

The Most Impactful **Employee Volunteer Programs** You Need to Know About



Introduction

Creating an Employee Volunteer Program (EVP) is one thing, but creating lasting community impact is another. It's become a no-brainer for companies to implement an EVP into their giving strategies as it comes with a lot of proven benefits, like improving public image, increasing employee retention, boosting employee morale, addressing community issues and more.

However, taking the "if you build it, they will come" approach doesn't foster strong engagement and participation. Successful employee volunteer programs balance the needs of their employees while achieving measurable benefits that move the organization's bottom line.

This is all very possible, and exactly why we've curated a list of innovative EVPs that find unique approaches to addressing community issues while achieving measurable outcomes.

In this guide, we've highlighted some key ingredients that make each of these employee giving programs unique and successful, so you can borrow proven strategies to try with your own program. Each of these snapshots contains an element that can help elevate your community impact, develop your employee skill base, enhance operations and propel your brand.

Note: Throughout the guide, the terms "associates," "employees" and "colleagues" are used interchangeably depending on how the company refers externally to their employees.

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Innovative Employee Volunteer Programs

1. Starbucks Community Service Program

Giving back to the communities it serves and using its scale for good has long stood as a pillar of Starbucks heritage.

Through their [VolunteerMatch Network Subscription](#), Starbucks partners (employees) are able to create, find and join community service projects that are relevant and local to them and the neighborhoods in which they serve. In the last two years, more than 18,000 Starbucks partners have volunteered in over 8,500 projects across the US.

What really stands out with Starbucks' giving efforts is their [Starbucks Service Fellows pilot program with Points of Light](#), where 36 Starbucks partners from 13 cities work at least 20 hours in their stores and 20 hours in local non-profits over six months building capacity and creating new resources and programs for the local organizations.

"Starbucks partners consistently share with us their passion for service both in and out of their stores," said Virginia Tenpenny, vice president of Global Social Impact at Starbucks and executive director of The Starbucks Foundation. "The Service Fellows program powers that passion through philanthropy and partnerships to have the greatest impact. Our Service Fellows program is an innovative approach that combines work, service, and partnerships, a model that will inform how we catalyze our partners and grantees to create enduring change in our communities."



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2. Comcast NBCUniversal

Comcast NBCUniversal celebrates its year-round commitment to volunteerism on Comcast Cares Day, a long-standing company tradition that has grown into a global program across 23 countries. Since the annual day of service began in 2001, employees, their friends, families and community partners have contributed more than 6 million hours of service to more than 10,000 projects. These projects include revitalizing neighborhood parks and schools, teaching digital literacy and jobs skills, and assembling care packages for military service members and veterans.

What makes its employee volunteering program so successful is how accessible it is. In addition to Comcast Cares Day, employees can find volunteer opportunities throughout the year by getting involved in employee resource groups, contributing their unique skills to the community and finding opportunities on the Comcast NBCUniversal volunteer portal. Since volunteering is encouraged and offered, employees can easily mobilize around causes that are near and dear to them while creating measurable impact in their global communities.

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3. LinkedIn

LinkedIn engages employees year-round in charitable giving and volunteer opportunities focused on coaching and mentorship of seekers working directly with LinkedIn's network of nonprofit partners. Time and time again, LinkedIn proves that aligning their company's purpose with their mission of connecting the world's professionals is achievable.

What sets LinkedIn apart is that they take their promise one step further by providing their tech infrastructure for good. By unlocking access to thousands of volunteer opportunities from network partners like Catch-a-Fire, VolunteerMatch and Taproot Foundation, LinkedIn members can search and sign up for skills-based and pro bono volunteer opportunities without leaving LinkedIn's platform.

Internally, employee involvement at LinkedIn can range from leadership opportunities as Social Impact Leads in their 26+ offices, pursuing a local or virtual volunteer opportunity through their [VolunteerMatch Network Subscription](#), or serving on nonprofit boards through LinkedIn's partnership with BoardLead.

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4. IBM Corporate Service Corps

Largely due to their exceptional employee giving programs and engagement practices, IBM was recognized by LinkedIn as a [“Top Companies 2018: Where The US Wants To Work Now.”](#)

IBM launched the pro bono arm of their giving program, [Corporate Service Corps](#), in 2008 as a vehicle for global leadership development. Through the program, employees have a chance to participate in a four-month, pro bono project where teams of 8 to 15 employees are deployed all over the world to assist governments, companies and civic organizations with education, healthcare and economic development work.

Over the last 10 years, IBM’s Corporate Service Corps activated over 4,000 participants from 62 different countries and supported over 340 teams with more than 1,400 projects. Talk about success!

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5. Ingersoll Rand

2017 was the fourth consecutive year Ingersoll Rand was recognized on Corporate Responsibility Magazine's list of the [100 Best Corporate Citizens](#) for their giving initiatives.

The success of employee participation in their "Glocal" (global + local) community initiative is proven through their engagement numbers and has grown exponentially over the years. From 2016 to 2017, employee participation in the initiative increased by 178% (from 4,765 to 13,292 employees).

Across the globe, Ingersoll Rand employees support their local communities on a personal level, and the company assists their employees in contributing both time and financial support to local nonprofit groups and community organizations.

In 2018, for example, 1,800 employees in Georgia, North Carolina and Tennessee volunteered 4,000 hours in a single week with a range of United Way organizations, where they built a homeless center, prepared and served meals and organized snack packages for children.



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6. Humana

In 2016, Humana tracked more than 475,000 employee volunteer hours through [Humana's volunteer network](#). With 41,146 associates (aka employees) in the U.S., each associate, on average, volunteered 8.6 hours of their time to a good cause.

Humana associates are supported and encouraged to volunteer by the company's VTO policy, which gives them paid time off from work to volunteer for activities that positively impact the health and well-being of their communities.

This program is supported by the company's vision to help people achieve lifelong well-being, which goes beyond physical health – it's about living happily with a balanced sense of purpose. Humana recognizes that providing volunteer opportunities gives their associates a tangible way to connect to and be inspired by Humana's Bold Goal, where they aim to improve the health of the communities they serve 20% by 2020. This makes their employee volunteer strategy go beyond an internal engagement program – it's an integral part of their global movement and the company's purpose.

Most recently, Humana's commitment to giving back awarded them the [No. 1 among Health Care Providers](#) for corporate citizenship in Forbes and JUST Capital's "JUST 100" list.



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7. Nielsen

Nielsen Global Impact Day (NGID) engages and mobilizes 25,000+ associates in supporting nonprofit organizations through hands-on volunteering, pro bono work, in-kind giving and skills-based volunteering. NGID volunteer events are coordinated by local leaders around the world who work with local nonprofits to create activities that enable and empower their fellow associates to make a difference.

NGID is just one component of Nielsen's wide-ranging volunteer programs through Nielsen Cares. During [Hunger Action Month](#), Nielsen associates donated, raised, served, or packed over 195,000 meals to families in more than 60 countries during 2018. Throughout the year, they engage associates with year-round skills-based volunteering events and pro bono projects that provided \$21.2 million in data, insights and services to nonprofits during 2018.

Recently, a team of Nielsen developers and data scientists, alongside external volunteers, spent 24 hours in the Nielsen Tech Hub in New York City to design chatbot software that can be used by the World Food Programme (WFP) to conduct food insecurity surveys, in support of WFP's mission to assist people affected by hunger in over 80 countries.

Nielsen's extensive volunteering and pro bono programs not only apply to helping the needs of nonprofits and their communities, they also empower staff by giving them opportunities to refine their skills by doing good.

Nielsen is evolving their employee volunteering plan by focusing more on collaboration with the organizations they work with instead of doing the work for them, creating more lasting impact.

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8. Deloitte IMPACT Day

Deloitte's IMPACT Day has been around for 20 years. With more than 70,000 Deloitte professionals mentoring and supporting people in their communities today, it's considered "a best-in-class corporate day of service" by Realized Worth.

On IMPACT Day, Deloitte professionals and leaders come together in 80 cities across the U.S. to work on more than 1,000 projects for nearly 190,000 collective hours of service. Activities take many forms and include developing strategic business plans for social enterprises, delivering lessons on business ethics and values in schools, hosting skills-building workshops for nonprofit leaders and providing skills-development programs and mentoring to young people.

In 2018, partners and staff across 25 Deloitte offices in Southeast Asia concurrently took VTO to give back through various activities and initiatives involving the community they live and work in. Projects included conducting skills workshops for refugee children, delivering groceries to families in need and organizing a blood donation drive in Kuala Lumpur.

Deloitte's culture of volunteering has received accolades including being ranked No. 6 by Fortune and Great Place to Work on their 2018 list of the ["50 Best Workplaces for Giving Back."](#)



More than **70,000** Deloitte professionals mentor and support people in their communities today

9. BlueCross BlueShield

In 2017, BlueCross BlueShield (BCBS)'s staff engagement rate was 82% when surveyed about their volunteering and other CSR programs.

BCBS's employee volunteer program offers VTO, giving employees the flexibility of volunteering during their work day, up to 20 hours per year. BCBS also rewards giving back during personal time. Through their "Dollars for Doers" program, BCBS grants \$250 to an eligible nonprofit in honor of any employee that gives 40 or more hours of their personal time in a calendar year to that organization. Plus, every year three employee teams who create and carry out a volunteer project earn a \$500 donation for the nonprofit they supported.

As a result, in 2017, 1,660 employees used some or all their VTO and 17,758 volunteer hours were tracked.

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10. Bank of America

Bank of America's volunteer impact led to The International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE) recognizing them through their Global Corporate Volunteer Award – the only global award to formally celebrate excellence in corporate volunteering.

In 2017, Bank of America's employee volunteers contributed 2 million hours to help address community needs, from mentoring to building affordable housing to packaging food for the hungry. In addition, employees donated \$30 million, which was doubled through the company's matching gifts program totaling nearly \$60 million in funding to help address pressing social issues.

Bank of America supports volunteering efforts through programs such as a robust volunteer platform, volunteer grants directed to nonprofit organizations where employees volunteer regularly, matching gifts that double the impact of employee donations and additional employee giving opportunities.

Bank of America's volunteerism has evolved into a strategic and comprehensive platform, integrated with their business, philanthropic, and enterprise initiatives, including the Special Olympics. 260 Bank of America employees were official volunteers for the games and over 2,500 employees were Fans in the Stands supporting the athletes competing in Los Angeles. In 2015 alone, Bank of America employees volunteered over 32,000 hours in support of Special Olympics.



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11. Intuit We Care & Give Back

Intuit's signature "We Care & Give Back" program has been a driving catalyst for employee volunteerism, and the numbers prove it.

In 2018, 2,647 nonprofits were supported through Intuit's volunteer efforts. Intuit employees volunteered 36,652 hours, and \$4.9 million was donated to varying causes through the company's volunteer-led programs.

Intuit encourages their staff to pursue their passions by using their VTO to volunteer and request a donation match to qualified nonprofits.

We Care and Give Back is Intuit's commitment to serve communities around the world. In tandem with this program, the Intuit Foundation provides every U.S. employee with 4 days of paid time off to volunteer and matches up to \$5,000 in donations to nonprofit organizations.



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12. PwC Young People Project

PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC)'s volunteer participation has increased by 12% between 2016 and 2017, and that's due to their pro bono Young People Project. This project's goal is to help address youth unemployment issues in Canada and to equip emerging leaders for the future of work through skills-based volunteering.

Their goal is to use technology to provide digital literacy training, coaching experiences to at least 10,000 young people across the country by 2020.

In 2017, more than 400 young people in Canada were served through volunteer mentoring experiences. This program stands out in how it connects PwC's people directly with the next generation of innovators while aligning their mission with community purpose.



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13. U.S. Bank

U.S. Bank leads community involvement through the [U.S. Bank Volunteers program](#) where they provide access to benefits and events that support both company-sponsored volunteer activities and individual interests.

To make volunteering easy for their employees, U.S. Bank created the Community Possible Employee Center, an online platform for employees to engage employees with their local communities. The search function is powered by VolunteerMatch and provides access to a wide variety of volunteer opportunities that match individual passion with local nonprofit need.

They take those efforts one step further by encouraging U.S. Bank employees to share their skills and knowledge with their communities through more than one million hours of volunteer service with a variety of nonprofit organizations.

U.S. Bank also practices what they preach by mobilizing consumers to give to their community. By partnering with VolunteerMatch for the last few [#GivingTuesdays](#) to raise awareness about the importance of giving time, U.S. Bank created more than 660,000 impressions via social media, blogs, and branch displays with this message. Employees demonstrated their passion for [#GiveTime](#) by volunteering 24,800 hours that week.

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14. UnitedHealth Group

UnitedHealth Group's year-round giving program supports employees' desires and efforts to give back to the communities where they live and work. Through charitable contributions and volunteering, their people are deeply and personally involved in improving the health and welfare of their neighbors.

UnitedHealth Group partners with nonprofits like VolunteerMatch to work on [studies on the positive health benefits of volunteering](#). By doing this, they are another shining example of how a company can tie their mission in with purpose in the community. UnitedHealth Group's mission is to help people live healthier lives. That translates into providing valuable resources for nonprofits and equips volunteers with more good reasons to volunteer in the community.

In 2017, their employee volunteer hours totaled 1.5 million.



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15. Heineken

With business goals aligned with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, Heineken is on a ten-year-long sustainability journey to “brew a better world.” Launched in 2010, the program is on track to meet its targets and reduce global environmental impact despite the company's growth.

Heineken unwaveringly aligns these sustainability efforts with how their employees give back. In 2015, for example, after a South Bronx neighborhood suffered from extensive fire damage, over 100 Heineken USA employees helped renovate a 32,500 square-foot garden and green space for the community to use.

Through its [Day of Giving program](#), Heineken and its subsidiaries contributed \$27 million to communities, including cash donations, time, in-kind donations and management costs in 2017, with more than 2,700 employees in 32 markets spending an estimated 34,000 hours volunteering.

In the past few years, Heineken employees spent more than 7,500 hours volunteering by delivering holiday meals, creating community gardens or raising funds for charities.

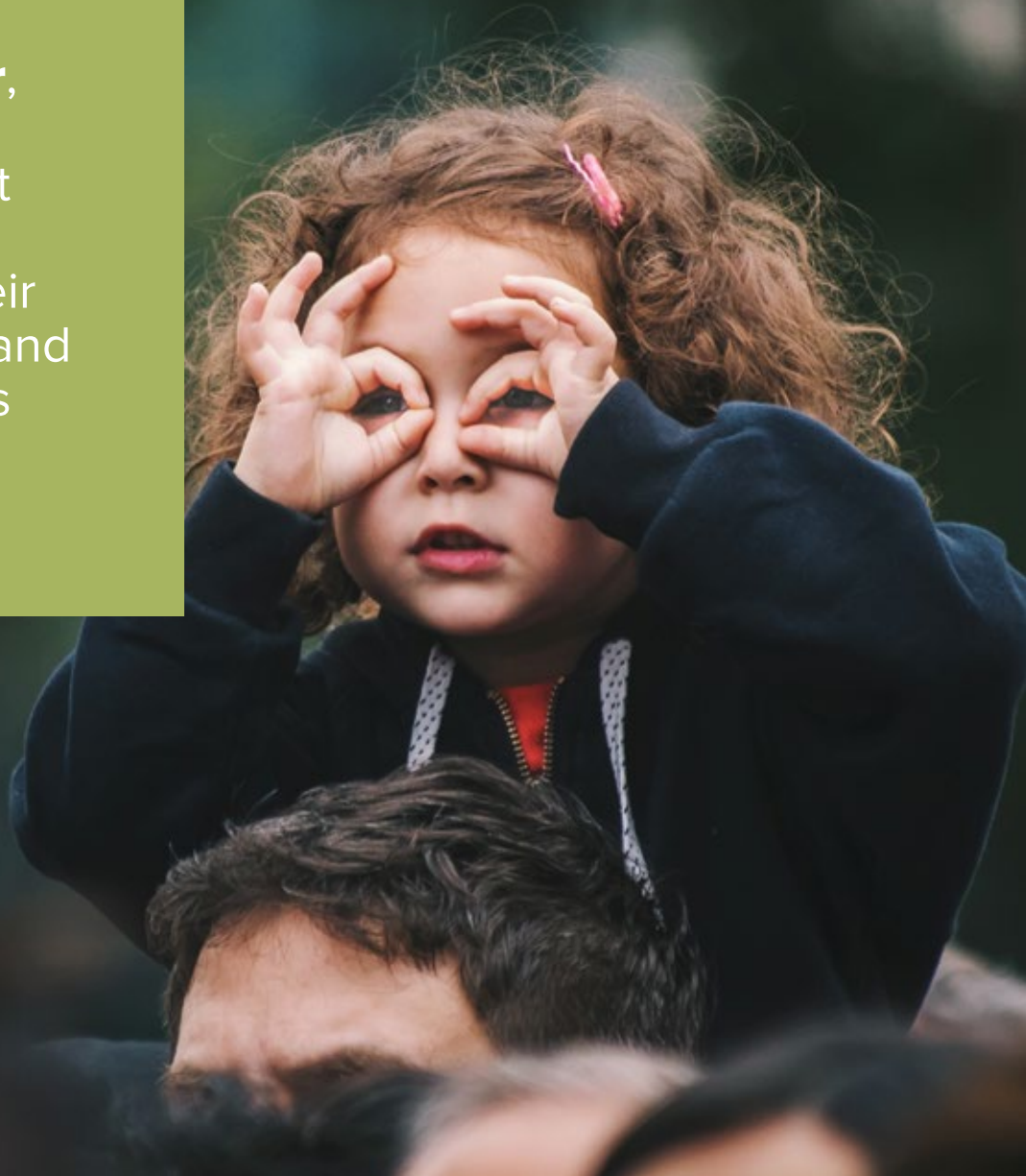


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Conclusion

These are just a few snapshots of EVPs that have a meaningful impact in their communities. Within each of these stories presents a common narrative: successful programs have a clear, guiding mission that attracts and engages their employees and communities they serve. Whether it's one event that rallies everyone together or a prioritized culture of service that speaks directly to the emotions of the employees, EVPs are a powerful force in the mission of any company. And it's by nurturing the needs of your employees that leads to fostering impactful work out in the world.

Successful programs have a **clear, guiding mission** that attracts and engages their employees and communities they serve



About VolunteerMatch

VolunteerMatch believes everyone should have the chance to make a difference. As the web's largest volunteer engagement network, serving 122,000 participating nonprofits, 100 network partners, and 13 million annual visitors, VolunteerMatch offers unique, award-winning solutions for individuals, nonprofits and companies to make this vision a reality. Since its launch in 1998, VolunteerMatch has helped the social sector attract more than \$13.4 billion worth of volunteer services. Learn more about VolunteerMatch at [VolunteerMatch.org](https://www.volunteermatch.org), and follow @VolunteerMatch.

About SmartSimple Software

SmartSimple is a global leader in online corporate giving, employee engagement, and grants management solutions. Its flexible software transforms how enterprises manage, track, and measure the full impact of their CSR programs. Pushing the limits on the most complex process challenges in corporate responsibility and philanthropy, SmartSimple delivers innovative, client-centric solutions that strengthen their triple-bottom-line. SmartSimple's technology supports some of the largest Fortune 500 brands, foundations, and government agencies globally. With offices in New York, Toronto, and Dublin, SmartSimple connects over 200,000 active monthly users in more than 192 countries. For more information, or to request a live demo, visit [smartsimple.com](https://www.smartsimple.com) or call us at 1.866.239.0991.