

BARRON'S

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BARRON'S COVER

The 25 Best Givers

By SUZANNE MCGEE

FORMIDABLE AS IT MAY BE, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has taken time changing the world.

Last year, in fact, it ranked only No. 7 on Barron's list of high-impact givers, even though its \$34 billion in assets towered above those of all other foundations. While the Gates foundation had some mighty big irons in the fire, including efforts to develop an AIDS vaccine, the payoffs were years away. The six philanthropists ahead of the Gateses were getting large and immediate bangs for their bucks. To us, that's impact.

Bill and Melinda Gates are now having impact. By teaming up with their pal Warren Buffett and challenging the rest of the superrich to give like there's no tomorrow, the Gateses are sure to change the face of philanthropy. Already, 40 billionaires have taken the Gates-Buffett pledge, committing to give away at least 50% of their net worths during their lifetimes or at death. As more and more billionaires join the trend, hundreds of millions of dollars that would have been handed down to descendants for years to come will instead go, quite quickly, to life-saving and life-changing causes around the world.

That's why the Gateses are No. 1 on our 2010 list, which, like last year's, we developed with Global Philanthropy Group, a top consulting firm. This rocketing from No. 7 isn't the only news. Ten new members have joined the roster of 25, including a bicycle magnate who is giving away tens of thousands of bikes across Africa and a movie star who has launched a social network that amounts to the Facebook of philanthropy. The repeaters on the list, for their part, have done plenty of good work over the past year. And, for the first time, China is represented on the list, as the American tradition of philanthropy continues to spread around the world. Profiles of all 25 start on this page.

Measuring impact in philanthropy is not easy. It clearly involves some subjectivity. Barron's and Global Philanthropy Group give especially high points to giving that has strong ripple effects or is magnified through alliances with others. No philanthropist is an island. We also give greater weight to urgent causes, especially life-saving ones. Other observers will have other views of impact, but no matter how you define it, impact is what good philanthropy is all about. Who doesn't want their dollars to go far?

The Gates-Buffett pledge is sure to have a massive ripple effect, according to an analysis by Global Philanthropy. The 40 people who have signed the pledge have a combined net worth of \$254 billion. Based on estimates of what these people already were planning to give away, the group will donate at least \$188 billion, and possibly \$239 billion, to meet the pledge's requirements.

Some have pegged the ultimate potential of the pledge at \$600 billion, but that's speculative beyond reason. The fact is, even \$188 billion is a lot. It's more than five times the size of the entire Gates foundation, and nearly two-thirds of what Americans in total donated to charity in 2009.

Of course, giving away gazillions isn't the only way to have an impact in philanthropy. Consider Gareth Evans. Before he ran his seventh New York Marathon last month, he decided to try something new: linking up with sponsors through Crowdrise, actor Ed Norton's social network for giving. By the time Evans crossed the finish line, he had raised \$6,000 for his favorite cause, a brain-cancer research group. It was a breeze, says Evans, a wealth manager at Dominick & Dominick in New York. "When you have a full-time job, the last thing you want to spend extra time doing is sending out individual e-mails to every sponsor, and then following up with them one by one later."

Stories like that are unfolding with increased frequency on Crowdrise, and we have a hunch the pace will only pick up. How can it fail to when Crowdrise is offering this advice: "Make sure your Crowdrise experience is at least as much fun as French kissing someone for the first time."

Did someone say mistletoe? May the season for giving begin.

1. Bill and Melinda Gates

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

To have the maximum impact in large-scale giving, you need to connect with other philanthropists—to coordinate strategies and inspire one another. Bill and Melinda Gates, joined by Warren Buffett, made the ultimate connection this year, challenging the wealthiest Americans to give at least half of their money to charity before or when they die. So far, 40 have signed the pledge, changing the face of philanthropy for decades to come.

Latest Win: Squeezed Big Pharma to slash prices on 2.4 billion doses of polio vaccine.

2. Pierre and Pam Omidyar

The Omidyar Network

The Omidyars provide crucial funds for both for-profit and nonprofit groups that spark "economic, social and political change." Building on the record that put them at No. 1 on our 2009 list, the couple this year invested in solar-powered light sources for people who live in areas without electricity and also promoted transparency in government. Janaagraha, which uses technology to improve government transparency in India, is using Network funds to expand beyond Bangalore.

SWINGIN': The Network backs KaBOOM!, which promotes innovative community playgrounds across America.

3. Thomas Siebel

The Meth Project

The Meth Project is spreading—and teenage use of methamphetamine is falling as a result. That's good news for tech billionaire Siebel, who wants to discourage teens from even touching the intensely addictive homemade drug. His massive campaign of provocative antimeth ads, first rolled out in Montana, moved into Georgia this year and was stepped up in Colorado and Hawaii. Acclaimed filmmaker Darren Aronofsky directed the latest TV ads in Wyoming. In Montana, teenage meth use has fallen below the national average for the first time since 1991.



INSIDE DOPE: "We spend more on prisons than on homeland security," Siebel laments, largely because of losing the war on drugs.

4. Jeff Skoll

Skoll Foundation

Sometimes, telling a good story can help change the world. Skoll, eBay's second employee and then its president, tells his stories through movies. His Participant Media produced this year's *Waiting for Superman*, a documentary about the plight of America's public schools. It got President Obama's attention: He invited five kids from the film to a screening in the White House. The flagship program of Skoll's foundation gives out various grants to promising "social entrepreneurs." One winner this year, typifying Skoll's preference for attacking root problems rather than symptoms, shows farmers in Africa how to triple their harvests and thus alleviate hunger.

JUST THE TICKET: Every time a moviegoer pledged online to see *Waiting for Superman*, corporate partners like Jones New York, OfficeMax and Donors Choose, an educational nonprofit, made educational donations.

5. Chris and Jamie Cooper-Hohn

The Children's Investment Fund FOUNDATION

Their model remains the same—funneling a hefty chunk of the profits and fees from the London-based activist hedge fund that Chris runs—but Jamie has been tweaking the implementation. The \$2.4 billion foundation now focuses on a number of priority impact areas where spending can save the largest possible number of children's lives, mainly in Africa and India. These range from simple deworming to efforts to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV and AIDS. The gets a nice multiplier effect by helping mothers, who in turn can provide better care for their children. Although the hedge fund took some big hits in 2008 and 2009, the foundation says it committed this year to give away \$82 million, up from \$67 million in 2009.

Networking: Partners range from The Elton John AIDS Foundation to the United Nations Children's Fund.

6. Paul Tudor Jones II

Robin Hood Foundation

Hedge-fund manager Tudor Jones continues to coax his fellow market bandits to turn out their pockets. This year's mega-gala raised \$88 million for antipoverty programs in New York, up from \$72.7 million in 2009. Look to the list of the foundation's board members for clues to who is "in" and "out" on Wall Street. Gone is Richard Fuld, the former Lehman Brothers CEO, replaced by the likes of Jes Staley, newly-named CEO of JPMorgan's investment bank. Board members underwrite all the foundation's expenses, meaning all donations go straight to work easing homelessness and hunger and supporting charter schools.

Hot Fund: Tudor Jones has teamed with buyout maven Ray Chambers on a commodities fund to benefit poor children.

7. Donna & Philip Berber

A Glimmer of Hope

The Berbers are pushing deeper and deeper in Ethiopia, figuring they can have the greatest impact in philanthropy by focusing on one country. They try to "cluster" their projects to serve adjacent communities. On any given day, half of all Ethiopians are battling the effects of some kind of waterborne disease, so improving water quality is the first line of attack. Then it's on to microfinance loans to boost crop production and help women start businesses. The repayment rate: 98%. If only U.S. banks had it so good.

R U Gvng? A new online platform will let the foundation's donors blog about their philanthropy and get others excited about the mission.

8. Bill Clinton

William J. Clinton Foundation

The former president is the picture of power-giving. His Clinton Global Initiative, started in 2005, has helped some 300 million people in more than 170 countries. This year, the foundation provided leadership in the wake of the big earthquake in Haiti, raising \$16 million in relief and rebuilding funds from some 100,000 individuals.

Tough Targets: He takes on everything from maternal health to access to technology.

9. John Wood

Room to Read

This has been the “Year of 10s” for Room to Read, the nonprofit that former Microsoft man John Wood set up to build libraries and distribute books for children in countries like Bangladesh, Laos and Zambia. Celebrating the group’s 10th anniversary, the group has counted 10,000 girls in its scholarship program (part of a new gender equity program) and opened its 10,000th library. It distributes about three books every minute of the day, and, to make sure those are put to good use, Wood has been creating literacy pilot programs and librarian training programs.

NATIVE TONGUES: “We have helped devise ways for teachers to teach their students how to read Khmer letters, Hindi phonics and the Tamil alphabet,” says Wood.

10. Arpad Busson

ARK: Absolute Return for Kids

Revenue from Busson’s annual blowout gala dinners for his foundation ARK, or Absolute Return for Kids, may be falling, from a record of about \$50 million three years ago to \$22.4 million in 2010, but Busson is squeezing the most out of those dollars. Lucy Heller, in charge of ARK’s eight inner-city schools in England, says students’ scores have improved by an average of 13 percentage points. Some 64,000 children are reached by ARK’s HIV/AIDS treatment efforts in South Africa and Mozambique. But don’t ask Busson for funding if you can’t demonstrate the merits of your approach and show a pattern of success: This philanthropist is famed for his hard head for business.

First Things First: Busson wants to save lives and worry later about improving quality of life.

11. Jerry Hirsch

Lodestar Foundation

Former real-estate developer Hirsch was distressed to find in philanthropy the same kinds of problems he’d seen in business: big egos and territorial instincts. So he made it his business to encourage nonprofits to work together to magnify their results. There have been plenty of opportunities for that amid the proliferation of foundations in recent years; Hirsch has overseen mergers of everything from homeless groups to wrestling museums. Says he: “Everyone is good-hearted; sometimes you just need an outside party to get them all on the same page.”

RECENT COUP: Helped spark a historic merger of the United Nations Association of the USA (Eleanor Roosevelt was an early champion) with the United Nations Foundation (Ted Turner started it in 1998 with a \$1 billion gift).

12. F.K. Day

World Bicycle Relief

Day was more accustomed to providing bike parts for Tour de France racers than help for devastated populations. But that didn't stop him from stepping in after the Asian tsunami and giving residents of Sri Lanka bikes to connect them to jobs, schools and health facilities. That was only the start: The bicycle mogul is now distributing durable 55-pound bikes across Africa and training mechanics to keep them running.

Wheels of Fortune: At last count, 71,416 of Day's bikes were on the roads and byways of Zambia, Zimbabwe, Kenya and Tanzania, helping 702,080 individuals.

His Biggest Race: "Someone came to me and said, 'Look, there are 230,000 people dying in Africa every two weeks and you could help prevent some of that.' "

13. Edward Norton

Crowdrise

It was just waiting to happen: a vibrant, social network for donors, nonprofits and volunteers to swap stories about projects, look at each others' photos and do some business. Think of it as the Facebook of philanthropy, and it's the work of movie star Norton (*Fight Club*, *The Illusionist*). With Crowdrise, he says, "You can raise your fist and plant a flag in the ground and tell everyone you know what matters to you and what you're doing about it." You don't need a big wallet to help out, either: "Sponsored volunteers" can write up their work and win donations for their causes. The network is intended, above all, to be fun. "Making something fun is the best way to keep someone engaged in it," Norton says.

TINGLY MOMENT: Norton and his collaborators were stunned to learn that online giving was only about 5% of all philanthropic donations. "Wow, the possibilities..."

14. Vinod Khosla

Khosla Ventures/AMAR Foundation

A noted Silicon Valley venture capitalist and co-founder of Sun Microsystems, Khosla made his name backing a host of Internet and telecommunications companies that transformed the way the world connected and did business. Now, at his new fund, he is backing businesses that he hopes will make a difference—as well as a profit. Example: an operation that captures carbon emissions from electricity plants and turns it into cement-like building materials. He's planning to donate all the profit owed to him as general partner of the \$1.3 billion fund. When SKS Microfinance went public in India, Khosla made \$117 million and pledged to invest it in businesses that would help battle poverty.

HOLD THE PHONE: Khosla wants to see a \$4 cellphone charger built from discarded Altoid mint boxes. Aimed at rural Africa, it would recharge when tossed in a stove.

15. Jean and Steve Case

Case Foundation

The Cases have found they often can have the greatest impact by sharing the skills acquired while founding and building tech giant AOL. Says Jean: "I could give a group a check, but if I sit with a team and helped them with their business plan or refine their fundraising or provided them with technology tools or even access to a PR person, well the value of that is greater than any check we could write."

TWEET THAT!: The couple is helping nonprofits tap into social networks. This past April they teamed with Twitter and Malaria No More to fight the disease and have raised \$36,000 so far.

16. John Fisher

The KIPP Foundation

It's great if the Fisher family sells a pair of GAP jeans to every American teen (the late Donald Fisher founded the chain), but they'd also like to make sure that every one of those kids gets a good education. "We can't just sit idly by as our schools fall apart," says John Fisher, Donald's son, who has taken over running the family's philanthropic activities. The fee-free KIPP charter schools—now 99, up from 82 last year and with a target of 110 in 2011—offer an innovative model that was rewarded this year with Education Department funding.

A+: Fisher is devising programs to help KIPP grads navigate the tricky waters of college life; stats show only a minority of at-risk students get a diploma.

17. Mo Ibrahim

Mo Ibrahim Foundation

Sudanese-born Mohammed "Mo" Ibrahim is trying to make life better for Africa's inhabitants by improving the quality of leadership and governance. He helps line up mentors for future leaders, and stands ready to give a hefty prize—\$5 million over 10 years and \$200,000 a year after that—to admirable former heads of state. Though he has assembled a distinguished panel to make selections, it found absolutely no worthy recipients in 2009 and 2010.

Carrots and Sticks: "The Ibrahim Prize is not a bribe" to convince corrupt leaders to leave office or behave better, he says.

18. Sunil Mittal

Bharti Foundation

India's economy is booming and Mittal's Bharti Group, the country's biggest mobile operator, is one of the biggest beneficiaries. Still, millions are stuck in poverty and lack education. Mittal's goal is to build 550 free schools in some of India's poorest areas. So far, 30,000 students have enrolled, and Mittal has a team of 1,600 employees to help him move ahead.

Multiplication: "If you teach a child, then her family and her future is taken care of."

19. Marc and Lynne Benioff

Salesforce.com Foundation

Employees of Marc Benioff's Salesforce.com give 1% of their paid time to volunteer work, while the company makes grants and helps nonprofits manage their IT. "It was costing them huge amounts of money to set up databases, to run them—and we come in and will do that for free," he says. It's a model that other corporations are starting follow. The Benioffs themselves have pledged \$100 million to build a children's hospital in San Francisco.

Hands Off: "I am the philanthropist; I am not the operator of the monastery in Bhutan, the Israeli NGO or the San Francisco hospital."

20. Howard Buffett

Howard G. Buffett Foundation

Buffett, Warren's eldest son, went to the remote western regions of Algeria last month to see how a particular type of tree fared in a hostile desert environment—and learned something entirely different. "It's possible we could start a

camel dairy there, to help the community of refugees from the Western Sahara that most of the world has forgotten,” he says. Buffett isn’t just a dreamer: he’d like to get the \$1.5 to \$2 million project funded by the end of this year. He draws on his background in agriculture and business to help farming venture around the world. He makes sure projects he funds can be replicated, or will help pull local farmers into the broader economy. “That’s the way to have a long-term impact,” he says.

VOTING POWER: After hearing citizens of conflict-wracked Burundi say they didn’t think their votes counted, Buffett funded the country’s first pre-election political debates.

21. Oprah Winfrey

Oprah’s Angel Network

Though she is winding down her funding organization due to the end of her show, Winfrey has shown how to use high-wattage star power. By shining a spotlight on causes she admired, she spurred thousands upon thousands of TV viewers to start giving. There was a low: A girls’ school she funded in Africa was rocked by sex scandals. But the Oprah Effect still has been profound. She’s given awards to 50 organizations, sent school supplies to thousands of students in South Africa and helped African-Americans finance educations at Morehouse College.

Life Lesson: “Think about what you have to give, not in terms of dollars because I believe that your life is about service.”

22. Yu Pengnian

YU Pengnian Foundation

Yu, an 88-year-old real-estate magnate, this year became China’s first \$1 billion philanthropist. He is apt to soon have company, thanks to the proliferation of billionaires in China and the spreading of philanthropy. By one count, the country’s top 50 philanthropists increased their giving by 50% last year. This past April, Yu said he was transferring his last \$500 million to his foundation, bringing it to \$1.2 billion. “I have nothing more to give away,” he told the press. Yu, who comes from humble roots, focuses his giving on education, health and disaster relief.

NEXT GEN: Do his kids object to not getting his money? “They didn’t oppose the idea, at least not in public.”

23. Huang Rulun

Century Golden Resources

Hailed as “China’s Carnegie,” Huang donated an estimated \$315 million in the past year to schools and universities across China. He’s giving \$88 million for a massive expansion of a science museum. Huang grew up in a small fishing village in East China and eventually became a hotel and a mall tycoon.

Rethinking Money: “Wealth is just a symbol and some numbers,” he has said.

24. Jennifer & Peter Buffett

NoVo Foundation

The Buffetts are sticking to the meaning of the name of their foundation: Novo is Latin for “change, transform, alter.” The Buffetts are using their share of paterfamilias Warren’s philanthropic legacy to transform the lives of women and girls in developing nations, as well as improve the educational system at home. They’ve helped women in Bosnia, Congo and Iraq get skills and business training, and they’ve funded antiviolence programs. In all they’ve reached some two million people.

CRIME FIGHTERS: New grants are aimed at undermining the global sex-trafficking business.

25. George Soros

Open Society Foundations

Hedge-fund billionaire Soros was once billed as “the man who broke the Bank of England.” These days he is known for his largesse. He supports nonviolent democratic movements around the world and is also investing heavily in social-justice campaigns. He’s giving \$100 million to Human Rights Watch this year to expand its global efforts.

PENCIL TO PAPER: Soros gave every New York state family on welfare \$200 for school supplies. That came to \$35 million, letting the state win another \$140 million in federal funding.