

The logo for the Miami Herald, featuring the words "Miami Herald" in a white, stylized, gothic-style font on a blue rectangular background.

Give Miami Day shines as patrons raise \$5.2 million for local nonprofits

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In just 24 hours, Miami's future became a little brighter.

Thousands of people showed their generosity by raising \$5.2 million for local nonprofits during this year's Give Miami Day, (<https://givemiamiday.org/>) an online event sponsored by The Miami Foundation.

Beginning midnight Nov. 20 and ending midnight Nov. 21, patrons offered up 19,245 individual gifts of at least \$25 to 520 organizations serving Miami-Dade County. Last year, Give Miami Day raised \$3.2 million and received more than 10,000 individual gifts.

"For us, the success is an affirmation of something we've always believed, which is the generosity of Miamians," said Javier Soto, president and CEO of The Miami Foundation (<http://www.miamifoundation.org/>).

No donations were accepted after the 24-hour period ended.

"That's what defines the moment — the urgency about building a better community and only having 24 hours to do so," Soto said.

Donations between \$25 and \$10,000 qualified for a bonus for the recipient organization, distributed based on how much was raised and how much was collected in the bonus pool. The Miami

Foundation, Knight Foundation and other sponsors have contributed as an "incentive" for giving, Soto said earlier this week (<http://www.miamiherald.com/news/local/community/miami-dade/article3998515.html>).

Of the 520 organizations participating in 2014, the Greater Miami Jewish Federation (<http://jewishmiami.org/>) landed atop the financial leaderboard with \$368,739. The Children's Movement of Florida (<http://childrensmovementflorida.org/>) received the greatest number of individual gifts – 537 – and a total of \$156,925.

"I'm not only grateful for the support, I'm just so proud of Miami," said Jacob Solomon, president and CEO of the Greater Miami Jewish Federation. "What a wonderful day for our community."

Solomon said the organization plans to give the money to a community planning and distribution committee, which will allocate funds to local and international organizations for everything from Jewish community centers to day schools.

Vance Aloupis, statewide director of the Children's Movement of Florida, an organization dedicated to early childhood education and development, was grateful that the organization received the greatest number of individual contributions.

"It's such an energy-packed 24 hours," Aloupis said. "It's hard not to come out of it fully inspired by the work you're doing."

Aloupis said the organization will use the money to continue raising awareness across the state about the importance of investing in children's first five years of life.

"If you don't get those five years right, it's very hard to get children back on track," he said. "Early childhood investment is key to future success in Florida."

Other organizations like Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Big Brothers Big Sisters and Feeding South Florida received tens of thousands of dollars in donations.

Although Give Miami Day is in its third year, this was the first year the organization set a public goal to meet for donations.

"The first two years were trial and error for us," Soto said. "We set a goal not only to challenge ourselves, but the community."

Representatives from some of the organizations that raised money through Give Miami Day, like the Adrienne Arsht Center and PBS, have tweeted their thanks to the community and The Miami

Foundation for their support.

Switchboard of Miami, which runs suicide prevention and other crisis intervention programs, raised more than \$7,000.

“We received 82 donations, \$7,410 in gifts and immeasurable support from our community. We cannot thank you enough,” Switchboard wrote in a press release.

Soto said planning for Give Miami Day 2015 starts Monday. His greatest pride is the organization’s work in helping redefine what the “new Miami” means.

“The new Miami is generous. It’s setting a course for how incredibly diverse communities will be built in the future,” he said. “The new Miami is no longer stuck in old arguments about who built this place, but rather focused on how we’re going to build the greatest Miami possible together.”