Tis the Season

The Chronicle of Philanthropy publishes “How America Gives” an annual report on charitable giving in the United States. The Chronicle relies on data from the Internal Revenue Service to provide detailed statistics on charitable giving by individuals and households that file federal income tax returns.

The most recent report states that Americans donated $180 billion to charity in 2012. The median donation per federal tax return was $3,176 or about 3 percent of Adjusted Gross Income (AGI). What was the median charitable contribution per federal tax return in Wisconsin in 2012?

a) $3,578  
b) $3,199  
c) $2,768  
d) $2,301

Answer: d) The median charitable contribution for Wisconsin taxpayers in 2012 was $2,301. Wisconsinites donated a total $2.6 billion or 2.4 percent of their AGI to charity. Dane County residents gave $308 million and a median of $2,375 per tax return in 2012. If Dane County residents had donated at the national average, an additional $87 million would have been donated to charities.

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1 The median is the midpoint. Half of the tax returns reported more in donations than the median and half reported less.