



SIENA COLLEGE RESEARCH INSTITUTE
SIENA COLLEGE, LOUDONVILLE, NY
www.siena.edu/scri

For Immediate Release:

Thursday, December 13, 2018

Contact:

Dr. Don Levy: 518-783-2901, dlevy@siena.edu

PDF version; crosstabs; website:

www.siena.edu/scri/research

Annual Statewide Poll of Holiday Spending Plans

One in Five NY'ers Plan to Spend \$1,000 or More on Gifts this Season

40% Will do at Least Half of Shopping Online

68% Will Donate to Help Needy; 31% Plan to Volunteer

By 44-32% Say Fruitcake Awful, Would Never Eat It, Rather than a Delicious Treat

Loudonville, NY – Nineteen percent of New Yorkers plan to spend \$1000 or more on gifts during this holiday season according to a new statewide survey of consumers released today by the Siena College Research Institute (SCRI). Just over half of New Yorkers plan to hold their gift spending under \$500, while 27 percent have budgeted between \$500 and \$1000 this holiday season. While half of New Yorkers say they will keep their spending unchanged this year, more than twice as many hope to cut spending as compared with those that say they will increase their spending this year.

Forty percent, up from 35 percent a year ago, say that they will do at least half of their holiday shopping online in 2018. Ten years ago only 7 percent of New Yorkers planned to do half or more of their shopping online. Sixty-eight percent, down from 76 percent a year ago, will be making donations of money, food or gifts to charitable organizations that focus on the needy during the holiday season and 31 percent, down from 36 percent, plan to volunteer for organizations that help people during the holidays.

Only a third of all New Yorkers, but nearly half of those 65 and older, say that fruitcake is a delicious treat that they love while 44 percent of all New Yorkers, and over half of those 35 to 64 years of age, say that fruitcake is awful and they would never eat it.

“Two-thirds are excited about the holiday and one in ten say that they never stop holiday shopping and another 12 percent started right after Halloween. Still half of New Yorkers say that their finances are about the same as a year ago and nearly a quarter tell us that their financial condition has worsened since last holiday season. It’s not surprising that many hope to keep holiday spending about the same. But with 15 percent planning to up the budget and 19 percent earmarking at least \$1000, make room for plenty of presents under the tree,” according to SCRI Director, Don Levy.

‘Merry Christmas’ (49 percent) rather than ‘Happy Holidays’ (41 percent) remains the most popular greeting during this time of the year. Thirty-one percent of all New Yorkers say that they believe in Santa with St. Nicholas support highest among Catholics at 44 percent.

Seventy-two percent of all New Yorkers will put up a Christmas Tree for the holidays, but of those, 69 percent, up from 58 percent a year ago, plan to have an artificial rather than real tree. Atop that tree, 47 percent prefer a ‘Star’ while 32 percent place an ‘Angel’.

“Looking ahead to New Year’s Eve, nearly three quarters say that they stay up until midnight while only 17 percent admit that they don’t keep their eyes open to see the ball drop. Are we getting old? Only a quarter say that they are heading out to party, 15 percent say ‘maybe’ while 62 percent of all New Yorkers and nearly half of those 18 to 34 plan to ‘stay in’ and celebrate,” Levy said.

The SCRI survey of Holiday Spending Plans was conducted December 2-6, 2018 by random telephone calls to 500 New York adults via landline and cell phones and 406 responses drawn from a proprietary panel of New Yorkers. Telephone sampling was initiated by asking for the youngest male in the household. Telephone sampling was conducted via a stratified dual frame probability sample of landline and cell phone telephone numbers (both from ASDE Survey Sampler) from within New York State weighted to reflect known population patterns. Data from the telephone and web samples were blended and statistically adjusted by age, race/ethnicity and gender to ensure representativeness. SCRI reports this data at a 95% confidence level with a margin of error of ± 3.4 points including the design effects resulting from weighting. The Siena College Research Institute, directed by Donald Levy, Ph.D., conducts political, economic, social and cultural research primarily in NYS. SCRI, an independent, non-partisan research institute, subscribes to the American Association of Public Opinion Research Code of Professional Ethics and Practices. For more information, call Dr. Don Levy, Director Siena College Research Institute, at 518-783-2901. For survey cross-tabs: www.Siena.edu/SCRI/research.



SIENA RESEARCH INSTITUTE
 SIENA COLLEGE, LOUDONVILLE, NY
www.siena.edu/scri

Siena College Holiday Poll Trends – December 2018

As the holiday season begins, would you say you are very excited, somewhat excited, not very excited or not at all excited about the upcoming holiday season?

DATE	VERY EXCITED	SOMEWHAT EXCITED	NOT VERY EXCITED	NOT AT ALL EXCITED	DON'T KNOW
2018	26	40	21	13	1
2017	33	34	17	15	2
2016	26	36	19	18	2
2014	23	35	23	18	0
2013	28	44	14	13	1
2012	26	41	18	15	0
2011	22	45	20	12	1
2010	24	45	18	13	0
2009	22	42	19	17	0
2008	24	39	25	12	1

Compared to last year (past years), do you plan to spend more money on holiday gifts, less money or about the same?

DATE	MORE MONEY	LESS MONEY	ABOUT THE SAME	DON'T KNOW
2018	15	33	50	1
2017	9	28	61	2
2016	9	31	57	2
2014	7	32	59	1
2013	10	29	57	4
2012	13	33	53	2
2011	7	34	55	3
2010	4	37	57	2
2009	4	48	45	3
2008	5	53	41	1
2007	8	35	54	2

What is the total amount of money you plan to spend on gifts this holiday season?

DATE	\$0- \$299	\$300- \$399	\$400- \$499	\$500- \$599	\$600- \$699	\$700- \$799	\$800- \$899	\$900- \$999	\$1000+
2018	32	13	8	14	5	3	2	3	19
2017	29	12	9	13	3	3	2	2	26
2016	31	11	9	13	4	2	4	3	24
2014	31	11	11	11	5	4	2	3	23
2013	28	12	8	13	5	2	3	3	25
2012	23	10	10	14	4	3	3	3	29
2011	27	14	9	13	3	4	3	2	26
2010	26	13	14	11	4	2	4	3	23
2009	30	13	11	11	4	3	2	3	23
2008	28	11	10	13	4	4	3	3	23
2007	21	11	8	14	5	3	3	2	33

Siena College Holiday Poll Trends – December 2018

Page 2

What percentage of your holiday shopping is done online?

DATE	NONE	0-25%	25%-50%	50%-75%	75%-100%	DON'T KNOW/REFUSED
2018	24	16	19	20	20	1
2017	28	18	17	16	19	2
2016	33	16	17	15	18	1
2014	34	16	19	17	13	1
2013	33	20	18	18	10	2
2012	43	21	16	12	7	1
2011	43	21	14	13	9	0
2010	45	29	16	7	2	1
2009	51	22	15	7	4	1
2008	51	28	12	5	2	1

This year will you be making any donations of money, food or gifts to charitable organizations that focus on the needy during the holiday season?

DATE	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW/REFUSED
2018	68	31	1
2017	76	22	2
2016	76	20	4
2014	75	23	3
2013	76	20	4
2012	77	19	4
2011	77	20	3
2010	77	19	4
2009	72	20	7
2008	77	21	1
2007	81	17	2

Do you plan to volunteer any of your time this holiday season for organizations that help people during the holidays?

DATE	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW/REFUSED
2018	31	68	1
2017	36	62	3
2016	37	60	3
2014	36	62	2
2013	33	63	4
2012	39	58	4
2011	31	66	3
2010	33	63	4
2009	30	65	4
2008	37	62	1
2007	34	65	1

Siena College Holiday Poll Trends – December 2018

Page 3

Of the following, during this time of the year, which greeting is the one you yourself most often use, is it...

DATE	MERRY CHRISTMAS	HAPPY HOLIDAYS	SEASONS' GREETINGS	OTHER/DON'T KNOW/ REFUSED
2018	49	41	5	4
2017	55	35	5	5
2016	51	38	6	5
2014	51	38	6	5
2013	47	44	4	5
2012	55	38	5	2
2011	53	37	8	2
2010	53	38	5	3
2009	56	35	3	7

Do you put up a Christmas Tree in your home for the holiday season?

DATE	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW/REFUSED
2018	72	28	0
2017	70	29	1
2016	72	28	1
2014	70	30	0
2013	73	27	0
2012	75	24	1
2011	75	25	0
2010	74	26	1

(If put up Christmas Tree) Do you have a real tree or an artificial tree in your home?

DATE	REAL TREE	ARTIFICIAL TREE	DON'T KNOW/REFUSED
2018	31	69	0
2017	42	58	0
2016	38	61	1
2014	38	61	1
2013	42	57	1
2012	39	60	1
2011	40	59	1
2010	42	58	0

Would you say you believe in Santa Claus or not?

DATE	BELIEVE	DO NOT BELIEVE	DON'T KNOW/REFUSED
2018	31	68	1
2017	33	66	1
2016	32	65	2
2014	30	68	1
2013	30	69	1
2012	37	62	1
2011	30	69	1
2010	30	69	1