



Giving Back ... from the Bottom of Our Hearts

When our agency began to make charitable gifts on behalf of our clients during the holiday season of 2002, everyone – from staff members to clients – was delighted. Heifer International, the beneficiary of the gifts, provided animals – from bees to goats, cows, and geese – to help people in underdeveloped countries become financially independent, lifting them out of poverty. Since donating to Heifer, we've helped nearly 600 families end their cycle of poverty and, in the process, improve their health.

GROWING HEARTSATWORK

Over the next decade, our charitable giving initiatives expanded, along with the number of employees involved and range of activities under the agency's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) umbrella, which we call **heartsATwork**. In fact, since its inception, AbelsonTaylor has earned a reputation as an agency with social responsibility in its DNA. With more than 55% of our employees identifying as millennials, we recognize that giving back is a prime motivator in recruiting and retaining these talented individuals.

Today, heartsATWork supports 12-14 charitable organizations annually, which can include hospitals, youth outreach organizations, homeless institutions, schools, camps, and more. Our employees can select from a range of organizations to support. In 2014, for example, our Summerfest initiative supported two charitable organizations—Urban Initiatives and La Rabida Children's Hospital. For Winterfest, we chose to help Youth Outreach Services, Letters to Santa, Imerman's Angels, and the Grace Place. And because every CSR initiative is different, our folks are given creative freedom in designing the campaigns to recruit volunteers. The results are campaigns that are fun, colorful, and at times humorous.

Since recruitment for each of our CSR initiatives is critical to each program's success, members of the heartsATwork committee broadcast their programs through posters placed around the office. These are combined with email blasts to invite employees to join in. When possible, we also post

photos on both Facebook and Instagram to engage participants, followers and fans alike.

Because the agency has a strong communications team in place, the heartsATwork Committee keeps the agency apprised of every initiative through multiple channels.

SOME OF THE PROGRAMS WE SUPPORTED IN 2014 INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

Purple Day for Epilepsy Awareness – AbelsonTaylor raised more than \$900 dollars and collected several bins of gently-

used clothing for the Epilepsy Foundation of Greater Chicago. Photos from the Purple Bake Sale appeared on both Instagram and Facebook. Clients also took notice: one with an epilepsy treatment applauded our commitment to epilepsy patients.

Summerfest – In July and August, AbelsonTaylor partnered with two not-for-profits.

- **Urban Initiatives:** Many of us spent the afternoon playing with children or painting wall murals for this organization, which

gives youngsters the chance to belong to – and play for – a soccer team.

- **La Rabida Children's Hospital:** We collected and filled more than 250 backpacks with school supplies and healthy snacks for families of children in this facility, which treats chronic illnesses, developmental disabilities, abuse, and trauma. The event appeared in *Chicago Defender*, a weekly local newspaper, and Reuters picked up the story – helping make our Facebook posts a “top trending topic.”

We ended Summerfest with a raffle of wine and spirits – donated by employees – that raised more than \$3,800 for both organizations.

Winterfest – This is by far the agency's most popular event, with nearly 200 employees volunteering in a range of activities.

- For *Letters to Santa*, we answered 65 letters, resulting in 600 gifts delivered to 115 children.
- For *Youth Outreach Services*, we arranged 150 holiday gifts to be delivered to 82 needy teens.



AT staff together supporting Purple Day, dedicated to increasing awareness about epilepsy worldwide.

Humanitarian Awards



Dale Taylor, President and CEO (left) of AbelsonTaylor, and Brenda J. Wolf, President and CEO of La Rabida Children's Hospital (right), enjoying time with a patient and his mom during the AT backpack drive.

- For *Grace's Place*, we collected winter coats that warmed Chicago's homeless – young and old alike.

THE REWARDS OF GIVING BACK

One of the most rewarding outcomes of heartsATwork is the response we've received from clients, employees, and our HR Department. The number of those participating in our philanthropic activities has soared, and our staff has

expressed renewed enthusiasm for the agency's giving-back program.

HR, which has been sharing our program with recruiters and prospective employees, indicated that people consider heartsATwork a reason for applying to, and joining, the agency.

AbelsonTaylor's CSR program has set it apart from competitors. We even embed information about our heartsATwork program in new business development and capabilities presentations. Our focus on social responsibility has also benefited our current client relationships because it demonstrates our commitment to health and wellness and to the patients client brands aim to help.

AbelsonTaylor is located at 33 West Monroe Street, Chicago, IL 60603-5315. To find out more about their charitable efforts, contact Kristen McGirk at 312-894-5500 or kristen.mcgirk@abelsontaylor.com.

Note: To read more about AbelsonTaylor's work with charities, go to http://www.hmexchange.com/archive/Stone_1212.pdf and http://www.hmexchange.com/archive/Stone_1109.pdf

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