Northwestern, University of Chicago see rise in donations

By Lorene Yue
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University of Chicago and Northwestern University were the only large Chicago-area schools that saw donations increase in 2012 compared with the previous year.

The fortunes of the two schools mimic those of U.S. universities, according to an annual study compiled by the Council for Aid to Education, a New York-based nonprofit. The Voluntary Support of Education survey estimates that U.S. universities received $31 billion in donations last year, a 2.3 percent increase from the $30.3 billion collected in 2011. The all-time high was $31.6 billion, made in 2008.

Stanford University topped the list with more than $1 billion in charitable contributions. The California-based private school has raised more funds than any other school in each of the past eight years.

The 2012 survey tracked donations made during each participating institution's fiscal year, which typically begins on July 1.

University of Chicago raised $255.8 million in donations, the most of any Illinois university, and more than the $246.7 million it received the previous year, according to the survey.

Northwestern University received $233.7 million in charitable contributions, up from $228.6 million the previous year.

Nearly half of the schools in the Council for Aid to Education study, including most large institutions in the Chicago area, raised less money in 2012 than the previous year.

Loyola University Chicago saw $26.2 million in 2012 compared with $28.4 million the previous year, while DePaul University received $18.6 million in 2012 compared with $20.6 million. Illinois Institute of Technology saw donations drop to $17.5 million from $20 million the previous year.

University of Illinois at Chicago saw the largest decline, to $59 million from $80.1 million.

The survey also found that while alumni giving fell 1.3 percent, contributions from foundations rose 5.5 percent and corporations gave 4.6 percent more than the previous year.