

# Celebrities That Actually Get Their Hands Dirty When Giving Back



By Samantha Menjor

Picture this: You are helping rebuild homes destroyed by Hurricane Sandy down on the Jersey Shore. You ask a fellow volunteer to give you a handful of nails, and when you turn around you're staring into the eyes of Brad Pitt himself! While the chances of that scenario actually happening are slim, it is no surprise that most, if not all, celebrities attach their name to some sort of charity work. Whether they are boosting their image, expanding their brand, or truly helping out those in need, you can always count on seeing a celeb promote a foundation or organization at some point

throughout their career. However, many times it is hard to differentiate between those who volunteer for good publicity and those who are really adamant about helping the less fortunate.

## Most Charitable Celebs

**Angelina Jolie:** We've watched Angelina Jolie grow from a wild child to a doting mother and philanthropist for a plethora of causes. A majority of her work surrounds her children, three of whom were adopted from different countries around the world. Her want to help others seems to have rubbed off on her celebrity love Pitt, who has joined her on many humanitarian efforts. The parents of six started the Jolie-Pitt Foundation in Cambodia, the native country of their eldest son. The organization focuses on eliminating rural poverty and protecting natural resources and wildlife. Since its beginnings in 2003, the foundation has expanded to provide aid in over 60 countries. Jolie is also a special envoy for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, a role in which she will contribute to finding solutions for people displaced by conflict. Are you wondering how she does it all? So are we!

**Related Link:** [Jay-Z and Beyonce Raise \\$1 Million at Fundraiser](#)

**Oprah Winfrey:** Even if you haven't watched her number one daytime television talk show, you know that the celebrity news surrounding Oprah has shown she has always been a strong advocate for education. The Oprah Winfrey Foundation awarded grants to organizations that support the education and empowerment of women, children, and families everywhere. During a visit with Nelson Mandela in 2000, she pledged to build a school, which created the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy Foundation. Winfrey herself contributed 40 million dollars towards the creation of her self-named leadership academy for young girls in South Africa. Because she has such a large following, she encouraged her audience to get involved

with her public charity Oprah's Angel Network, which has raised over 80 million dollars to fund projects all over the world. Winfrey is one of the few celebs whose altruistic credibility you cannot deny.

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**Elton John:** This British pop singer has lost many close friends to HIV/AIDS over the years. As a coping mechanism, he decided to dedicate a large part of his time and money to fighting the auto immune disease. In 1992, he started the Elton John AIDS Foundation (EJAF), which works to cushion the blow of destruction the disease causes worldwide. EJAF has raised over 125 million dollars to support efforts in 55 countries since its commencement. The singer has also given a staggering amount of his own money to charity. In 2004, he gave 43 million dollars to different foundations, making him the most generous person in music that year. We cannot forget about his song "Candle in the Wind," which he wrote following the death of Princess Diana. Proceeds from the hit single totaled 40 million dollars, all of which was donated to charity.

These three celebs have made it their life's mission to use their fame to make a difference in the world. Their selflessness has made an insurmountable difference in the lives of so many of the less fortunate throughout the world. There are plenty of stars who could probably take notes from these influential characters.

**What other celebs do you think deserve to be on this list? Let us know in a comments below!**