



"Giving" Advice



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Princeton Case Puts Spotlight on Charitable Gifts With 'Strings Attached'

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In the summer of 1961—in the wake of newly inaugurated President John F. Kennedy's exhortation to "ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country"—an anonymous group of donors gave Princeton University an almost inconceivably generous gift of \$35 million.

The endowment, the largest of its kind at the time, was to be used by the school's Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs to train young men and women for government service in international relations.

The donors and the university agreed to a governing structure that would manage the fund—a nonprofit corporation with a seven-member board of trustees, with the university holding four of the seats.

But 45 years later, the endowment, now worth \$750 million, is at the center of a heated legal battle that could significantly influence the future of restricted charitable giving in the U.S.

"This could be a very important case for universities," said Leslie Lenkowsky, a professor of public affairs and philanthropic studies at Indiana University. "We take donor intentions very seriously in the U.S."

According to the Council for Aid to Education (CAE), a nonprofit organization that monitors private giving in education, contributions to colleges and universities are escalating sharply. CAE said that overall giving to colleges and universities in 2005 totaled \$25.6 billion, an



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