

# The Examiner

<http://www.theexaminernews.com/corporate-support-for-charities-often-represents-a-companys-values/>

## Corporate Support for Charities Often Represents a Company's Values

[Examiner Media](#) | Jul 04, 2014 |

By Peter Chieco



In the investment world, we ask a great deal about companies that are just starting out, companies with innovative products and services, companies with promising futures and even companies with healthy profits.

Now, many also ask the next question: What are they doing philanthropically? The answer may dictate whether or not a company is one in which we are comfortable investing.

I find that more and more employees are encouraged – indeed, often expected – to volunteer for charitable causes. It is fast becoming part of corporate culture. Corporate volunteerism is more often than not an expression of the deeply held values of a company's leadership.

And, not surprisingly, corporate volunteering may even help boost corporate earnings.

Business leaders are finding that when employees participate in volunteer programs and feel a sense of purpose, there is a heightened sense of goodwill and a boost to morale – both of which may lead to increased productivity. And employees who take pride in their company tend not to leave to seek potentially greener pastures elsewhere.

Some human resources professionals say that volunteering is an effective way to develop leadership skills. Volunteer programs can provide strong platforms for leadership development, including project management, goal setting, problem solving, mentoring and communications.

Volunteerism also forges strong bonds between employees and hones interpersonal skills, leading, hopefully, to better communication between bosses and co-workers.

A study by [PricewaterhouseCoopers](#) discovered that 88 percent of so-called “millennials” surveyed gravitated toward companies with pronounced corporate social responsibility programs, and 86 percent would consider leaving if these programs no longer met their expectations.

Of course, a business that strengthens its local community through charitable outreach is also planting seeds for its own growth: the community is more likely to support that business. For instance, if the business engages in medical-based charities, the business may be helping to grow a healthier pool of prospective employees and customers.

June is also Global Volunteer Month. At Morgan Stanley, June traditionally is the month in which my co-workers and I volunteer at food pantries, pack backpacks of meals for hungry children or help in countless other ways as part of a longstanding commitment to help feed the hungry.

This month, more than 200 volunteers from Morgan Stanley, Yonkers Public Schools, Rotary Club of East Yonkers, Yonkers Community Action Program (YCAP), organizers from KaBOOM!, and residents of the Yonkers community joined forces to create a new playground at Yonkers Public Schools.

The design of the playground was based on children’s drawings created at a special event in April.

A playground is more than a playground; it is a brain expander, friend-maker and muscle-builder. Morgan Stanley’s partner, KaBOOM! a national nonprofit dedicated to building spaces for play, has been helping since 1996 to ensure that children get the balance of active play they need to become healthy and successful adults.

The new playground will serve some 450 Yonkers children. Since current play opportunities in their neighborhood are limited, the new space will provide an outdoor oasis and encourage

play for students and their families. This will be the seventh playground built by Morgan Stanley, KaBOOM! and a host of different volunteer organizations nationwide.

There are many ways to express our social, environmental or ethical values. Participating in volunteer projects is just one way to support the betterment of us all. Our volunteer efforts, and our investments, can make a difference communally and globally.

*Peter Chieco is a wealth adviser with Morgan Stanley Wealth Management in Greenwich, Conn. He can be reached at 203-625-4897.*

*The information provided in this article is not a solicitation to purchase or sell investments. Any information presented is general in nature and not intended to provide individually tailored investment advice. The strategies and/or investments referenced may not be suitable for all investors as the appropriateness of a particular investment or strategy will depend on an investor's individual circumstances and objectives. Investing involves risks and there is always the potential of losing money when you invest. The views expressed herein are those of the author and may not necessarily reflect the views of Morgan Stanley Smith Barney LLC, Member SIPC.*