or volunteer time through the Give Big Kern effort.



Online giving began April 1, and reached a fevered pitch on May 2, with people from across the county, state, nation, and world supporting local nonprofit causes. **In total, 1,469 donors (69% more than 2016's 869 donors) gave \$147,839, and 327 volunteers pledged 14,844 hours online.** The unduplicated number of total supporters (monetary donors + volunteers) was 1,496.

The Background – With a Focus on Engagement

Kern Community Foundation began hosting Give Big Kern in 2016, on the first Tuesday in May, as a part of its Nonprofit Strengthening Initiative, which focuses on increasing visibility, building capacity, and improving sustainability for local nonprofits. Like other strategic initiatives from the Foundation, Give Big Kern is offered at no cost to participating nonprofits.

At the 2016 Give Big Kern launch, the Foundation's main focus was to increase the visibility of local nonprofit participants and help them reach new donors and/or volunteers. In 2017, the Foundation reinforced the value of **engagement** as a pathway to new donors and/or volunteers by offering more training opportunities for nonprofit participants, including numerous workshops on the effective use of social media with help from local PR firm Providence Strategic Consulting; free Give Big Kern marketing materials, with a customization option at a reasonable rate; and the opportunity to win prizes for such community engagement goals as most unique donors, most individual volunteers and 100 percent board member participation.



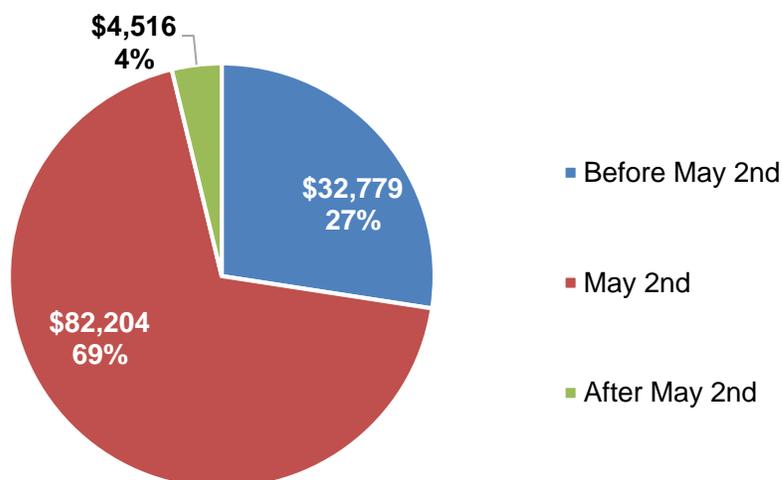
While the 1,496 number of total supporters fell short of the 8,000 mark set for 2017, most nonprofit averages for 2017 bespeak significantly greater community engagement compared to 2016.

Nonprofit Averages

17 Number of Donors 2016: 7	\$1,448 Dollars Raised 2016: \$1,404
3 Number of Volunteers 2016: 2	147 Pledged Hours 2016: 186

Something else that helped toward greater community engagement in 2017 vs. 2016, was that the online portal for making monetary donations or pledging volunteer hours was officially opened on April 1, more than a month before Give Big Kern Day. While more than two-thirds of online donations were still received on Giving Day, opening up the giving portal early, and keeping it open beyond May 2, helped to greatly increase the visibility of the effort and gave friends and family members of pre-Giving-Day donors more of a lead time to consider giving.

Donation by Day



Finally, there were also prizes/incentives to encourage agencies to reach out to more potential donors, volunteers, and fundraising champions, including from among their Board Members. A challenge to ensure 100% board member participation in monetary donations (the “Board Giving Challenge”) through Give Big Kern, was taken on by 29 agencies, but in the end only nine (i.e., 10% of the 90 agencies that actually received donations online) qualified for a \$1,000 opportunity drawing. Following is a detailing of prize winning agencies in their respective categories:

Prizes/Incentives

**Most Unique Online Donors:
\$1,500 Prize**

Habitat for Humanity Golden Empire:
125 Donors



**Most Dollars Raised Online:
\$500 Prize**

Marley's Mutts Dog Rescue:
\$9,490



Most Individual Volunteers: \$1,000 Prize
CSUB Edible Garden:
155 Volunteers



**Most Volunteer Hours Pledged:
\$500 Prize**

Bakersfield Art Association: 2,324 hours¹



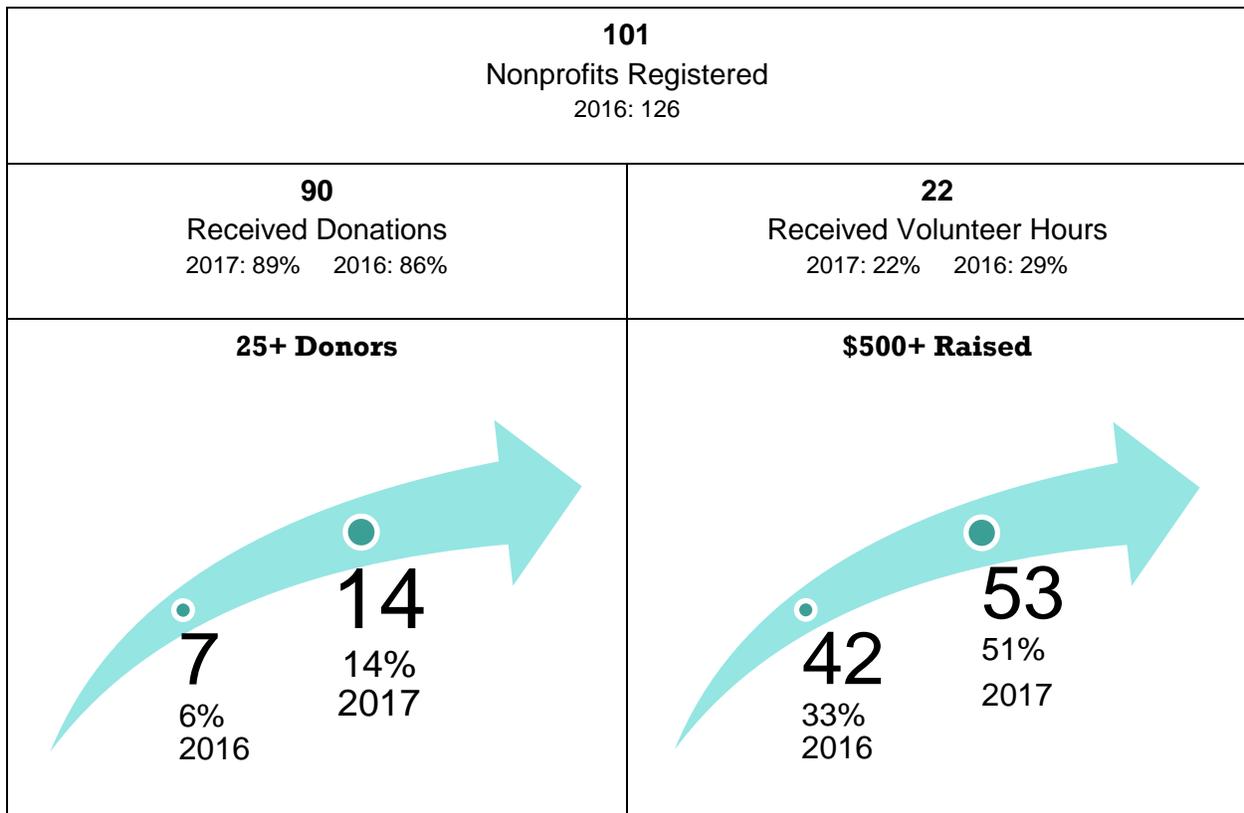
**Board Giving Challenge²:
\$1,000 Opportunity Drawing**
Bakersfield Birth Network



Nonprofit Engagement

While there were fewer nonprofits that registered as Give Big Kern participants in 2017 than in 2016 (101 vs. 126), the chart below shows that a greater percentage of 2017 nonprofits received donations, had higher numbers of donors and raised more dollars compared to last year.

The reduced percentage in the number of volunteer hours pledged to nonprofits in 2017 vs. 2016 is due to technical glitches that prevented us from capturing all the intended pledged hours. We are, however, working with our technology partner, GiveGab, to ensure that Give Big Kern 2018 brings access to everyone who would like to pledge volunteer hours to their nonprofit(s) of choice.



During the months leading up to Give Big Kern 2017, the designated representatives of registered nonprofits were required to attend an orientation workshop and encouraged to attend a series of training workshops and webinars covering topics ranging from social media basics to board engagement in fundraising to the cultivation of new donors and volunteers, and more. Attendance was incentivized with a drawing based on 100% attendance. Board giving was incentivized with a drawing based on 100% Board Member engagement in giving \$5 or more through Give Big Kern.

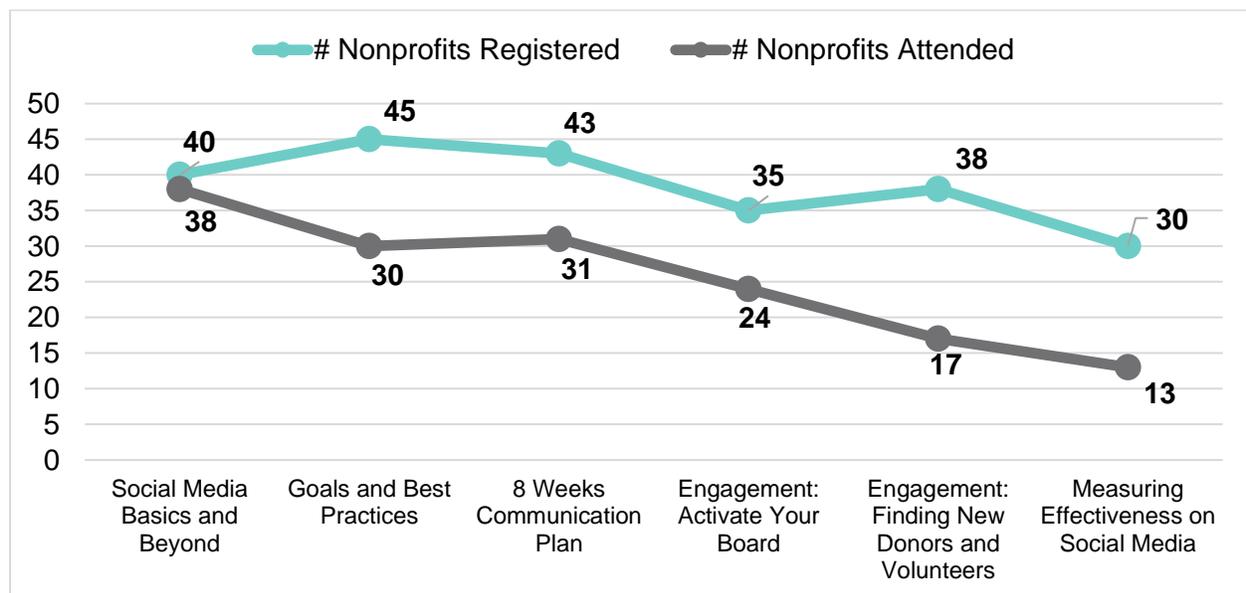
Nonprofits that engaged in different growth opportunities provided by Kern Community Foundation through the training workshops and webinars saw increased impact compared to the overall average of nonprofit participants. Highly engaged agencies, including the 9 (10% of all that participated) that were successful in getting 100% of their Board Members engaged in giving through Give Big Kern, saw better results in both fundraising and securing volunteer pledges. Following are some examples of how participation in these opportunities affected their success.

The Measurable Impact of Nonprofit Engagement

Greater Participation/ Accompanying Results	More Donors	More \$ Raised	More Volunteers	More Pledged Volunteer Hours
Attended at Least 1 Workshop	2	\$410	3	133
Attended the Key Workshop: “Engagement: Finding New Donors and Volunteers”	9	\$693	15	599
100% Board Giving Challenge	16	\$747	15	533
Engaged CSUB Marketing Student Volunteers in their Efforts	15	\$1,103	6	192

That said, over time a drop off in attendance at the workshops and webinars offered became evident when comparing registered nonprofits vs. those that actually attended. L-to-R chronological progression on the graph is toward Give Big Kern Day, May 2. (The graph shows workshop attendance only. Five webinars were offered as well, interspersed with the workshops.)

Workshop Attendance



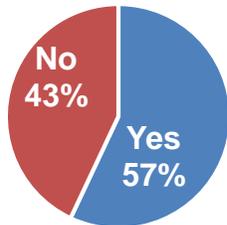
Nonprofit Survey Feedback

A survey given to participating nonprofits after Give Big Kern revealed some of the suggested resources they utilized (planning, goal setting, event hosting) to try to ensure event success.

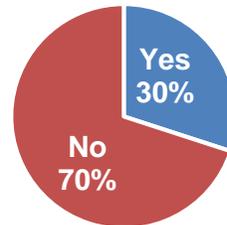
Every respondent indicated a willingness to participate in Give Big Kern in 2018, and three-quarters of respondents indicated with certainty that they will participate. The fact that there were more than twice as many survey respondents in 2017 than in 2016 shows growing engagement and buy-in from participating nonprofits.

39 Representatives from 37 Nonprofits Responded – Response Rate: 37%
(2016 Response Rate: 18%)

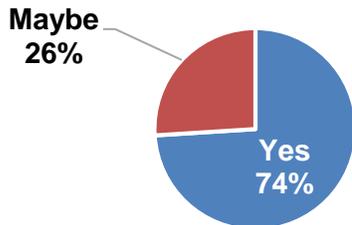
Held a Kick-Off Planning Meeting



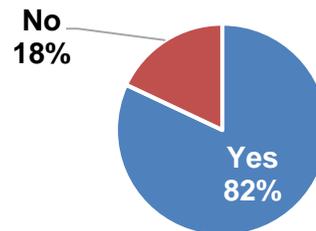
Hosted an Event on 5/2



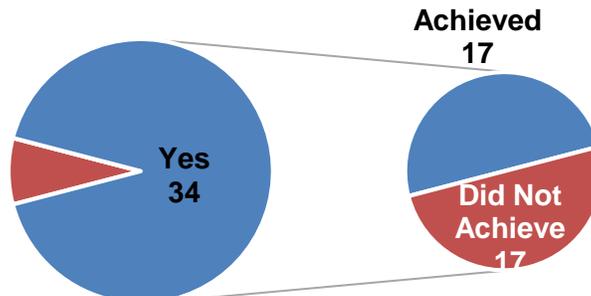
Will participate in Give Big Kern in 2018



Used Free Marketing Material



Did they set a goal?



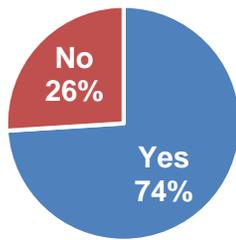
Donor Survey Feedback

And how did donors feel about Give Big Kern 2017? Close to three times as many donors responded to a survey in 2017 as did in 2016, and the overwhelming majority were pleased with the experience, contributed to nonprofits they were already supporting and, most importantly, plan to give again in 2018.

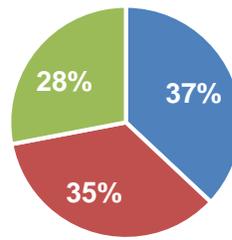
Most (72%) donors who answered the survey said they heard about Give Big Kern from a nonprofit, a friend or a coworker, and only 28% (less than one-third) said they heard about it through social media.

210 Responses – Response Rate: 14%
(2016 Response Rate: 5%)

Contributed to Nonprofits They Already Support

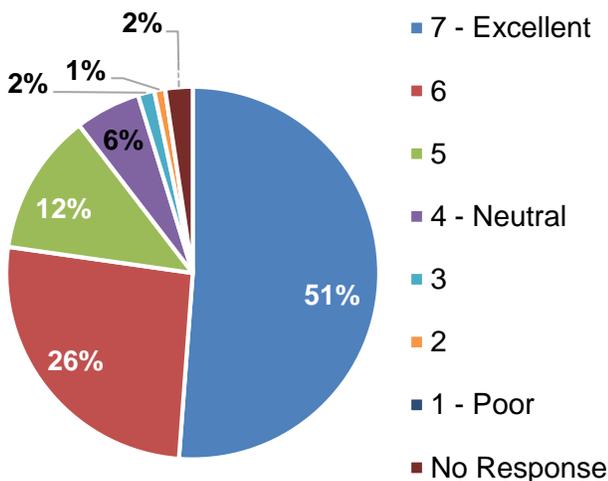


How did they hear about Give Big Kern?

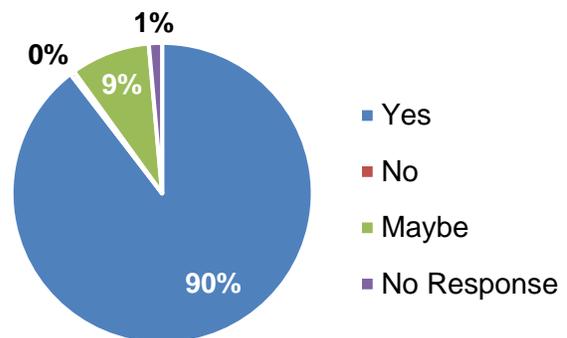


- From a Nonprofit
- From a Friend or Coworker
- Through Social Media

Their GiveBigKern.org experience was...



Would they give again in 2018?



Give Big Kern—An Online Crowd Funding Event that Relies on Social Media: The Word-of-Mouth Tool of the 21st Century

Because Give Big Kern is an online crowd funding marathon, a big part of our promotional push, as well as that of each participating agency, happens via social media—in an effort to get people to engage their friends to give to causes they care about by using what has essentially become the word-of-mouth tool of the 21st Century.

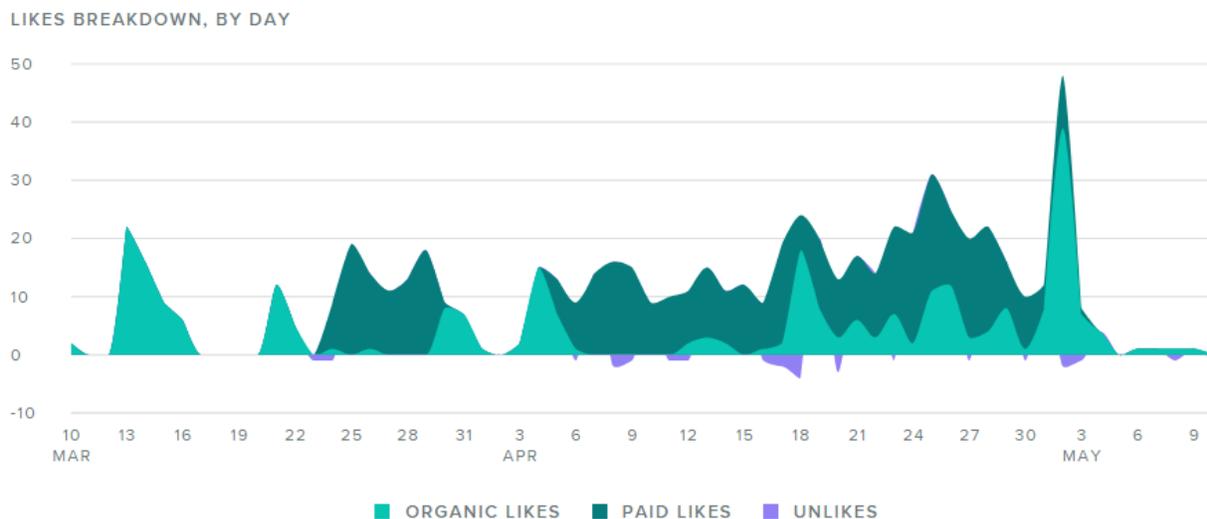
Thanks to a partnership with local public relations firm Providence Strategic Consulting, Kern Community Foundation offered extensive social media training to participating nonprofits. Attendees were taught best practices (optimum times for posting on certain days of the week, what makes for an attention-grabbing post), technical skills (how to boost posts and target them to specific audiences, how to use video effectively through apps such as Facebook Live and Boomerang), and strategies (creating an 8-week communication plan, linking to an agency’s Give Big Kern page directly from the agency’s Facebook page and website).

The social media trainings that accompanied the Give Big Kern effort created nonprofit strengthening by providing tips and tools that agencies can continue to use beyond Give Big Kern in all their ongoing publicity endeavors involving social media.

Give Big Kern’s Social Media Page

Providence Strategic Consulting also “adopted” the Kern Community Foundation’s Give Big Kern Facebook page (facebook.com/GIVEBIGKERN), managing it strategically to increase page likes prior to May 2, and to increase overall social media engagement around the campaign. Meanwhile, Foundation staff continued to manage the agency’s own Kern Foundation Facebook page, and to share posts from the Give Big Kern Facebook page to generate more online traffic and interest. Organic posts as well as paid or boosted posts were used to increase social media traffic.

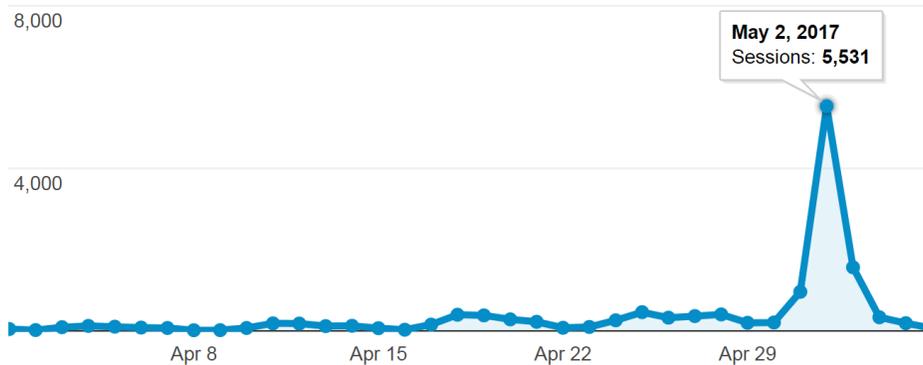
Audience Growth



Give Big Kern Website Traffic

From the following graphs and charts, it is evident that the majority of visits to GiveBigKern.org happened on Giving Day, May 2, and that social media, Facebook in particular, played a key role in driving visitors to the site (although other platforms—Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and LinkedIn—also drove traffic to the online giving portal). Close to 2,000 website sessions (36% of a total 5,531) originated on social media that day.

When did people visit www.givebigkern.org?

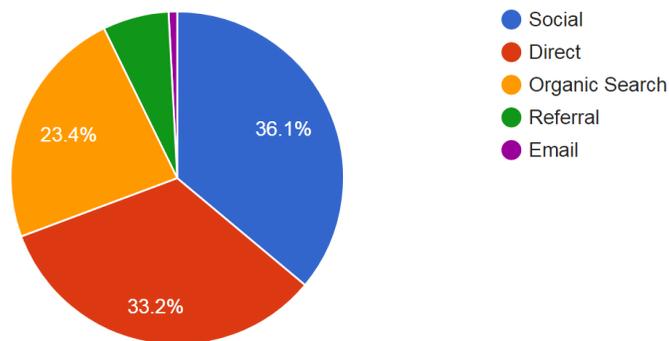


What social media platform brought visitors to www.givebigkern.org on May 2nd?

Facebook	1,891
Twitter	55
Instagram	34
YouTube	6
LinkedIn	5

1,991
website sessions
originated from social
media on May 2nd.

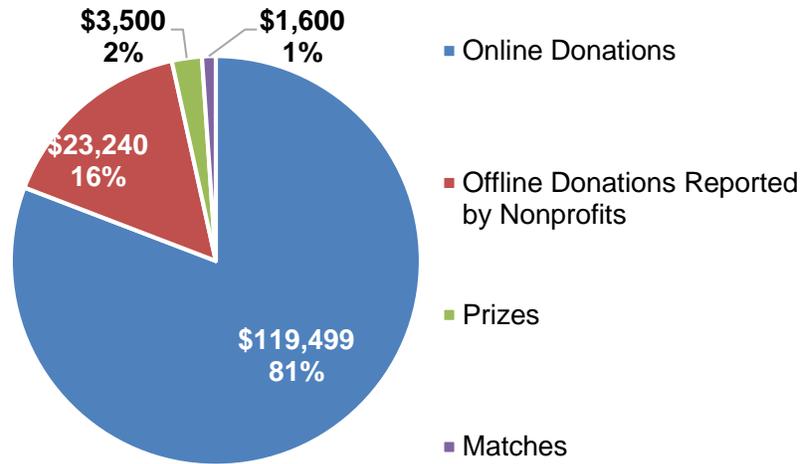
How did people get to www.givebigkern.org on May 2nd?



It is possible that e-mail as a driver of traffic to GiveBigKern.org is underreported as it is more difficult to track; however, several participating nonprofits reported using audience-targeted e-mails and e-mail blasts with direct links to their Give Big Kern page.

The Numbers

Total Dollar Breakdown



The majority of Give Big Kern donations were made online, but a sizeable percentage, 16% (or one out of every six), were made offline to participating agencies by check or cash.

While Give Big Kern remains an online-based crowd funding effort, it is important to continue to give donors a choice about how to donate.



We will continue to explore the option of receiving donations by check or cash, as well as credit card, in such a way that “offline” (check or cash donations) can be recorded in real time.

We have to be cognizant of the fact that there are many people in the community who shy away from making online donations because of concerns regarding online identity theft. We don’t want to lose out on their generous contributions to nonprofits through Give Big Kern, and want to make their giving as easy and carefree as it can be for them.



Free Marketing Materials Support

Thanks to a partnership with local printing and design firm Deprigo Media, Kern Community Foundation made marketing materials available free of charge to participants:

- 8-week communication plan workbook
- Give Big Kern buttons
- Laminated posters where customized messages could be written using erasable markers
- Panel cards (customizable with individual agency logo for a reasonable fee)
- Lawn signs
- Downloadable logos and images to be used online



Onwards to 2018!

While it is part of a national movement, in just two years Give Big Kern has evolved into a much-anticipated Local Giving Day in our community, which is well known for its generosity. The response from donors and nonprofits has been one of engagement and excitement in both 2016 and 2017 Giving Day events and, as previously mentioned, both groups have expressed a strong desire to participate in Give Big Kern 2018.

Before the end of the Third Quarter of 2017, the Kern Community Foundation will put together a task force from among the nonprofits that have participated in Give Big Kern in the past, to begin planning strategically for 2018 and to share proven best practices with a view toward strengthening one another—as well as nonprofits yet to come on board.

Here are a few inspiring quotes from 2017 participants that motivate us to work toward making 2018 an even *bigger* Give Big Kern:

“As a relatively small non-profit with a limited budget, Give Big Kern was a fantastic fundraising experience for the Gay & Lesbian Center of Bakersfield. Kern Community Foundation did the heavy lifting by providing extensive training - functional, strategic and marketing - in addition to the very professional donation portal and promotional materials. It provided an opportunity for us to engage existing and new donors in a way we could not have accomplished on our own, and we doubled the number of our Give Big Kern donors in our second year of participation.”

“Modeling our marketing on ideas and techniques presented in Kern Community Foundation's training workshops and materials, we created an entertaining week-long social media countdown campaign featuring volunteers and staff as we approached the giving day. It generated interest and excitement, and the momentum carried the Center through a highly successful giving day.”



- Cindy Smith, Board Member, Gay & Lesbian Center of Bakersfield



“From the training that the KCF provided, we decided that this year we would focus on acquiring Champions to help us reach new donors. One strategy we used was to connect with those supporters who are naturally outgoing, and who we thought would have fun with this kind of event, and excite them over the potential good they could accomplish if they got involved in Give Big Kern. We had them set the fundraising bar high for themselves and motivated them with

e-blasts and text messages such as:

‘Champions 🙌! Today is Give Big Kern and you, as a team, are essential to its success! Your network of friends and business partners will help us reach the 10k goal! Call, text, Facebook, email...your peeps will want to support you:) Check us out on the leader board!’”

- Tony Miranda, Executive Director, Habitat for Humanity Golden Empire

“Give Big Kern is a wonderful way to raise funds for Ridgecrest Chamber Music Society (RCMS), which traditionally has not had a separate annual fundraiser, as we are a small organization without the budget for such an event. Our entire board of directors and one non-board member donated this year, but we would like to have more engagement from other community members next year. Perhaps promoting offline giving options (by cash or check) might be a good way to involve more people who do not feel comfortable donating online using a credit card. While we are challenged by being 120 miles away from Bakersfield, and not having many RCMS members or supporters who are active on social media, we hope to participate and hopefully raise even more funds in 2018.”



- Fran Rogers, President, Ridgecrest Chamber Music Society

Stay in Touch with Us until Give Big Kern 2018!

For information about Give Big Kern 2018, including:

- How to register as a participating nonprofit;
- How to become a sponsor;
- How to help out as a volunteer; or
- How to donate to a nonprofit of your choice; please contact us at:

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 E-mail: info@kernfoundation.org
 Web: www.kernfoundation.org
www.GiveBigKern.org

Find us on Facebook and Twitter:

[@kernfoundation](https://www.facebook.com/kernfoundation)
[@GIVEBIGKERN](https://twitter.com/GIVEBIGKERN)



¹ Bakersfield Art Association was a runner up to CSUB Edible Garden (5,386 hours) and Marley’s Mutts Dog Rescue (3,659 hours). Nonprofits were only eligible to receive 1 prize each.

² The Board Giving Challenge was a voluntary, opt-in opportunity. Each of these nonprofits became eligible for a \$1,000 drawing due to 100% of their Board members making a monetary contribution during Give Big Kern. To make the process fair due to varying Board sizes, we allotted one “ticket” for each Board member for the random drawing of the \$1,000 prize.



Our 2017 Give Big Kern Sponsors are:

Platinum Sponsor

Patricia C. Brown Foundation

Silver Sponsors

Calpine Pastoria Energy Facility • The Padre Hotel • PG&E
Deprigo Media & The UPS Store

Bronze Sponsors

Kern Federal Credit Union • Greater Bakersfield Chamber of Commerce
Valley Republic Bank • Tejon Indian Tribe • DeWalt Corporation
Duane and Corey Keathley Charitable Fund
Estate Planning Council of Bakersfield, Inc.

Media Partner

KGET TV-17

Outreach Partners

Bakersfield Eye Care • Brown Armstrong • Caldwell Banker • DeWalt Corporation • Dewar's Candy Shop
Encore Boutique • Executives Assoc. of Kern County • Fresno Pacific University – Bakersfield Campus
Greater Bakersfield Chamber of Commerce • Hubbell & Associates • IKEA Lebec Distribution Center
Intero Real Estate • Junior League of Bakersfield • Kern County Superintendent of Schools
Kern Federal Credit Union • Kern Radiology • Klein DeNatale Goldner • La Cabaña • Les Schwab Tires
Locale Farm to Table Eatery • Mission Bank • Starbucks • TERRIO Physical Therapy & Fitness
The Padre Hotel

