



## SERVING PEOPLE

*People depend on people. Throughout history, across cultures, around the world, people have reached out to help improve the lives of others. From providing essential sustenance and protection... to offering community support and understanding... to advocating for human rights and freedom... people around the world contribute to the welfare of others. In so doing, they often experience unexpected enrichment of their own.*

Societies are defined by how people care for one another. While basic human needs vary little, how people meet their own needs—and those of the young, the old, and the weak—identifies their values, their culture, their sense of community. Economist Manfred Max-Neef defines nine basic human needs: subsistence, protection, affection, understanding, participation, leisure and creativity, identity, and freedom.

Communities come together to meet those needs and provide essential services. They establish neighborhoods, organizations, and associations. They build schools, temples, and hospitals. They provide food, clothing, and shelter. Sadly, human service needs almost always exceed resources.

From helping people in crisis... to building homes... to tackling the root causes of poverty... much needs to be done. Every contribution makes a difference.

“As long as there is hunger, disease and lack of opportunities for education, shelter and employment, as long as there is oppression in the world, there can be neither lasting peace nor significant development.”

Javier Pérez de Cuéllar  
Secretary General  
of the United Nations  
1988

**Michigan**  
community foundations<sup>™</sup>

For **good.** For **ever.**<sup>®</sup>

## FAST FACTS ON HUMAN SERVICES

**Subsistence (food, clothing, shelter, work)** In 2003, children under the age of 18 accounted for 39 percent of the homeless population; 42 percent of these children were under the age of five.<sup>1</sup> A recent study of 27 U.S. cities found that in 2004, 23 percent of all requests for emergency shelter went unmet due to lack of resources; 32 percent of emergency shelter requests from families were denied.<sup>2</sup> In 2005, the average number of unemployed people in the U.S. at any given time was 7.6 million.<sup>3</sup>

**Protection (safety, security, healthcare)** In 2003, 6.9 million people were in the probation, parole, prison or jail corrections system, three times more than in 1980.<sup>4</sup> In early 2005, 41.7 million persons of all ages (14.4 percent) were without health insurance, 52.4 million (18.0 percent) had been uninsured for at least part of the year, and 29.5 million (10.2 percent) had been uninsured for more than a year.<sup>5</sup>

**Affection (family, friendships, community)** In first marriages, 45 percent to 50 percent end in divorce; in second marriages, 60 percent to 67 percent end in divorce; in third marriages, 70 percent to 73 percent end in divorce.<sup>6</sup> In 1970 there were 3.4 million single mothers in the United States; now there are nearly 10 million. From the 1930s to 1990s, first children born to or conceived by an unmarried woman rose from 18 to 53 percent.<sup>7</sup>

**Understanding (education, libraries, forums)** Results of the 2002 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) placed 25 percent of eighth-graders and 26 percent of 12th-graders at a “below basic” reading level. Parents’ ability to help with their children’s education is severely reduced by illiteracy. In 1990, more than 20 percent of adults in the U.S. were at the lowest level of literacy.<sup>8</sup>

**Participation (neighborhoods, churches, clubs)** Half (50.2 percent) of all Americans make up 140 million “religious adherents” claimed by 149 religious bodies in the U.S.<sup>9</sup> The five largest categories are: Protestant, with 66 million adherents in 222,000 congregations; Catholic, with 62 million adherents in nearly 22,000 congregations; Jewish, with 6 million adherents in 3,727 congregations; Mormon, with 4 million adherents in 12,000 congregations; Muslim, with 1.6 million adherents in over 1,000 congregations.<sup>10</sup>

**Leisure and creativity (arts, recreation, nature, studios, festivals, celebrations)** Nearly one-third of adults attend one or more jazz, classical music, opera, musical, play or ballet performances each year.<sup>11</sup> About one quarter of adults said they visited an art museum or art gallery. Combined, 39 percent of adults, or 81 million people, attended these types of events.<sup>12</sup> From 1990 to 2001, the number of “active” outdoors enthusiasts (those who participated at least 15 days per year in at least one rigorous physical activity) declined from 15.8 million to 15.3 million.<sup>13</sup>

**Identity (language, culture, faith)** According to interim population projections of the U.S. Census Bureau, the complexion of the United States will change from a fair-skinned majority of 70 percent in 2000 to a 50/50 distribution of white and non-white people by 2050. Hispanic and Asian populations may double, while black populations may increase by 71 percent.

**Freedom (self-sufficiency, equal rights, opportunity)** The number of people in poverty (37 million) increased the fourth consecutive year for 2004, with the poverty rate rising by 1.1 million, from 12.5 to 12.7 percent.<sup>14</sup>

*At the heart of all giving is the desire to touch a life. Whether it's feeding a hungry child, sheltering a homeless man, leading a family out of poverty or helping a teen in crisis—touching the life of another human being—and making a difference—fulfills a universal human need to connect, to help and to serve.*

<sup>1</sup>National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty, 2004. <sup>2</sup>NCH Fact Sheet #2, National Coalition for the Homeless, June 2005.

<sup>3</sup>U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics, October 2005. <sup>4</sup>Bureau of Justice Statistics Strategic Plan FY 2005-2008.

<sup>5</sup>National Center for Health Statistics. Health Insurance Coverage: Estimates from the National Health Interview Survey, January-March 2005.

<sup>6</sup>Jennifer Baker, Forest Institute of Professional Psychology. <sup>7</sup>National Vital Statistics Reports From the Centers For Disease Control And Prevention, Volume 48, Number 16. <sup>8</sup>National Center for Education Statistics. National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2002.

<sup>9</sup>Glenmary Research Center. Religious Congregations Membership Study 2000. <sup>10</sup>ibid. <sup>11</sup>National Endowment of the Arts, 2002 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts. <sup>12</sup>ibid. <sup>13</sup>American Sports Data, Inc., “The Great Outdoors Revolution: New Lifestyle or State of Mind?” 2002.

<sup>14</sup>[www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/income04/prs05asc.html](http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/income04/prs05asc.html).