

# 2024 US Chess Development Committee Report

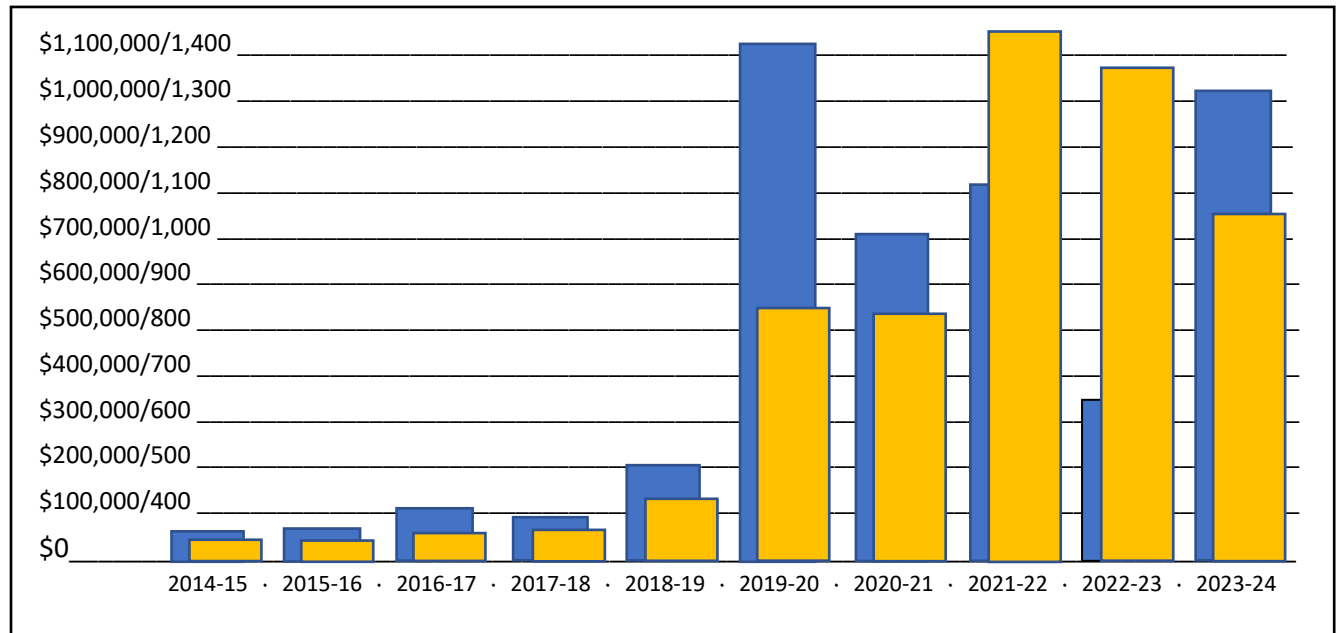
## FY2023-2024 Fundraising

From June 1, 2023, to May 31, 2024, **1,054 gifts** were made to US Chess totaling **\$1,019,916.28**.

The following shows the total annual gifts and number of gifts over the past ten years:

<u>Period of Fundraising</u>	<u>Number of Gifts</u>	<u>Funds Raised in that Period</u>
Fiscal Year 2023-2024	1,054	\$1,019,916
Fiscal Year 2022-2023	1,375	346,277
Fiscal Year 2021-2022	1,446	819,322
Fiscal Year 2020-2021	836	712,002
Fiscal Year 2019-2020	841	1,119,494
Fiscal Year 2018-2019	423	202,644
Fiscal Year 2017-2018	278	87,757
Fiscal Year 2016-2017	261	114,534
Fiscal Year 2015-2016	222	77,440
Fiscal Year 2014-2015	223	71,196

**Year-to-Year Fundraising Graph (FY2014/15 – FY2023/24)** ■  
**and Number of Gifts Received** ■



## Continuing to Grow a Broad Base of Support

On average, the number of donors making gifts to US Chess has increased steadily. Just a few years ago the number of gifts we received annually was 200-400. Then it climbed to over 800. For the past three years we have received over 1,000 gifts per year. Many donors making modest contributions regularly, rather than relying on a few donors making large gifts

infrequently, makes for a stable fundraising program. Even on a down year – like we had last year – although we didn’t raise as much money as we usually do, the number of gifts was high. That suggests that even though people felt the effects of an inflationary economy and couldn’t give as much as they usually do, *they still gave what they could*. This indicates a very loyal and committed donor base.

There are a few reasons why our base of support is growing: 1) *The Annual Appeal Letter*. We continue to build on our Annual Appeal letter by refining the mailing list; 2) *First-Time Donors*. We are uncovering first-time donors through various fundraising campaigns and platforms, like our *Annual Appeal Letter*, *Giving Tuesday*, *Donut*, and *GoFundMe* campaigns; and 3) *Stewardship*. Every gift we receive is followed up with a personal Thank You letter from either Ranae, Geoff, or Debra. This amounts to hundreds and hundreds of letters that strengthen the relationships we have with donors. If a donor feels appreciated, they are likely to give again.

**Programs and Funds US Chess Donors Supported in FY2023-2024**

<u>Program/Fund</u>	<u>Number of Gifts</u>	<u>Amount Raised</u>
Invitationals	4	512,204.66
USCF Endowment Fund	4	261,575.51
Women & Girls in Chess	36	93,210.00
USCF General Fund	801	59,597.18
At-Risk-Youth/Title I Schools	125	55,063.93
Scholarships	1	15,000.00
Life Benefactor	5	9,000.00
Seniors	38	3,265.00
Military Chess	11	2,154.00
Governance	1	2,000.00
Scholastic Program	10	863.00
Olympiad	9	387.00
Gift Membership	7	210.00
Absolute Prize Fund	1	200.00

**Our Year-End Appeal Letter**

Our base of support is tied very closely to our year-end appeal letter. While we always promote our main programs in the appeal letter and encourage recipients to support programs they are passionate about, we intentionally emphasize those programs that particularly resonate with the greatest number of people. We also include a return card for recipients who would like more information about ways they can give, or about making a planned gift.

Second only to the *US Chess General Fund*, the At-Risk Youth/Title I Schools Grant programs continue to be popular funds for our donors, though it has plateaued in the last two years. 2019-2020 was the first year we made At-Risk Youth a giving option, and 19 donors gave a total

of \$1,531.00 to the fund. In 2020-2021, 89 donors gave a total of \$18,823.00. In 2021-2022, 204 donors gave \$90,003.00. In 2022-2023, 189 gifts totaling \$65,096.33. And this past year, we received 125 gifts totaling \$55,063.93.

### **Planned Giving**

This spring we will continue to promote our Planned Giving program by selectively and strategically mailing information to planned giving prospects age 55 and older within the US Chess database. The best and most obvious prospects to promote Planned Giving (and those most invested) are USCF Life Benefactor Members, and USCF Life Members.

The very nature of Planned Giving requires patience, as it often takes years before a planned giving program bears fruit. Nevertheless, it is an important program to promote, and one that, given time, will eventually yield great rewards. The following is planned giving activity we've had since the start of the new fiscal year:

- In April of 2022 we were notified that a US Chess member from Arizona passed away and designated US Chess as the beneficiary of their survivor benefits. They sent us his last paycheck, which included a payout of 236 hours of unused PTO. The check was for \$4,924.20 and was reported in our 2022-2023 Development Report.

In addition to his last paycheck and unused PTO, we were notified that the decedent had also designated his retirement savings to US Chess in the amount of \$216,264.67. Unfortunately, the State of Arizona took a long time releasing these funds to us. We should have received these funds last fiscal year, which would have improved last year's fundraising numbers considerably, moving us from \$346,277 to \$562,541, which would have been more consistent with the previous four or five years. This member's gift wasn't released to us until October of 2023, adding to an already exceptional fundraising year. We can't always control when the gifts come in, we are just grateful when they do!

- In November of last year, a long-time US Chess member who passed away bequeathed an unrestricted gift to us from his estate in the amount of \$25,768.00. This past March, a member who passed away remembered US Chess in his estate by making an IRA Beneficiary Distribution in the amount of \$15,752.76. When added to the annual gift we received from the Nearing Charitable Trust for \$3,790.08, we received a total in planned gifts this past year in the amount of \$261,575.51, which will go into the US Chess Endowment Fund.

### **The US Chess Legacy Society**

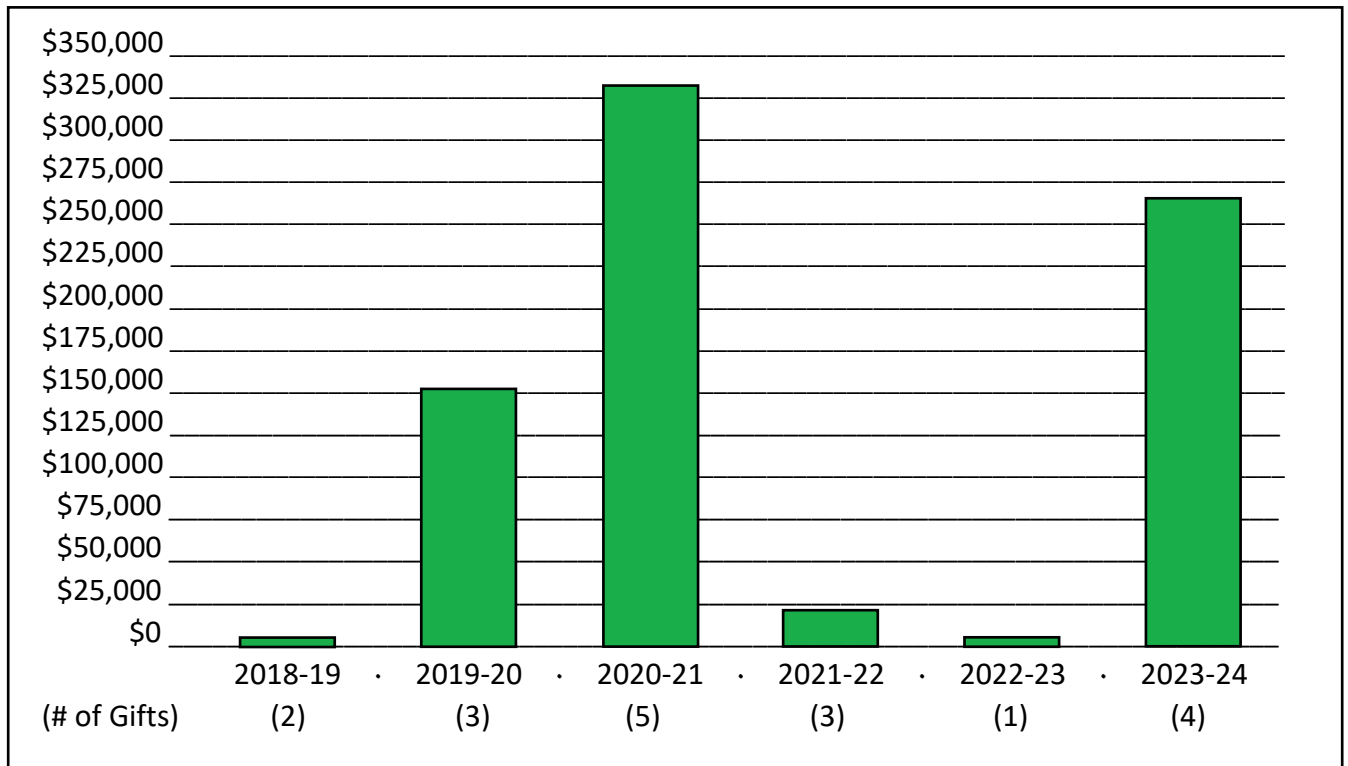
Since its creation in 2018, the US Chess Legacy Society has steadily been adding members. The idea is simple: By making a gift to US Chess through an Estate Plan or Planned Gift, the donor becomes a member of this exclusive club. In FY2023-2024, there were two new members added. The US Chess Legacy Society is comprised of the following members:

Randy Bauer  
 Bernard Goodman  
 David Hutchinson  
 Myron & Rachel Lieberman  
 Phil Trautman

George & Anne Chamberlin  
 Charles Greger  
 Dr. Herbert B. Jacklyn  
 The Nearing Family  
 Chuck Unruh & Debra Colpitt

Herbert A. Dropkin  
 Dane E. Hinrichsen  
 Kim Jones  
 Everett M. Renick

**Year-to-Year Planned Gifts (FY2018/19 – FY2023/24)** ■



**Summary**

FY2023-2024 has been a good year for US Chess and the chess community at large: US Chess membership is on the rise, and our partners and friends have been very generous in their support. We are already looking forward to a strong 2024-25 by continuing to expand our donor base and connecting and engaging with US Chess members and affiliates.

Many thanks to the committee members who volunteer their time: John Rockefeller, Vice Chair (MD); Bill Brock (IL); Kimberly Doo (NY); Sherlock Grigsby (MD); Maureen Grimaud (SC); Joe Lonsdale (TX); Kevin Pryor (FL); Danny Rohde (NY); Mike Schulte (OH); Jay Stallings (CA); Nate Tyrell (DC); Chuck Unruh (OK); *ex officio*: Ranae Bartlett (AL); Geoff Isaak (MI).

Michael Shuman, Chairman  
 US Chess Development Committee