

BACKGROUND

Established in 1944 by hotel entrepreneur Conrad N. Hilton, the foundation remained relatively small until his death in 1979 when he bequeathed virtually his entire estate to the foundation. In accordance with Hilton’s Last Will and Testament, the foundation seeks to alleviate the suffering of the world’s most disadvantaged, with a special emphasis on children and support for the work of the Catholic Sisters.

The foundation identifies critical societal needs, and then proactively initiates major, long-term projects with selected partner organizations for implementation. Offices are located in Los Angeles, California, and Reno, Nevada, U.S.A.

**ESTIMATED
CURRENT
WORTH**

The Conrad N. Hilton Foundation and related charitable entities have total assets in excess of \$3.4 billion. Since inception, the Foundation has awarded in excess of \$800 million in grants. Currently more than 50% supports international charitable projects.

**STRATEGIC
PROGRAMS**

At the foundation’s last five-yearly retreat, in 2008, it was decided to focus on *five strategic initiatives*:

Safe Water Development—The foundation supports safe water programs in rural communities in West Africa, Ethiopia, India and Mexico. The WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene) paradigm has been recognized by the foundation and the international community as the most effective way to improve health, and peripheral programs, such as micro-irrigation schemes, and can provide livelihoods that contribute to community sustainability. In total, the foundation has awarded \$78 million in water projects since 1990.

Homelessness—The foundation focuses on supportive housing as one of the most effective ways to end chronic homelessness, particularly for the mentally ill. In the last few years, it has chosen to focus its efforts on Los Angeles County, the site of the largest homeless population in the United States. Since 1991, the foundation’s total commitment to homelessness has been \$35 million.

Children—Addressing the challenges facing children in the United States and selected countries is the foundation’s third strategic priority. While the foundation’s strategic focus is under review, historically, the foundation has focused on early childhood development issues in the United States, particularly with respect to the handicapped. In this area, the foundation provided a total of \$19 million to Early Head Start and Migrant Head Start programs nationwide.

Substance Abuse—Since 1982, the foundation has awarded \$63 million to the RAND Corporation and the BEST Foundation for a Drug Free Tomorrow to develop and disseminate Project ALERT, a middle-school-based curriculum now in use in all 50 U.S. states.

Catholic Sisters—The Conrad N. Hilton Fund for Sisters was established in 1986 as an independent organization run by Sisters and is the largest recipient of Hilton Foundation grants. It has awarded more than 7,000 grants and distributed more than \$70 million to Sisters’ projects worldwide. In addition, the Hilton Foundation supports a Sisters Leadership Development Initiative, currently focused on Africa and India, to help the growing number of Sisters in the developing world more effectively administer projects that address human suffering.

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**MAJOR
PROGRAM
AREAS**

In addition to the five strategic initiatives, the foundation will continue to provide support to a number of *major program areas*:

Blindness Prevention—The foundation provides critical funding toward the global effort to control and prevent trachoma, the leading cause of preventable blindness in the world, by supporting the widely-endorsed SAFE strategy – Surgery for people at risk for blindness; Antibiotic treatment; Facial cleanliness; and Environmental improvements. Over the past decade, a total of \$40 million has been committed to trachoma. Historically, the foundation has supported the Perkins School for the Blind to promote blindness education throughout the world.

Hotel & Restaurant Management Education—Since 1969, the foundation has awarded \$74 million for hospitality management education. Of that amount, \$52 million has been provided to the Conrad N. Hilton College of Hotel and Restaurant Management at the University of Houston.

Multiple Sclerosis—The foundation has awarded \$14 million over five decades to help researchers and practitioners find the cause of multiple sclerosis. It has also focused on developing effective treatments and medications and improving the livelihoods of people who suffer from MS and its debilitating effects.

Disaster Relief & Recovery—In addition to the \$7 million distributed to humanitarian relief agencies following major international and domestic disasters since 1991, the foundation has awarded \$10 million to assist with the relief and recovery needs of New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Foundation policy emphasizes long-term recovery needs, which are often under-funded, yet critical to the revitalization of communities impacted by disaster.

Catholic Schools—Recognizing the value Conrad Hilton himself placed on Catholic education, the foundation will be assessing the needs and common challenges facing Catholic educators.

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