



BOSTON COLLEGE
CENTER FOR CORPORATE CITIZENSHIP
CARROLL SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

Leadership in Community Involvement Advisory Board



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Letter From the Chair

Dear Members of the Corporate Community:

As the chair of the Boston College Center for Corporate Citizenship (BCCCC) Advisory Board on Leadership in Community Involvement, I am writing to emphasize the crucial roles corporate community engagement, philanthropy, and volunteering play in building a thriving and sustainable society. Nelson Mandela stated, “What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead.”

Corporate community involvement takes many forms, each equally valuable. Through strategic philanthropic initiatives, companies can direct resources to address pressing social issues, support innovative solutions, and empower nonprofit organizations. By aligning corporate giving with the company’s values and expertise, businesses can amplify their impact and create lasting change.

Moreover, encouraging, and facilitating employee volunteering are powerful ways to engage employees and amplify corporate impact. When employees have the opportunity to contribute their time and skills to causes they care about, they develop a deeper sense of purpose, enhance their leadership abilities, and strengthen their connection to the company and the community at large.

The benefits of corporate community involvement extend far beyond the immediate effect on the beneficiaries. By demonstrating a genuine commitment to social responsibility, companies can enhance their reputation, attract and retain top talent, and build trust and loyalty among customers and stakeholders. In an era when consumers increasingly prioritize purpose-driven brands, active community engagement can provide a competitive edge and contribute to long-term business success.

As leaders in the corporate world, we have a unique opportunity and responsibility to harness our resources, expertise, and influence to drive positive change. By embracing community involvement as a core value and integrating it into our business strategies, we can create a virtuous cycle of shared prosperity and social progress.



RITA ORTIZ

Senior Director,
Community Relations,
Travelers
Assistant Vice President,
the Travelers Foundation

I urge you to prioritize corporate community engagement, philanthropy, and volunteering within your organizations. I hope this bulletin will inspire you to recommit to your community engagement efforts. Together, we can build a stronger, more resilient, and more equitable society for all.

Sincerely,

RITA ORTIZ

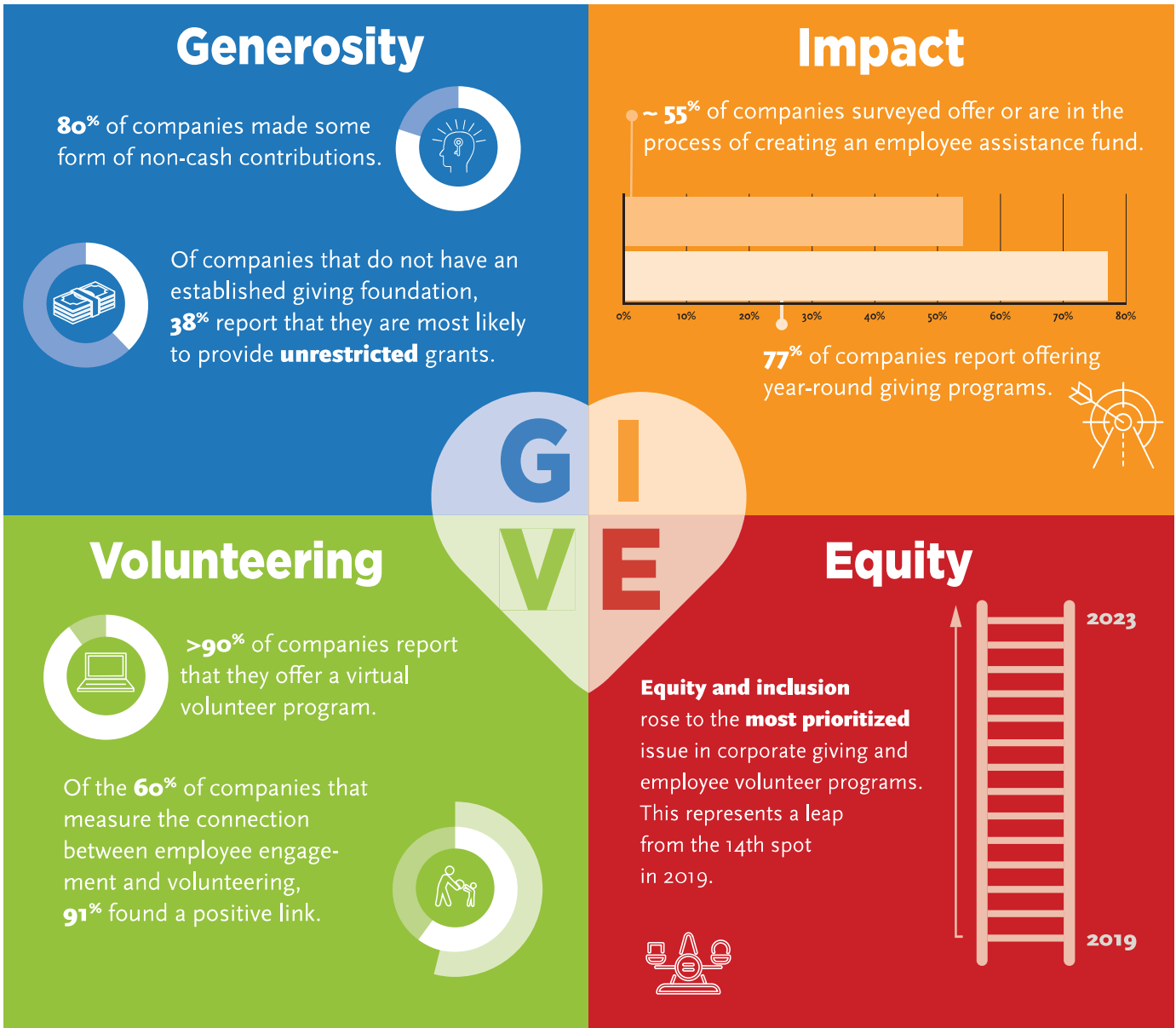
Chair, Advisory Board on Leadership in Community Involvement
Senior Director, Community Relations, Travelers
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INTRODUCTION

Community Involvement as a Critical Part of Business

Community involvement initiatives continue to be important for engaging employees and connecting to communities. This important facet of business enables companies to address pressing issues in our operating contexts. Empirical research has found the benefits of community involvement initiatives manifest in the following ways:

- Companies that engage in giving and volunteering can be seen as generous, community-oriented, and responsible corporate citizens. Their commitments to social and environmental issues can build customer loyalty and attract new customers.^{1,2}
- Employees are often proud to be associated with companies that contribute positively to society. This can boost morale and job satisfaction and help attract and retain talent.^{3,4}
- Corporate philanthropy can be particularly meaningful to employees when they are able to participate directly, such as through volunteer opportunities or matching donation programs.^{5,6}
- Corporate community involvement can help foster stronger relationships with the local community and contribute to its well-being.^{7,8} This can create a more supportive and stable operating environment for the company and its employees.
- Commitment to the community can help mitigate business risks. This may reduce the likelihood of community opposition and regulatory scrutiny by providing an insurance-like reputation protection in the event of a crisis, as stakeholders who are engaged with the firm proactively are more likely to address concerns to the company directly rather than directing complaints to third parties.^{9,10}
- Community involvement can help companies create the conditions for long-term success.¹¹ For instance, philanthropic initiatives that support education can help ensure a future skilled workforce.



Source: Boston College Center for Corporate Citizenship. (2023). *Community Involvement Study 2023: GIVE*

The BCCCC State of Corporate Citizenship 2024 Report, a study of the priorities and expectations of non-CSR responsible executives, states the majority of executive respondents report success in achieving business objectives when corporate citizenship is integrated into the overall business strategy. The areas of attracting new customers, managing risk, and reducing operational costs all benefit significantly when CSR and business strategies are aligned.¹² Community involvement programs are an important lever for realizing these benefits by advancing current objectives while providing a feedback loop to educated businesses about how the current social landscape might affect their employees, business performance, and other operational factors.

This Advisory Bulletin, developed by the BCCCC Advisory Board on Leadership in Community Involvement, outlines key trends and topics of concern to community involvement professionals, as of June 2024.

The BCCCC Advisory Board on Leadership in Community Involvement is chaired by Rita Ortiz, senior director of community relations at Travelers and assistant vice president of the Travelers Foundation. This board is the current iteration of a Leadership in Community Involvement Roundtable launched in 2006. It is composed of a cross-sector group of executives who have expertise and experience in community involvement. The purpose of the board, and this bulletin, is to accelerate learning and share insights about how companies can most effectively manage the ever-evolving landscape of community involvement. Unless otherwise noted, all the information in this report was inspired by Advisory Board discussions run under the Chatham House Rule—meaning that statements made in the meeting may be quoted but not attributed without explicit permission.



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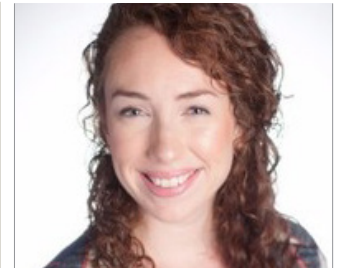
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Generosity



Background

Corporate giving is a major dimension of community involvement, and when conducted strategically, it can deliver significant value to both businesses and society. Corporate giving provides an opportunity to align philanthropic pursuits with a business purpose, enabling companies to contribute to a more sustainable future in a manner that mitigate future risks and make the most of potential opportunities. For example, companies that prioritize equity and inclusion might donate to nonprofit organizations that spend resources providing education and career training to people from communities often overlooked as qualified job candidates. A company's structure and financial and staffing capabilities will also determine which of the various types of giving a company employs.

Types of Giving

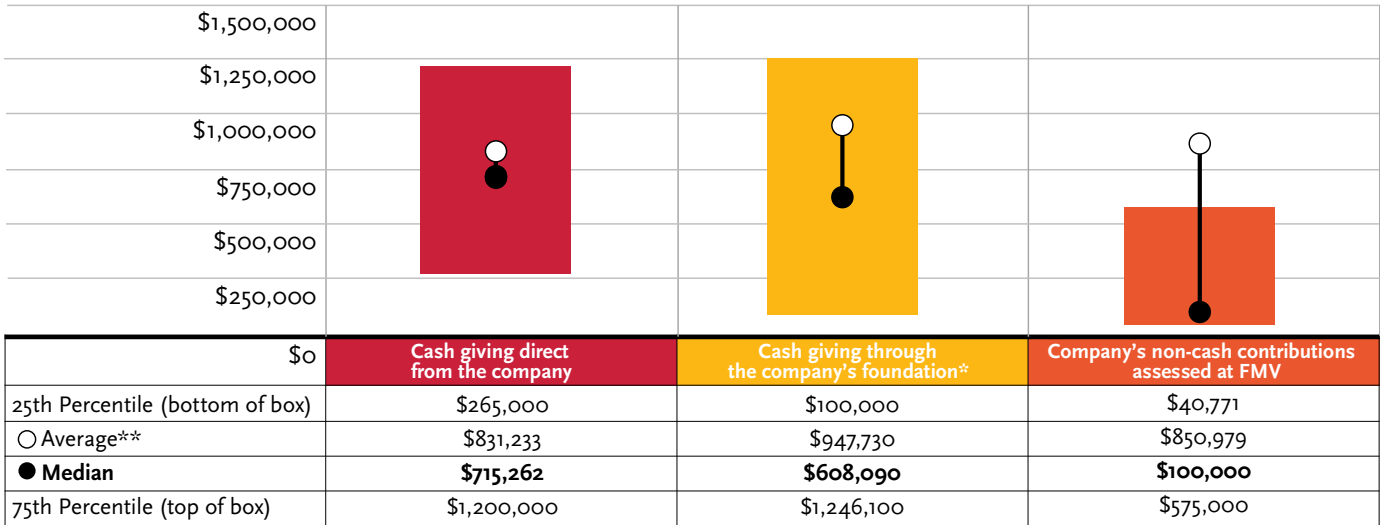
Total giving is made up of three types of corporate giving to 501(c)(3) organizations or public schools, or the international equivalent of a 501(c)(3) organization. These include the following:

- Cash giving directly from the company
- Cash giving through the company's foundation
- Noncash contributions assessed at fair market value (FMV) (e.g., merchandise, pro bono service, supplies)

These forms of giving are often done concurrently and exclude giving by other stakeholders (e.g. employees, customers).

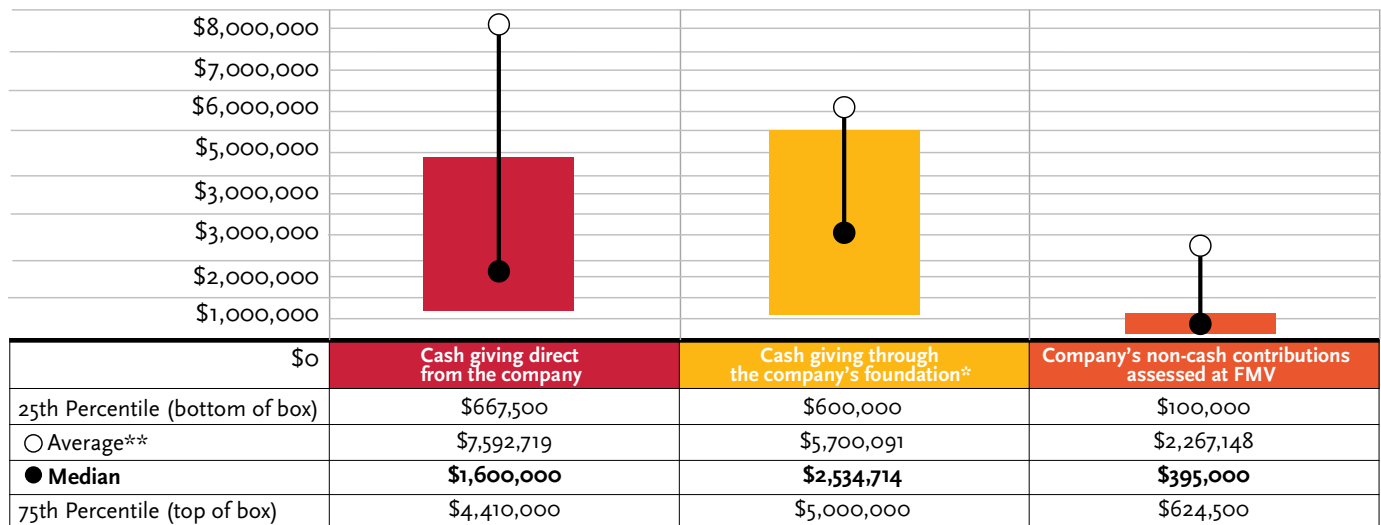
How Much Do Companies Give?

ANNUAL GIVING - COMPANIES WITH LESS THAN 1 BILLION IN ANNUAL REVENUE



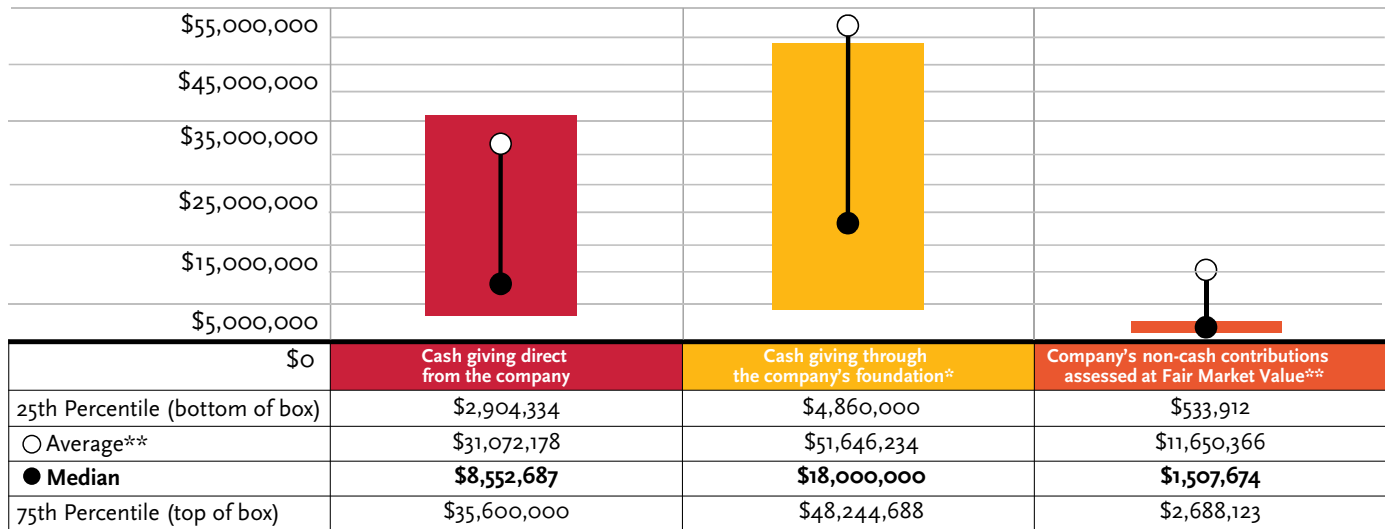
*Data source: Candid's Foundation Directory Online. **Average calculation excludes values of more than \$1 billion.

ANNUAL GIVING - COMPANIES WITH 1 BILLION TO LESS THAN 5 BILLION IN ANNUAL REVENUE



*Data source: Candid's Foundation Directory Online. **Average calculation excludes values of more than \$1 billion.

ANNUAL GIVING - COMPANIES WITH 5 BILLION OR MORE IN ANNUAL REVENUE



*Data source: Candid's Foundation Directory Online. **Average calculation excludes values of more than \$1 billion

Source: Boston College Center for Corporate Citizenship. (2023). *Community Involvement Study 2023*.

How Do Companies Give?

Giving budgets and strategies vary based on a company's size, industry, and priorities. Some companies have established foundations, whereas others give directly from the corporate entity. Employee engagement in giving decisions is common through strategies such as ambassador networks, local giving committees, and business resource group involvement. However, balancing employee input with strategic alignment and administrative efficiency can be challenging. Matching gift programs are popular, with varying participation rates and maximum match amounts. Some companies have found success in increasing employee participation by removing or raising match limits.

Focus areas for corporate giving include STEM education, disaster relief, well-being, mental health, youth programs, diversity/equity/inclusion, and sustainability initiatives. Aligning giving with business priorities and employee interests is a common goal. Building strong relationships with nonprofit partners is crucial for effective giving. Some companies encourage long-term partnerships and employee volunteerism to deepen the community impact.

Community involvement professionals are actively reviewing and adjusting their budgets in response to various internal and external factors, such as company performance, organizational changes, and economic conditions. The ongoing review process helps ensure giving strategies remain aligned with business priorities and available resources.

Measuring and reporting on the impact of corporate giving remain challenges for many companies. Sharing best practices and learning from industry peers can help professionals refine their strategies. Because community involvement professionals navigate evolving societal needs and business priorities, continuous learning and adaptation are essential. Engaging in such industry discussions can provide valuable insights and support for optimizing corporate giving strategies.

Corporate giving professionals can draw on these strategies and adapt them to their specific company context, considering factors such as business priorities, employee interests, and community needs. Continuously assessing and refining giving strategies can help optimize the impact and effectiveness of corporate philanthropy efforts.



ADVICE FROM THE FIELD



- **Align giving with business priorities and values:** Many companies focus their giving on areas that align with their core business such as STEM education for tech companies or sustainability initiatives for energy companies.
- **Consider strategy:** Engage senior leaders in the overall giving strategy, high-dollar partnerships, and any major shifts in giving. Maintain day-to-day decisions and operations in the community involvement function.
- **Employee engagement and decision-making:** Companies are involving employees in the giving process through ambassador networks, local giving committees, and business resource groups. This approach helps ensure the giving reflects employee interests and community needs.
- **Build internal partnerships with ERGs:** Some companies allocate a portion of philanthropic dollars for distribution by employee resource groups. This helps employee resource members engage in decision-making, build internal relationships, and come together with community involvement teams for productive conversations about reaching goals. For some companies, giving must align with corporate giving pillars.
- **Matching gift programs:** Offering to match employee donations is a common strategy to encourage employee giving and increase the impact of corporate contributions. Some companies are experimenting with different match limits and structures to optimize participation.
- **Targeted local giving:** High performing companies tend to allocate funds to specific locations or regions where they have a presence to allow the local actors to develop appropriately targeted community impact and relationship-building.
- **Think beyond your headquarters:** Work with volunteer committees at company sites to identify local needs and organizations to support.
- **Partnerships with nonprofits:** Building long-term relationships with nonprofit partners is seen as key to effective giving. Some companies encourage multifaceted partnerships that include volunteerism and in-kind support, along with financial contributions.
- **Strengthen external relationships:** Engage local community leaders who are experts in the areas the company funds. Collaborate to learn more about grassroots organizations and others that are moving the needle on important issues. Align giving to the needs of the organizations you support.
- **Balance responsive and strategic giving:** Although many companies have defined focus areas for their giving, they also maintain flexibility to respond to emerging needs and crises such as disaster relief efforts.
- **Streamline and centralize giving processes:** Some companies are moving toward more centralized decision-making and oversight of corporate giving to ensure strategic alignment and administrative efficiency.
- **Set giving targets:** Establishing clear targets, such as a percentage of profits or revenues, can help guide corporate giving budgets and demonstrate a company's commitment to social responsibility.

Employee-Matching Gifts

Workplace-giving campaigns allow employees to play a key role in corporate community involvement efforts. Although they vary in format, these campaigns often take the form of company-sponsored programs that allow employees to make charitable contributions through payroll or other types of deductions. According to BCCCC's 2023 Community Involvement Study, nearly 90% of companies offer or are in the process of setting up a workplace giving program.

Through employee matching gift programs, companies provide financial support to nonprofits by complementing donations made by their employees by matching some or all of the amount donated. According to one member, "We support causes important to our employees through employee-matching gifts." Some common aspects of employee-matching gift programs include the following:

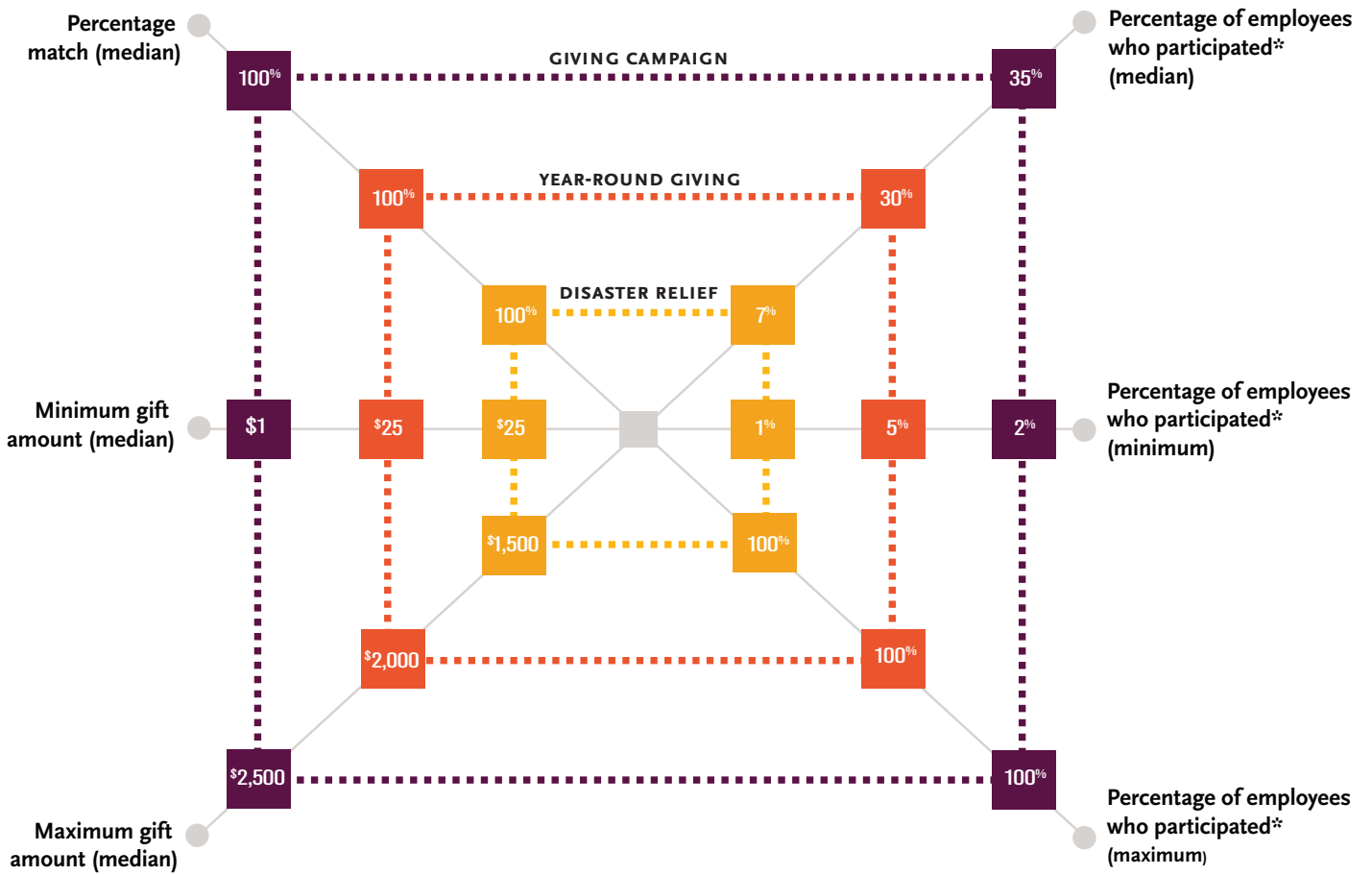
- Using a matching ratio such as 1:1 or another predetermined ratio. Some companies may increase this on special giving days like Giving Tuesday.
- Setting limits on the total amount the company will match.
- Requiring employees to provide proof of their donations from the nonprofit organization to be eligible for their donation to be matched.
- Having deadlines by which employees must submit their donation requests to be eligible for the match.



To ensure charitable donations are made for charitable purposes, leaders in community involvement suggest developing a workflow so expenses coded to a charitable contribution budget line are approved by the Philanthropy or Community Involvement teams.

COMPANY MATCHING INFORMATION FOR WORKPLACE GIVING PROGRAMS

To read this chart, follow each color of the dotted lines all the way around its rectangular path to read six descriptive statistics about each of the three types of workplace giving represented in this chart. If you want to know how each program compares to others on a particular statistic, read the statistics along the solid pin lines. For example, the median values of minimum gift amounts range from \$1 in a giving campaign to \$25 in year-round giving and disaster relief.



Source: Boston College Center for Corporate Citizenship. (2023). *Community Involvement Study 2023*.

GIVING GOES GREEN

As the effects of climate change become more obvious, environmental issues have been ranked among the top five priorities in corporate giving and employee volunteer programs in BCCCC's Community Involvement Study for the first time since 2011 (see graph on next page). Although social issues maintain the top positions, environmental issues are receiving increasing attention.

Beyond sustainable business practices, companies can support environmental goals through community involvement in several ways, such as the following:

- Direct funding
- In-kind donations
- Employee volunteer programs

By aligning charitable giving with environmental goals, corporations can demonstrate their commitment to sustainability, engage employees, and build a positive brand image while also making a tangible difference to addressing climate change.



At Capital Power, we're Powering Change by Changing Power™." One way we do this is by powering our communities to thrive through partnerships and investments that align with our business and values to amplify the positive impact. Our Community Sustainability Fund supports grassroots projects that provide sustainable solutions such as reduced emissions, water conservation, and energy efficiencies, among other things, which collectively enhances our goal of being net-zero by 2045."

TRICIA JOHNSTON

Director, Communications & Community Engagement
Capital Power Corporation



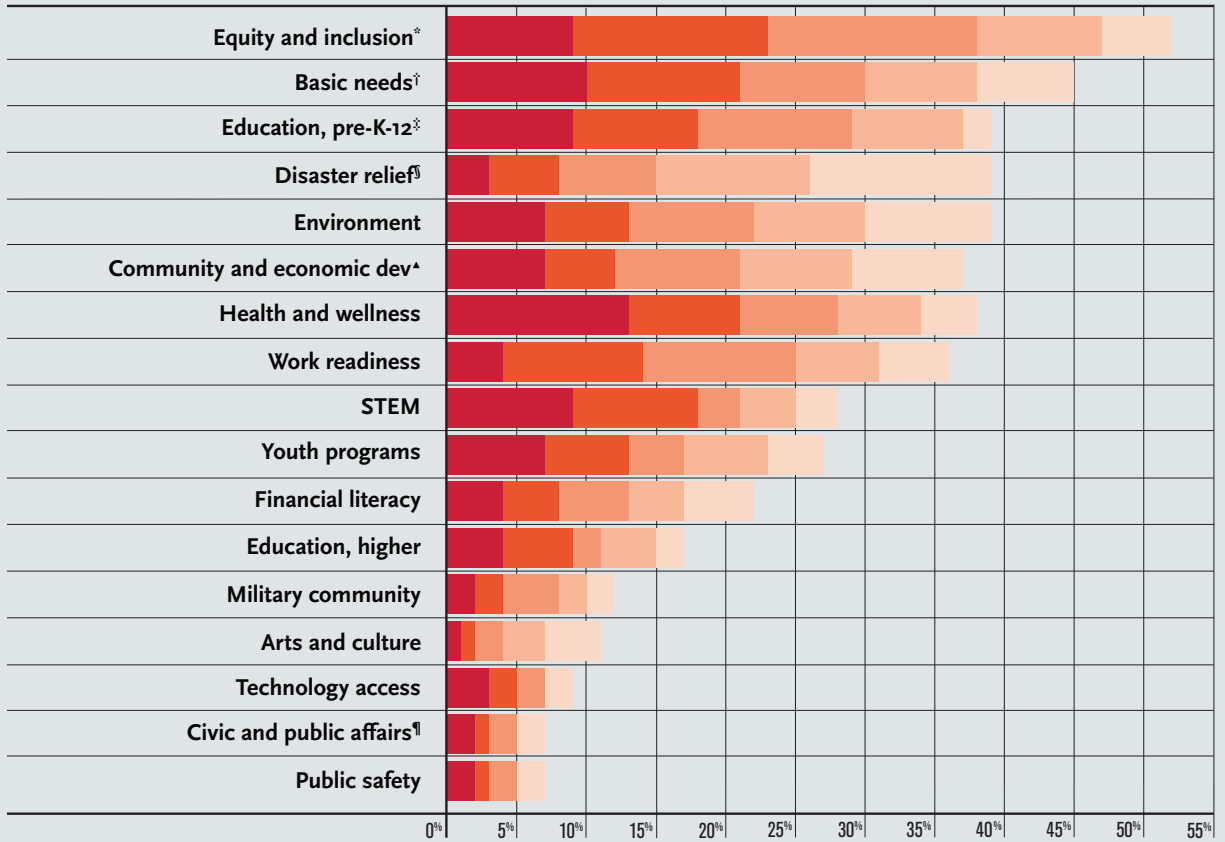
SMUD is a community-owned, not-for-profit organization that develops all programs to support the customer. As we have an ambitious goal to hit zero carbon by 2030, we have built major campaigns, rebates, and assistance programs to help our customers be part of the plan. In addition to this, we have aligned our giving and partnership agreements to support the community, and our senior leaders all serve on community-based boards."

RHONDA STALEY-BROOKS

Director, Community Relations, Outreach & Support
SMUD

TOP SOCIAL ISSUES IN COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PROGRAMS

■ Rank No. 1 ■ Rank No. 2 ■ Rank No. 3 ■ Rank No. 4 ■ Rank No. 5



* Includes racial justice and gender equality

† e.g., food and shelter

‡ Excludes STEM

§ Includes preparation, response, and recovery

^ Includes small business and entrepreneurship

¶ e.g., Rotary Clubs and scouting organizations

Source: Boston College Center for Corporate Citizenship. (2023). *Community Involvement Study 2023*.

Impact

There is intense pressure on community involvement teams and all aspects of corporate citizenship to justify their existence by demonstrating return on investment and impact, but this is challenging, given the complex social problems being addressed and limited control over outcomes. A key issue is that impact goals are often set in areas outside the company's direct sphere of control. Numerous other challenges and pitfalls to implementing impact measurement exist.

Challenges and Pitfalls

- Attribution and causality: It can be difficult to isolate the impact of a specific community involvement program from other factors and interventions. Social and environmental problems are complex, and changes observed may not be directly attributable to the company's efforts. Claiming credit for an impact that the company did not cause can undermine credibility.
- Long-time horizons: Many social and environmental outcomes take years to manifest, extending well beyond typical business planning and budgeting cycles. This can make it hard to sustain measurement efforts and attribute long-term impacts.
- Overemphasis on quantitative metrics: There is a risk of focusing too narrowly on quantitative metrics at the expense of qualitative insights. Numbers alone may not capture the full picture, and an obsession with metrics can lead to perverse incentives and gaming the system. Taking a balanced approach that combines quantitative and qualitative data is important.
- The burden on partners: Rigorous impact measurements often require extensive data collection and reporting from nonprofit partners. This can strain their limited resources and distract them from program delivery. Companies need to be sensitive to this burden and invest in their partners' measurement capacity.
- Lack of standardization: There is a lack of standardized metrics and methodologies for measuring social and environmental impact, making it hard to compare results across programs and companies.

- **Confirmation bias:** Companies may be tempted to measure only what they think will confirm success and shy away from evaluating potential negative impacts or unintended consequences. A commitment to honest and balanced evaluation is crucial, even if it surfaces uncomfortable truths.
- **Overstating impact:** Finally, there is a risk of overstating or misrepresenting an initiative's impact to make the company look good. Inflated claims can do more harm than good if they are exposed. It is important to be transparent about methodology, limitations, and failures — as well as successes.

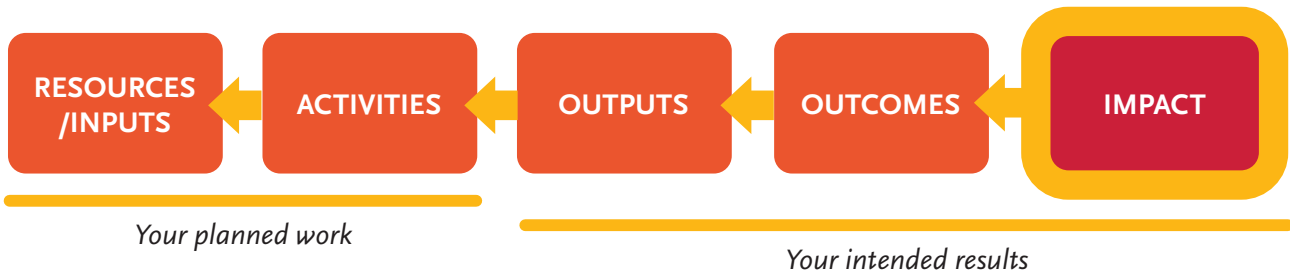
None of these challenges negates the importance of impact measurement, but each underscores the need to approach it thoughtfully and rigorously. Companies should be clear about what they are trying to measure and why, use appropriate methods, engage stakeholders, share both positive and negative results, and use the findings to drive real learning and improvement. Done well, impact measurement can be a powerful tool for advancing social and environmental progress. Here are some initial steps companies can take on their impact measurement journey:

Steps to Get Started

1. **Align on the definition of “impact”:** In casual conversation or marketing terms, “impact” may be used loosely. However, in the social impact field, it refers specifically to measurable changes in systemic conditions or populations' well-being that can be attributed to an intervention. Community involvement leaders should clarify this distinction with colleagues to ensure alignment on what is being measured and promised.
2. **Use a logic model to map levels of control:** A logic model links an initiative's inputs and activities to its intended outputs, outcomes, and impacts. As you move along this chain, the company's degree of control decreases. Outputs (e.g., number of people trained) are directly controllable. Outcomes (e.g., trainees getting jobs) are influenced but not controlled. Impacts (e.g., reduced unemployment rate) are affected by complex external factors. Given limited resources, CI teams should focus robust impact measurement on select initiatives with large budgets, long durations, and strong alignment with company capabilities. The rest of the portfolio may be primarily measured at the output and outcome levels.

PROJECT LOGIC MODEL FOR IMPACT

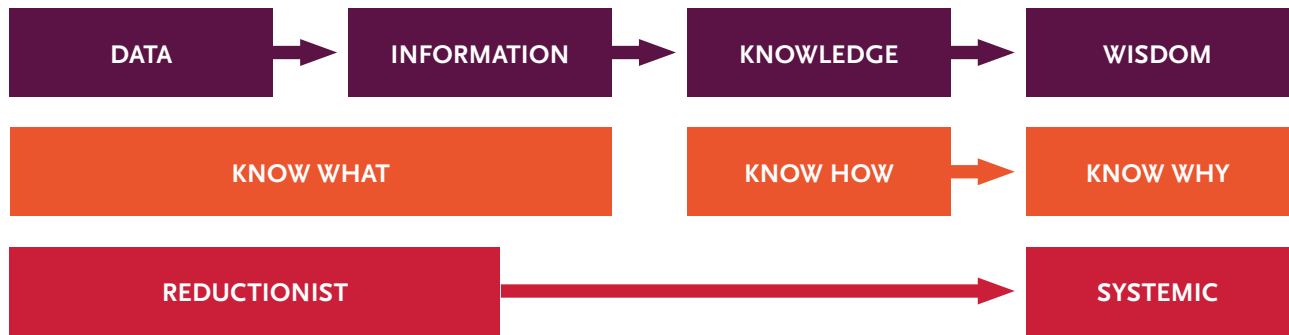
A logic model is essentially a roadmap of your program. It highlights how your program is expected to work, what activities need to come before others, and how desired outcomes are achieved.



3. Adopt a learning orientation: Impact measurement should not just be a year-end reporting exercise but an ongoing process of gathering data to surface insights and drive improvements. This requires open, two-way dialogue with nonprofit partners to interpret results and discuss changes. Having a learning mindset also means recognizing the value of failure; if an initiative misses its targets, that is an opportunity to dig into the reasons why and identify lessons to apply moving forward. The key is ensuring strategic measurement focused on learning and not trying to quantify the impact of every dollar spent. Start with clarity on definitions, map the logic model, and focus rigorously on the impact in targeted areas while strengthening the rest of the portfolio at the output level. The goal is to build the company's knowledge and ability to achieve social impact over time.

WHAT IS LEARNING ORGANIZATION?

- Learning is the acquisition of knowledge or skills through instruction, observation, and experience.
- Learning is driven by organization, people, knowledge, and technology working in harmony—discovering and distributing knowledge, and increasing the relevance of an organization.



4. Measure community involvement’s internal impact: Although community involvement’s ultimate purpose is to benefit society, it also delivers significant value to the company by engaging employees, reinforcing culture and values, providing leadership development opportunities, and supporting DEI objectives. Capturing this internal impact requires close collaboration with colleagues in human resources, diversity, equity, and inclusion — as well as the overall business — to define relevant metrics and integrate CSR results into their reporting. Significant value is left on the table if this is not measured and communicated.

Bringing this all together, community involvement leaders can maximize their impact by rigorously prioritizing where to invest in deep impact measurement, continuously learning and improving, and comprehensively capturing the value they deliver, both externally and internally, to the company. This strategic approach allows them to build a robust impact story while effectively deploying limited resources.

ADVICE FROM THE FIELD



As community involvement professionals, we must engage with all departments to achieve success. The purpose of the partnership depends on the specific need, such as C-level for support and departments/locations for teambuilding events that promote volunteerism, and so on.”

EMMA CHAMBERS

Manager, Corporate Social Responsibility
Air Liquide America Corporation

Ibelieve community involvement should work across every department in a corporation. You need buy-in and leadership support, starting with your CEO and then following to every C-level member of your company. Having a strategic goal implemented is much more difficult from the bottom-up versus the top-down.”

SHERRI NUGENT

Director of Community Relations
Teradata

First and foremost, community involvement professionals should partner with HR and communications. For us, engaging employees in giving and volunteering means our HR and comms teams have to be aware of our programming and help us with the grassroots efforts. Additionally, the IT Department is very important because every evolved CI program in today’s world will need some type of software at some point, often multiple different ones, like in our case.”

VESELA ZEHIREV

Director of Philanthropy and Community Engagement
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Our community involvement harnesses Vanguard’s impact-driven philanthropy, inspired employee volunteerism, and company expertise to drive global impact. We describe our overall strategy as Vanguard Community 365, which reflects our year-round efforts to serve our communities and embodies our company’s culture of care. Our collaborative approach engages nonprofit and corporate leaders to collectively address critical needs in communities, where our crew and clients live with a primary focus on early childhood development and financial well-being.”

JESSIE HECKMAN

Manager of Global Employee, Volunteering and Giving
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Iwould recommend that you forge a strong link between CI and brand teams. Beyond the impact your CI work is having in the community, it’s also contributing to brand reputation with customers, employees, investors, and other stakeholders and differentiating your organization from competitors. It’s important to measure and connect that additional brand value to your CI story.”

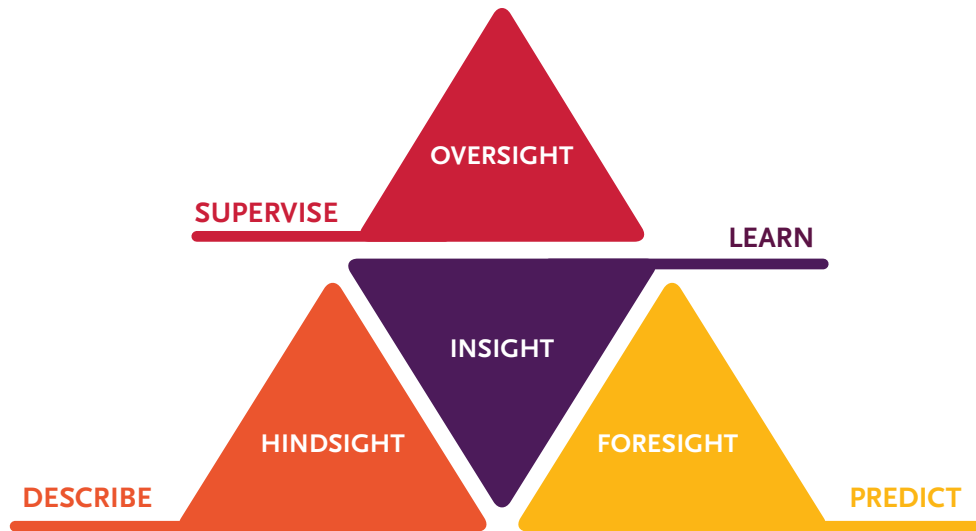
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HOW DO WE MEASURE?

Why we are measuring will indicate which measurement approach(es) we adopt.

Each approach suggests different stakeholder involvement, methods of collection, etc.



Company Examples

EXAMPLE 1

“Our company uses a third-party organization to analyze data and measure outcomes, not just outputs. We combine this quantitative data analysis with qualitative narratives from grantees to obtain a holistic view of the impact and challenges faced. This gives us confidence we are investing in the right partners and work. The data analysis is also shared back with grantees, who find it valuable for securing other funding and reporting to their boards. However, it does require significant data collection from grantees initially.”

EXAMPLE 2

“Our company focuses our measurement on key metrics aligned to our focus areas like literacy and education (e.g., number of books provided to children, hours of enrichment delivered). We don’t try to measure everything or pay for expensive evaluations to direct more funding to programs vs. measurement. We supplement core metrics with grantee narratives. Moving forward, we plan to do more of our grant-making through collective impact initiatives to access richer data.”

EXAMPLE 3

“Our company gathers data from our employee giving platform on employee engagement trends, top causes supported, and so on. This is helpful for us to measure and grow employee participation.”

EXAMPLE 4

“Our company and other funders in our city helped community kitchen nonprofits implement a shared database and conduct simple surveys to better understand overlaps in populations served. Providing a small grant enabled multiple nonprofits to participate in the same system.”

KEY THEMES FROM THE COMPANY EXAMPLES INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

- 1) Aligning a focused set of meaningful metrics
- 2) Combining quantitative and qualitative data
- 3) Not overburdening nonprofits or spending too much on measurement vs. programs
- 4) Leveraging collective impact partnerships
- 5) Letting the data guide insights and solutions vs. just tracking predetermined outcomes





MODES OF MEASUREMENT

OVERSIGHT

SUPERVISE

Prospective + retrospective

Dictate & define metrics, analysis methods, time-lines

When we need to control characteristics and quality for comparison or other decision-useful criteria

Challenge: overlooking other perspectives may leave insight on the table

HINDSIGHT

DESCRIBE

Collect information retrospectively to show what has been completed or achieved.

Disparate metrics may offer an incomplete or conflicting picture of results. Selection of metrics can cause confirmation bias.

Challenge: past orientation can reduce focus on learning and improvement

FORESIGHT

PREDICT

Apply insights to analysis of current and future scenarios to make informed bets on investments that are most likely to deliver results.

Challenge: past results do not guarantee future returns (A person can never step into the same river twice).

INSIGHT

LEARN

Derive knowledge + wisdom from collected data and analysis to understand causal relationships.

Can derive benefit from retrospective and varied data.

Challenge: requires time and some analytic capability to understand results

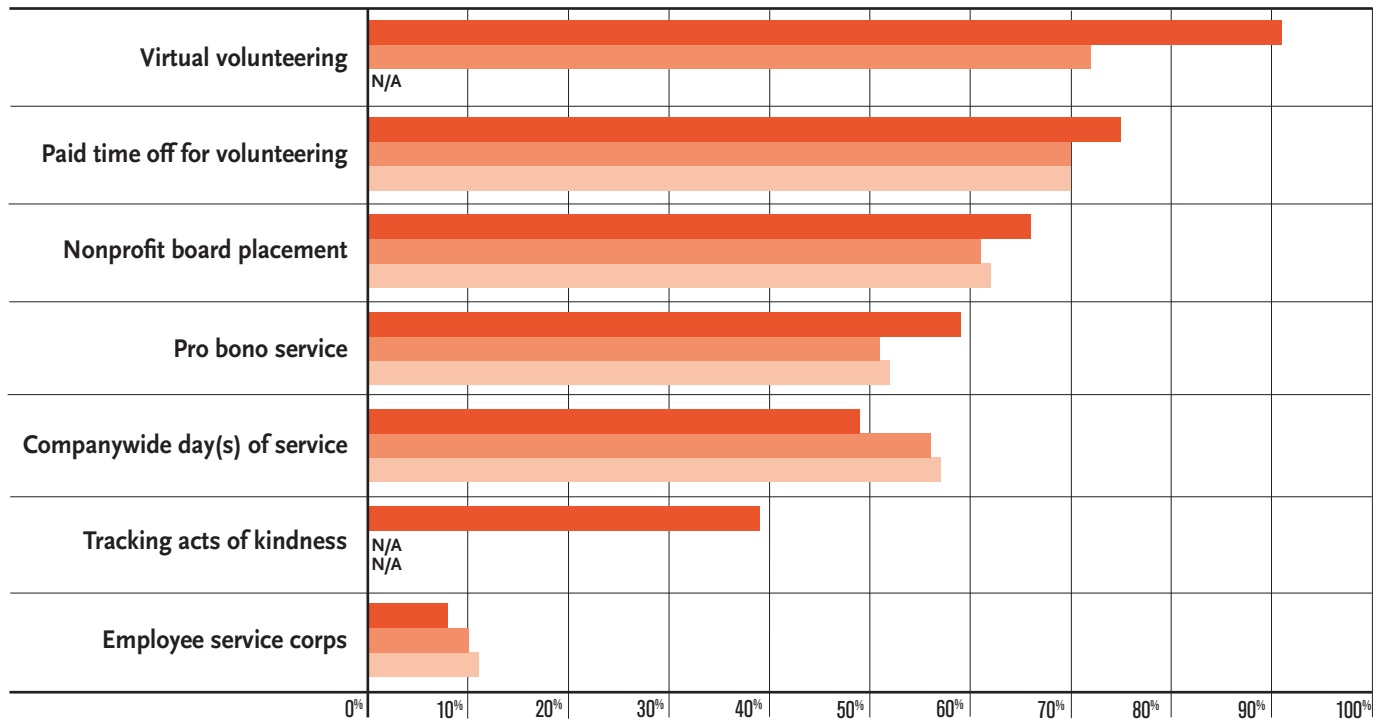
Volunteering

According to BCCCC’s 2023 Community Involvement Study, volunteer programs are an almost universal offering for employees. Nearly all (95%) of companies have or are in the process of developing an employee volunteer program. Of the 60% of companies that measured the connection, 91% found a positive link between employee volunteering and employee engagement scores.

Virtual volunteering became a volunteering mainstay during the pandemic and continues to be a popular way of maintaining employee engagement. Virtual offerings can help encourage engagement among employees who no longer work together in the same office, state, or time zone.

TYPE OF EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM OFFERED

2023 2021 2019



*Data from the BCCCC Community Involvement Study 2023.

ELIGIBILITY FOR EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS IN 2023

Employee type	Paid time off for volunteering*	Nonprofit board placement	Company-wide day(s) of service	Pro bono service	Virtual volunteering	Tracking acts of kindness	Employee service corp
Part-time employees	70%	50%	80%	71%	80%	82%	86%
Remote employees based in headquarters region	94%	92%	91%	94%	98%	88%	71%
Remote employees not based in headquarters region	77%	58%	66%	77%	85%	82%	43%
Retirees	N/A	8%	14%	0%	6%	6%	0%

Source: Boston College Center for Corporate Citizenship. (2023). *Community Involvement Study 2023*.

*Excludes company days of service



IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Advice for Engaging Employees Across All Generations

“

At Vanguard, we're developing journey maps and personas for our employee demographics to ensure we understand the types of volunteer incentives and experiences that will maximize their participation and inspire them to feel a part of Vanguard's larger collective community impact.”

JESSIE HECKMAN

Manager of Global Employee Volunteering and Giving
Vanguard

“

Be open to trying new, out-of-the-box ideas for engagement. I try to pilot a few new engagement strategies per year to see what sticks and what doesn't. As with communication, engagement is not a one-size-fits-all. It's important to be open with your employees, to solicit their feedback, and to give them options.”

KATE SHEEHAN

Senior Manager, Community Affairs
QVC

“

Employee engagement is not a one-size-fits-all effort. It's important to promote a variety of ways to engage in the community (e.g., in-person, virtual, as a team, individual) to meet each employee where they are. Additionally, the motivation behind service varies by employee, so it's critical to also make the connection of why and how. Why does our involvement in an initiative matter to the organization and the community? How does it connect to the overall values of the company? A well-informed employee is a more engaged employee.”

KELLY ACKER

VP, National Employee Community Engagement
U.S. Bank Foundation

“

Be flexible. What works for one generation may not work for another. Get employees involved; it's helpful to have ambassadors/champions from all generations present at the table.”

KRISTINA NARTIFF

Manager, CRL Cares Programs
Charles River Labs



Diversify your volunteer and giving offerings, and have open Dollars for Doers. Match programs to as many charities as possible. Our employees give their dollars and their time to over 1,500 charities, and that represents the wide range of interests and affiliations among the different demographics and generations.”

VESELA ZEHIREV

Director of Philanthropy and Community Engagement
MGM Resorts International



Employee engagement isn't a one-size-fits-all proposition. Meet employees where they are. In doing so, you will uncover commonalities in each generation that will guide your engagement strategy.”

EMMA CHAMBERS

Manager, Corporate Social Responsibility
Air Liquide America Corporation



I believe employees should look at CI efforts differently from executives. Employees should look at ‘what’s in it for me.’ I get to volunteer. I can use a matching gift program, and my company supports my personal passions in this way. I can also support our company’s strategic social objectives, so this allows me to look at the positive impact of CI in two ways.”

SHERRI NUGENT

Director of Community Relations
Teradata



Multigenerational efforts are the most successful, as are cross-functional teams. The memories you make with your volunteer and CI grant-making will be the memories you keep. I know this because on nearly every employee’s exit interview, whether leaving for a new opportunity, retiring, or even being part of an RIF and having their position eliminated, all have said their time and efforts with community relations and volunteering were the best memories they have (often accompanied by specific stories and memories).”

ANNIE TOMECEK

Senior Supervisor, Global Community Relations
T.D. Williamson

Engaging Employees in Community Involvement

A common challenge for engaging employees in community involvement activities is communication. Many employees experience information overload with a constant stream of messages and information on company intranet sites. However, communicating corporate citizenship efforts can help develop employees who are engaged and retain them for longer. When employees are aware of their company's corporate citizenship efforts, they experience higher levels of pride and engagement in the organization. Among nonmanagerial employees, this leads to higher retention.¹³ Additionally, when employees perceive a company to have strong corporate citizenship performance, they have greater commitment and pride and ultimately stronger job performance. Awareness of community investments is correlated with better performance among employees.¹⁴

So how do companies break through the noise? Read on for successful strategies from leaders in community involvement:

SECURE LEADERSHIP ENDORSEMENT

Engage senior executives to send communications or be featured in content to demonstrate top-down support and encourage participation.

- One member company sent a joint email from its new CEO and chairperson about its annual Impact Day of Service. The email drove tremendous sign-ups, with three-quarters of volunteer events booked before the CSR team even promoted sign-ups. Another firm sent a company-wide email from its CEO and CSO to launch its annual Week of Service, and it drove a lot of volunteer registrations.

ENCOURAGE EMPLOYEE STORYTELLING

Provide opportunities for employees to share their own CSR experiences and stories, such as through featured intranet articles to make communications more authentic and relatable.

- Members have found highlighting the employee volunteer experience through storytelling has resulted in other people wanting to participate. By shifting to personal storytelling, companies found more employees engaged with the content.

LEVERAGE MULTIPLE CHANNELS

Use a mix of email, intranet articles, employee social platforms (e.g., Yammer or Slack), video content, and in-person events to reach employees through their preferred communication methods.

- Several companies have been creating entertaining and engaging videos featuring employees participating in various programs like Dollars for Doers and volunteer time off. The videos are filmed by the communications team and shared to increase awareness and engagement. Others use their internal platform, such as Yammer, to promote CSR initiatives, functioning as a company Facebook or Instagram page, where groups can post and people can react. They also include CSR content in a weekly roundup email to all employees.

CREATE FOCUSED MOMENTS

Designate specific days, weeks, or months for CSR initiatives, and build multichannel communications plans leading up to these events to generate excitement and drive participation.

- A member company designated a “Wellness Day,” encouraging employees not to work. It was put on the calendar in advance as a global day with lots of communications in the week leading up to it about various activities employees could do.

PARTNER WITH EMPLOYEE GROUPS

Collaborate with employee resource groups, ambassadors, and champions to spread the word and make CSR communications more relevant to different employee segments.

- Some companies conduct “road shows” in partnership with their employee resource groups, presenting all-hands meetings and other gatherings. They find this face-to-face interaction, especially when employees see CSR leaders at both headquarters and regional offices, to be impactful. Others use ambassadors and influential employees to attend meetings, conferences, and events to promote their CSR initiatives. They also use their internal message board platform to have ambassadors share volunteer opportunities and drive engagement.

PROVIDE CLEAR CALLS-TO-ACTION

Always include call to action for specific next steps employees can take such as registering for an event, logging volunteer hours, or submitting stories.

- Another member company runs a monthly article on its intranet highlighting volunteer activities from different countries and regions. There is a button for employees to submit their volunteer stories to be featured. Verifying logged volunteer hours is required before employees are featured.

MAKE IT ENGAGING AND ENTERTAINING

Experiment with more engaging formats like video content, friendly competitions, and employee recognition to make CSR communications capture attention.

- A member company created an annual “Evolution Day,” focused on its company values with volunteering in the morning and a celebration in the afternoon. Putting out the communication generates excitement and quickly fills volunteer project spots.

TAILOR FOR DIFFERENT AUDIENCES

Consider the needs of different employee groups, such as field workers or global teams, and adapt your communications approach accordingly, such as with in-person events or translations.

- Another member company has champions at all of its sites who help lead its employee volunteer program and find creative ways to get the word out across shifts, especially for employees who do not have computer access at work. It also sets up tables with CSR information during well-attended headquarters days.

COMMUNICATE CONSISTENTLY

Regularly share CSR updates, stories, and opportunities throughout the year to maintain momentum and engagement.

- One company sent out a global communications email to promote its Month of Service campaign in April. It also worked with its internal communications team to highlight the campaign in various ways such as a monthly global digest, office-specific emails every 2 weeks, and providing a button for employees to submit volunteer stories.



MEASURE AND REFINE

Track metrics like email opens, intranet clicks, and event registrations to assess what is working and continue optimizing your communications approach over time.

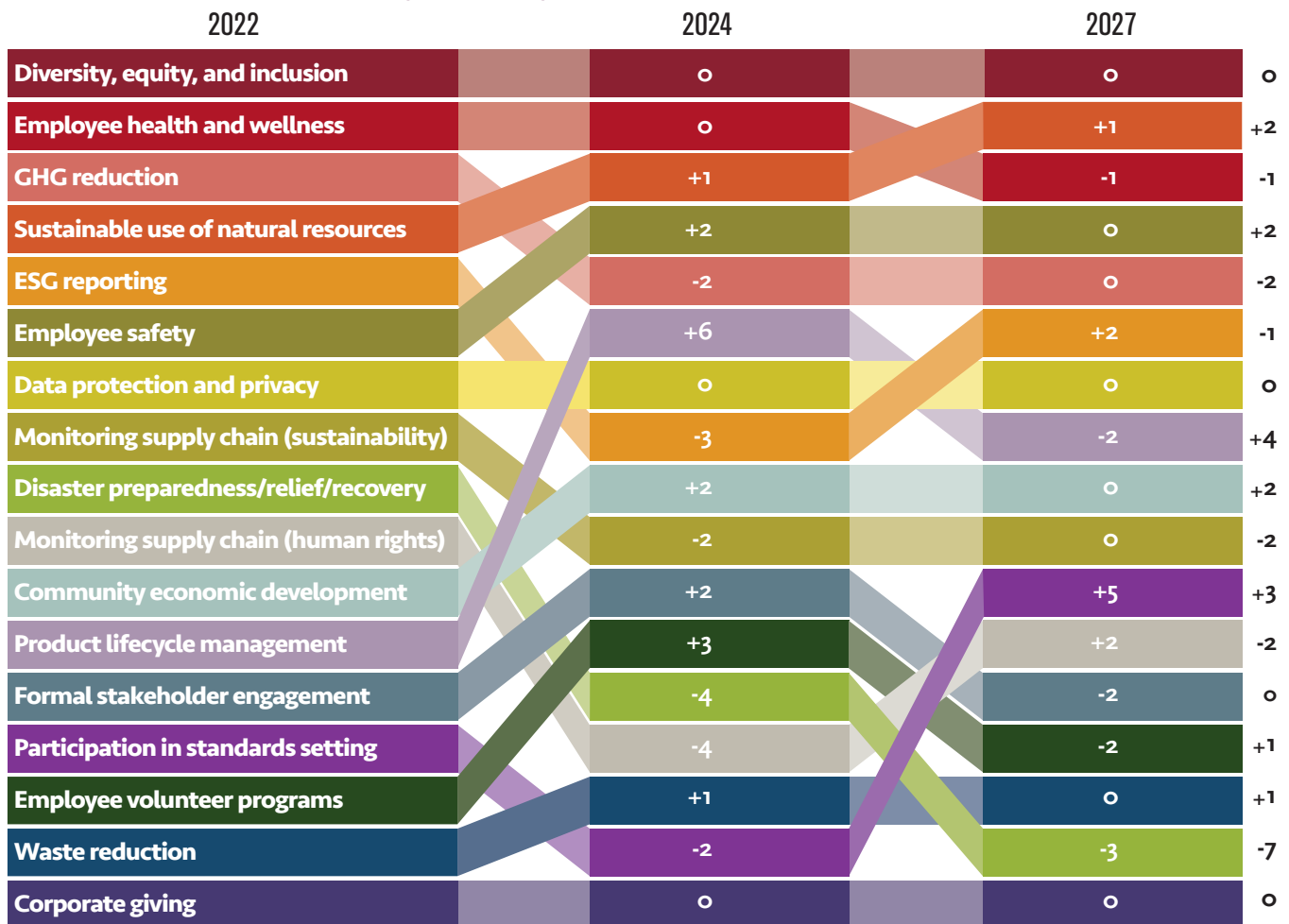
- Members share that this is a continual work in progress and use the data to refine and improve employee communication throughout the year.

By following these best practices, such as leveraging engaging formats like video, providing opportunities for employees to share their stories, offering leadership endorsement via communication, providing clear calls-to-action to register or get involved, and creating focused moments like dedicated service days/weeks supported by multichannel communications leading up to the events, companies can create more impactful and engaging CSR communications that resonate with employees and drive greater participation in initiatives.

Equity and Inclusion in Community Involvement

In BCCCC’s most recent community involvement study, the respondents reported that equity and inclusion, including racial justice and gender equality, are the most prioritized issues addressed through corporate giving and employee volunteer programs. This represents a leap from the 14th spot in 2019. Executive respondents in BCCCC’s State of Corporate Citizenship 2024 report also prioritized diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programs, now and in the future.

EXECUTIVE PRIORITIES—PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

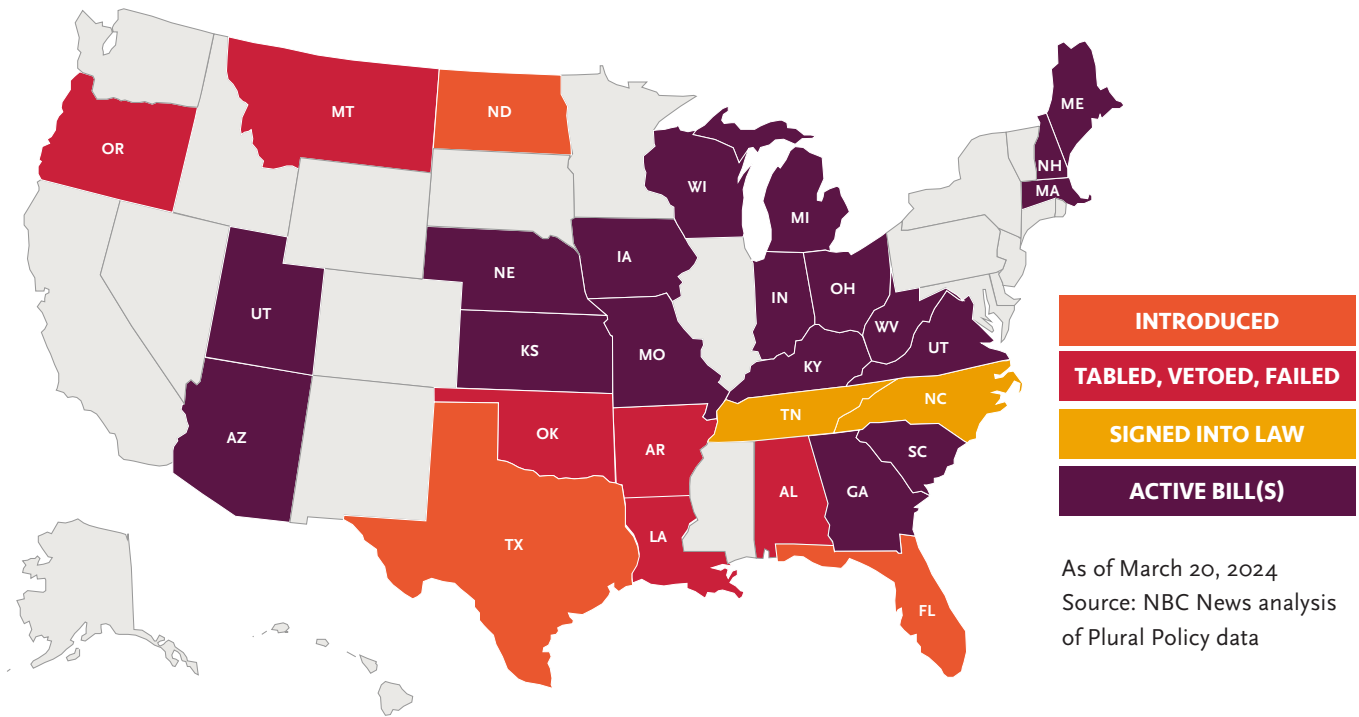


Source: Boston College Center for Corporate Citizenship. (2024). *State of Corporate Citizenship 2024*.

This focus on DEI by corporate leadership has come under fire, given the recent judicial rulings related to race and equity, as well as opposing legislation in parts of the United States.

The recent Supreme Court decision in *Students for Fair Admissions Inc. v. Harvard College and the University of North Carolina* has overturned four decades of precedent regarding affirmative action in college admissions. This ruling has raised concerns among corporations about the potential legal challenges to their DEI programs. However, it is crucial to understand the decision is limited to college admissions and does not directly cover corporate DEI efforts.

WHERE HAS ANTI-DEI LEGISLATION BEEN PROPOSED?



The Importance of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Workplace

Despite the Supreme Court's decision, DEI programs remain vital for businesses to ensure equal opportunities, comply with civil rights obligations, and address existing disparities in the workplace. Studies have shown diverse leadership teams lead to better decision-making, problem-solving, innovation, and financial performance. Companies with more racially and ethnically diverse teams are 36% more likely to outperform their competitors financially.¹⁵

However, disparities persist in the workforce. For example, although Black people represent 11% of the U.S. workforce, they only account for 9% of STEM workers.

Similarly, Latinos make up 17% of the workforce but only 8% of STEM workers.¹⁶ The wage gap is also significant, with Black women earning less than \$0.60 for every \$1 earned by White men with the same education level,¹⁷ and Latinas earning just 57% of what non-LatinX workers were paid in 2022.¹⁸

Corporate Implications and Response

Following the Supreme Court's decision, 13 state attorneys general issued a warning to Fortune 500 CEOs challenging race-based employment practices. This letter has raised concerns among corporations about their DEI programs. In response, companies should conduct internal reviews, use data to justify their decisions, and consider alternative factors such as census tract, language skills, and first-generation college status to promote diversity.

Supporting DEI Initiatives Through Corporate Philanthropy

Some companies may consider backing away from DEI efforts and commitments in light of the recent ruling. However, this would unjustly penalize community-based organizations that rely on corporate support. Instead, companies should use data effectively to justify their decisions and insulate their programs from legal challenges. They should review their programs thoughtfully. For almost all companies, diversity and inclusion are business needs. From a business perspective at least we should examine and acknowledge the importance of these initiatives to both the company and society at large.



LESSON LEARNED



Three sets of guardrails can help orient philanthropy programs to support DEI objectives while staying within the parameters of the law, including the following:

1. Use of inclusion as a remedy for historical racial discrimination
2. Separation of merit and need, with need being a more legitimate factor
3. Align DEI programs with the company's strategic objectives

Companies should engage in sophisticated reviews of their programs, considering factors such as demographics, client base, and strategic expansion plans to justify their DEI efforts.

Advisory Board Insights

A poll conducted among advisory board members revealed 74% of respondents reported their senior leadership as being either generally supportive or very strongly supportive of community involvement programs connected to DEI. Companies are taking various approaches to support and operationalize these programs, including the following:

- Defending programs that have proven to be effective
- Equipping the next generation of scientists
- Examining the role of DEI and social impact
- Maintaining strategic goals
- Reviewing language and application processes for inclusivity
- Engaging employee resource groups to align with DEI focus areas
- Seeking legal support to address concerns and mitigate potential litigation risks

Conclusion

Although the recent Supreme Court decision has raised concerns about corporate DEI programs, it is essential to recognize that these initiatives remain vital for businesses to ensure equal opportunities, address disparities, and drive innovation and financial performance. Companies should approach their DEI efforts thoughtfully, using data to justify their decisions and aligning their programs with strategic objectives. By engaging in proactive discussions, reviewing program language and processes, and seeking legal support when necessary, corporations can continue to support DEI initiatives through their philanthropy and community involvement programs, ultimately benefiting both their companies and the communities they serve.



Everyone in our company is either a STEM professional or supports our STEM professionals. We are a diverse and global company. We support programs locally that bring STEM opportunities to a future and diverse workforce. We also support opportunities that lift up individuals and our communities through education, basic needs, arts and culture, and sustainability.”

ANNIE TOMECEK

Senior Supervisor, Global Community Relations
T.D. Williamson



As a contract research organization in the drug development space, we are constantly looking for ways to inspire the next generation of scientists and technicians. This year, we launched a scholarship program for former foster youth who are pursuing a career in veterinary technology. These students will receive crucial funding for their schooling and ongoing support from CRL vets and vet techs.”

KRISTINA NARTIFF

Manager, CRL Cares Programs
Charles River Labs



For more than 30 years, we have supported the launch and growth of some of today’s most successful women-led brands and have a large number of women entrepreneurs in our vendor community. So it is only natural for us to focus the majority of our charitable efforts championing women’s empowerment, inclusion, and entrepreneurship. The alignment is intentional and authentic.”

KATE SHEEHAN

Senior Manager
QVC



As a company of over 60,000 employees, we have positions in all fields and need qualified employees not only for the traditional hospitality jobs but also for specialized positions such as art curators and marine biologists. That is why one of our main philanthropic focus areas is workforce development. We support workforce development programs in all of our jurisdictions, even if they do not directly connect to MGM Resorts’ hiring their clients.”

VESELA ZEHIREV

Director of Philanthropy and Community Engagement
MGM Resorts International



Quality education is a societal good, and the ability to access it is essential for the long-term success of the workforce. By investing in educational initiatives such as the KPMG Future Leaders Program and KPMG Empower High School Experience, the firm aims to support talented young individuals from underrepresented communities and provide them with opportunities to pursue higher education and develop their leadership skills. This aligns with KPMG’s business priority of attracting and retaining top talent as it helps create a diverse and skilled workforce that can drive innovation and deliver high-quality services to clients. Additionally, by focusing on education, KPMG contributes to building a stronger talent pipeline, which ultimately benefits the firm and the broader business community.”

LIA MANCUSO

Senior Director, Corporate Affairs, Community Impact
KPMG LLP



A key focus of our social impact work is to inspire and prepare young people to pursue STEM careers. As a company founded and led by physician-scientists, Regeneron is committed to fostering the next generation of scientific innovators who can help solve society’s greatest challenges. Through our philanthropic investments, employee volunteerism, and STEM outreach efforts, we drive toward equitable outcomes across our three impact imperatives:

- Expose young minds to the power of science
- Equip students with scientific skills
- Elevate the best and brightest students”

ALI MCDOWELL

Senior Manager, Social Impact
Regeneron Pharmaceuticals, Inc

The Punchlist

Whether you have little time and money for community involvement initiatives or a lot of both, there is something you can be doing today to make progress toward your community involvement goals. Here are recommendations from Advisory Board members about things you can get started on today. Bolder and larger font indicates those actions prioritized by greater numbers of advisory board members.



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Build your network Advance your ideas

Are you a CSR professional looking to share your expertise and advice with others while staying current on emerging issues and leading-edge practices related to your work? Explore the benefits of serving on a BCCCC Advisory Board! The boards are available only to Center members and give you an instant ability to tap into new strategies with your peers. It's also a great way to keep you energized and in the know; these supportive networks will help advance your ideas and keep you motivated.

Benefits of Serving on a BCCCC Advisory Board

COLLABORATION

Looking for new strategies? Want to hear about the experiences of other companies? Participating in an advisory board will give you access to an exclusive cohort of peers and professionals where you can discuss and share best practices.

CHOICES

BCCCC offers a multitude of advisory boards that focus on several areas that may impact your company including ESG Reporting; Community Involvement; Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; Health Equity; and Sustainability.

CREDIBILITY

Stepping up on a bigger platform with recognition from outside of your company gives you a platform to both showcase and build your CSR efforts.

COMMUNICATION

Board members are invited to be named as co-authors of the one or more briefing publications that their advisory boards release every year.





BOSTON COLLEGE
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KNOW MORE. DO MORE. ACHIEVE MORE.

Based in the **Carroll School of Management**, the Boston College Center for Corporate Citizenship combines the most valuable aspects of a professional community and the resources of a leading academic institution for our members. We integrate the perspectives and experience of some of the leading corporate citizenship professionals in the field today with management best practices, helping you align your corporate citizenship objectives and business goals. Center resources support positive outcomes for your functional area, your organization as a whole, and you as a leader.

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