



## VOLUNTEERING FOR THE COMMON GOOD

### GOING BEYOND DONATIONS AND SPONSORSHIPS

POSTED BY [MELISSA BECK](#) 09/07/2016 FEATURED, [LEADERSHIP AND CAREER](#)



When it comes to corporate philanthropy, giving back can take many shapes and forms — purchasing tables at fundraising events, sponsoring local programs and teams or offering in-kind donations to increase visibility. These monetary contributions go a long way for nonprofits, which can use much-needed funds to advance programs and research or serve more individuals in need.

Taking a hands-on approach to corporate giving, however, can add more meaning to a donation while offering measurable benefits for businesses looking to attract, develop and retain top talent.

## ENHANCING EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT AND ENGAGEMENT

When considering organizations to work for, 70 percent of 1,500 millennials surveyed value companies that are socially responsible, according to a 2011 Deloitte Volunteer Impact report. Even among the group who rarely or never volunteer, 61 percent said a volunteer program would be a factor

September 7, 2016

if faced with two competitive offers with the same location, responsibilities, pay and benefits. A philanthropic culture not only saves time recruiting, hiring and training new employees, but also creates a workplace that people want to help grow and be part of for years to come.

Providing opportunities for employees to give something other than dollars boosts participation and morale among staff. Team members who take part in corporate philanthropy programs also often develop a deeper appreciation for their jobs. As a result of such career satisfaction, companies experience higher retention rates and performance — not to mention increased engagement.

The Deloitte survey, which examined employee engagement in relation to workplace volunteerism, found that “millennials who frequently participate in their company’s volunteer activities are twice as likely to rate their corporate culture as very positive and are more likely to be very proud to work for their company.”

One way to incorporate hands-on philanthropy into a corporate giving strategy is by partnering with local nonprofits. PwC’s office in Irvine, California successfully invested in this model three years ago by participating in a youth mentoring program with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Orange County and the Inland Empire. Through this Beyond School Walls initiative, employees at PwC volunteer as mentors once a month during the academic year. Fifteen students from a nearby high school are shuttled to the company’s office, where they meet one-to-one with employees for sessions that focus on career exploration, college readiness and relationship building.

The adoption of this program has been incredibly successful in engaging employees — in 2016, two PwC volunteers were recognized out of hundreds of the nonprofit’s Beyond School Walls volunteers for their commitment to serving children in the community.

## BOOSTING THE BOTTOM LINE

Offering diverse giving opportunities also proves to be valuable for a company’s bottom line.

When you align a philanthropy program with your core values and culture, it offers the most good for the cause, company and overall community. The Big Brothers Big Sisters Beyond School Walls program, for example, tailors its curriculum to the expertise and industry of the partnering company. While students facing significant life challenges are able to learn about new career paths, corporate employees develop leadership skills that help them grow professionally into a managerial role.

In its 2008 study, Deloitte found that 91 percent of survey respondents (a random sampling of Fortune 500 human resources managers) agree that skills-based volunteering “adds value to training and development programs” and “helps foster meaningful business and leadership skills among employees.” True Impact, which assesses returns on investment for organizations, conducted a study of more than 28,000 individuals showing that skills-based volunteers are 142 percent more likely to report job-related skill gains than traditional volunteers.

When employee interests and skills align with community needs through a company’s philanthropic program, everyone wins. And with numerous nonprofits and organizations to support, it’s not difficult to find a cause that resonates with your mission and goals. Putting your company name behind a charitable effort and making it a long-term commitment is far more valuable than any one-off donation. Creative ways to give truly make an impact — whether it’s creating a scholarship for first-generation high school graduates pursuing careers in your field or offering a workplace mentoring program for youth.

*Sign up for our free weekly e-newsletter for more GRC articles, job postings, GRC events, white papers & more.....[click here](#)*

### MORE BY MELISSA BECK



**Melissa Beck** is the CEO of [Big Brothers Big Sisters of Orange County and the Inland Empire](#). The organization strives to provide strong and enduring, one-to-one, professionally supported mentoring relationships for every child who needs and wants one. Currently, more than 3,000 children benefit from its [community-based program](#) and [site-based programs](#) (High School Bigs and Beyond School Walls). For more information on how your company can get involved, visit [ocbigs.org](#) or call 714-544-7773.