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Second-Ever Social Action Survey Finds:

DESPITE SHAKY ECONOMY, AMERICANS STEADFAST ON GIVING BACK

- 97% Say It's Important to Contribute to the Greater Good; Same Level as in '06 Survey
 - **80% Say Their Charitable Donations in '09 Will Be Same or More than Last Year**
 - **Just About Three in Five Perform a "Random Act of Kindness" at Least Weekly**
 - 95% Believe It's Critical for Children to Learn the Importance of Giving Back
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Room for Improvement:

- **Two in Five Have Not Volunteered in 2009**
 - Among Those Currently Volunteering, About Half Spend Two Hours a Week or Less
 - Most of Us Think We Should Donate, Volunteer More
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When It Comes to Helping Others, Individual Actions Seen as Important as Organized Efforts

Obama's Efforts Notwithstanding, Most Believe Politicians Fall Short on Good Works Front:

- 75% Aware of Obama's Call for Volunteerism; 65% See A Political Motivation
 - **83% Believe Average Citizens Care More About the Country than Politicians**
 - 8 in 10 Say Political Discourse Obscures What's Good for the Country
 - Only 16% Think Politicians Set a Good Example When it Comes to Public Service
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Looking Forward:

- More than Half Would Support Mandatory Military or Civil Service for 18 Year Olds
 - 23% Have Learned About A Charity or Volunteer Opportunity Through Social Media
 - 1 in 4 Would Pay 20% More in Taxes If It Meant Eliminating Poverty, Hunger in U.S.
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NEW YORK, N.Y., DEC. 17, 2009 – Apparently a struggling economy and volatile stock market aren't taking a toll on Americans' inclination to give back.

Four out of five Americans who give to charity say they will donate as much if not more this year than in 2008, 59% of us perform a "random act of kindness" at least weekly, and 95% of Americans believe it's critical to teach children the importance of giving back, according to the results of the second Tiller Social Action Survey, released here today by Tiller, LLC, a leading advocacy marketing consultancy.

An overwhelming percentage of those surveyed – 97% – said it’s at least somewhat important for Americans to contribute to the greater good; virtually the same level (98%) who responded that way in the original Tiller survey, conducted in 2006. Eighty percent said their 2009 charitable contributions would be at the same level or higher than last year and 90% said they would donate as much or more in 2010.

“It’s been a challenging year for many Americans. Unemployment hit a 25-year high and the markets hit a 12-year low, but our desire to help others has never wavered,” said Tiller CEO Rob Densen. “Our pockets may not be quite as deep as they were last year, but we’re reaching in nonetheless.”

The 2009 Tiller Social Action Survey was designed to better understand Americans' attitudes and behaviors relative to civic and charitable activities. It was conducted via the Internet between November 27 and December 2, 2009 by the national polling firm of Mathew Greenwald & Associates. All respondents were at least 21 years of age. The margin of error for the 1,000 interviews is +/-3.1%. The original poll was conducted in October, 2006.

Commenting on the survey, Brian Perlman, partner and SVP at Greenwald & Associates, said: “According to the Tiller research, 29% of Americans will donate more this year than last; as recent data show, that’s three times the number that plan on spending more on holiday gifts. Everyone focuses on holiday sales; maybe holiday donations are the more telling numbers.”

Americans Talk the Talk, But Could Walk the Charitable Walk a Little More

When it comes to volunteering and participating in charitable causes, while Americans are well-intentioned, we are frequently constrained by work and family responsibilities.

Ninety percent of respondents (34% strongly and 56% somewhat) believe it’s more important than ever for people to volunteer, and 95% believe it’s critical to teach children the importance of giving back. But 40% of survey respondents have not volunteered in 2009, and of the 60% of respondents who have, roughly half spent two hours a week or less volunteering.

Forty-three percent of respondents expressed some disappointment in themselves for not being more involved. Among them, lack of time and the needs of family were the leading reasons for not doing more, cited by 39% and 29% of respondents respectively. Only 5% said they didn’t know what to do/where to start, down from 16% in the 2006 survey.

Fifty-seven percent of all respondents at least somewhat agreed with the statement, “I feel stretched so thin, I have nothing left to give.” On the other hand, 92% of Americans believe someone who really feels the need to help usually finds a way to do so.

Still, It's the Small Things That Count

Of course, world improvement does not always require formal efforts.

The survey evidenced the strong sense that individual actions matter. Ninety-five percent of Americans (50% strongly and 45% somewhat) believe that doing things on a regular basis to make the world a better place is just as important as participating in a formal, organized effort. Eighty-eight percent of respondents (39% strongly and 49% somewhat) agree with the statement that “a better world will be determined more by the collective actions of individuals than by political or economic events.”

Relative to the environment, when asked who is in the position to have the most positive impact on the environment, 53% of respondents cited individuals followed by communities (22%), business (17%) and government (8%).

“It was true in 2006 and it's true today, Americans believe that social responsibility, like charity, begins at home,” Densen said. “You may not have the time to coach Little League, mentor a young person, or volunteer at a soup kitchen, but everyone has the time to make a donation, offer a seat to the elderly, or deposit a bottle in a recycling bin. The cumulative effects of millions of individual actions can be transformational.”

Asked about random acts of kindness – defined as a spontaneous act of kindness, frequently performed for someone you don't know – just about three in five of us (59%) said they perform one at least weekly.

Americans to Elected Officials: Jump Down off the Soapbox and Pitch In

The survey evidenced a deep-seated distrust of politicians relative to public service.

Only 16% of respondents (5% strongly and 11% somewhat) believe “politicians set a good example for the rest of us when it comes to public service.” When asked whose intentions they are most skeptical about relative to good works, 59% of survey respondents cited politicians, followed by business leaders (9%), celebrities/entertainers (9%) and religious leaders (8%).

“It is hugely ironic that politicians – who are, at least nominally, public servants – should be viewed so skeptically,” Densen said. “Our surveys have consistently pointed to a profound public suspicion about politicians and their motivations. The notion of politicians as public servants is bordering on the oxymoronic. In general, politicians are perceived as having done precious little to support our inclination to good works.”

When asked what politicians should be doing to encourage more people to contribute to the greater good, “use their actions to set a good examples” was hands down the top choice, cited by 75% of those surveyed.

Respondents thought the media could do more as well to encourage good works. Eighty-five percent of respondents (46% strongly and 39% somewhat) agreed that the media does not pay enough attention to peoples’ good deeds.

“We call this ‘The New Tiger Woods Effect’ – the greater the transgressions and the larger the persona, the greater the public feeding frenzy,” Densen said. “So much attention is paid to those who fall from great heights, but not nearly enough to those who would lift up the fallen. There’s nothing wrong with a good, salacious story every now and then, but a little more attention to good works couldn’t hurt.”

Public Skepticism Extends to Obama’s Efforts to Encourage Volunteering

Three out of four Americans said they were aware of President Obama’s call for greater volunteerism, but 65% percent believe it was at least somewhat politically motivated.

Twenty-seven percent of Americans said Obama’s call to action made them more likely to volunteer and 14% said they had increased their volunteer activity since President Obama’s election. Among those who said they were more inclined to volunteer, 67% cited President Obama’s enthusiasm around the issue as a source of inspiration, 41% cited his history of community involvement, 37% cited a desire to answer a national call to action and 36% cited Michelle Obama’s active involvement in issues like kids and healthy eating.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the reaction to Obama’s call to action had a powerful break along party lines. Among Americans who were aware of Obama’s call for volunteerism, 47% of those who identified themselves as Democrats said Obama’s call to action made them more likely to volunteer but only 3% percent of Republicans and 16% of Independents said so. Similarly, less than half (47%) of Democrats thought Obama’s call was at least somewhat politically motivated while 89% of Republicans and 73% of Independents thought so.

At the same time, Americans strongly believe that political discourse has obscured the common good and that politicians should be doing a much better job – individually and together – of encouraging and facilitating good works.

Seventy-nine percent of Americans – compared to 82% in the 2006 survey – believe the tone of the political discussion makes it hard to know what’s best for the country and 78% agreed that “the political climate would improve if Americans spent more time helping others.”

“In terms of advancing the nation’s interests, the path hasn’t grown any clearer over the last three years,” said Tiller principal James Marren. “That reflects, in large part, the acrimony and extreme partisanship of today’s political discourse. The Republicans were in charge in 2006 and the Democrats are today. We’ve changed administrations, but the tone and tenor of the political debate remains the same – rancorous. As our survey shows, today’s fiercely partisan political discussion is undercutting our sense of common purpose and shared humanity.”

Sacrifice: An Important American Value

Politicians take note: the survey also revealed an appetite for greater sacrifice.

When asked about a law that would require U.S. citizens to either enlist in the armed forces or spend a year participating in community service upon turning 18 or graduating high school, 53% (22% strongly and 31% somewhat) said they would favor such a proposal.

Asked whether they would pay 20% more every year in taxes if it meant that poverty and hunger could be eliminated in the U.S., 40% of respondents said no, but 35% said they were not sure, and 25% said yes.

The willingness to at least consider these sorts of ambitious proposals is consistent with the fact that 69% of respondents at least somewhat agreed with the statement that “Americans today should be asked to make greater sacrifices for the good of the country.”

Finally, the survey shows signs that social media will play an increasingly important role in spreading the word on charitable and volunteer opportunities. Almost a quarter of Americans (23%) said they have learned about a cause, volunteer opportunity, or charity event through a social media tool such as Facebook or Twitter. Social media are particularly critical for younger Americans. Forty-seven percent of respondents ages 21 to 34 had used social media to learn more about a cause or charity versus only 6% of those 65+.

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Tiller, LLC is one of the nation’s leading consultancies in the creation and implementation of advocacy marketing programs for major U.S. corporations. For more information on the *2009 Tiller Social Action Survey*, a checklist of 12 random acts of kindness, and contact information for volunteer opportunities, please go to the Tiller website: www.tillerllc.com. Have some fresh, creative ideas for random acts of kindness? Please send them to actsofkindness@tillerllc.com. We will post our favorites on our website.

Mathew Greenwald & Associates is a premier full service market research firm headquartered in Washington, D.C.