



TWIN CITIES

Promoting Workplace Volunteerism

## **2010 Awards Luncheon and 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration**

April 29, 2010 | Minneapolis, MN

Keynote Address by Jeff Hoffman:

### **The Global State of Volunteering and Service**

Leah, thank you for the kind introduction. I am honored to be with you today as you celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Corporate Volunteer Council–Twin Cities. You should be very proud of both the work you have accomplished as well as sustaining such a vital group. Over the years I have been involved with establishing CVCs and working with them to both increase their effectiveness and their membership. From what I am learning, you are effective and you have a strong membership. I wish I could say that about all CVCs and of those cities that do not have CVCs but should. This is a celebration, but also a time to take stock of where you have been and how you can chart a course for the future in the fast-changing landscape of volunteering, philanthropy and civic engagement. You have much to base your future on. The Twin Cities' ranking of No. 1 in volunteering for U.S. cities by the Bureau of Labor Statistics Survey commissioned by the Corporation for National and Community Service is outstanding! Last year I sat in the audience at the National Conference on Service and Volunteering, held in San Francisco, and personally witnessed your CVC win the Points of Light Institute/HandsOn Network 2009 CVC of the Year Award. We have much to celebrate today while we are together, and I plan to talk about what we can do now to celebrate the future.

The question I have been asked to give perspective on is about trends and collaborations: how do corporate volunteering and CVCs move into the next decade and create bigger impact? Let me start with a global view, then look at what is happening nationally, then on the state level, cities and our local community and then to the work of individual companies. And my hope is that I can illustrate that we are all interconnected, and the more we can synergize and collaborate, the greater the positive impact on society.

One thought I want to put out there for you is “volunteering versus problem solving.” My good friend and mentor Senator Harris Wofford discussed this with me last month over dinner when I was in Washington. Harris, as most of you know, is our senior statesman of service. He worked with Gandhi in India, marched with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., helped Sargent Shriver start the Peace Corps and was CEO of the Corporation for National and Community Service. Harris said that he really never considered himself a volunteer but a problem solver. Now, I am not suggesting we leave here today and change our nomenclature, but what he was saying really is critical to our work. We serve to make positive change, we serve to solve serious social and environmental challenges, we serve to help people in need with the hope that together we will all have a bright future. Harris is reminding all of us why we volunteer.

Let's take a look at the global and national landscape.

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Just look online, pick up a newspaper or watch the evening news and you see that there are a lot of challenges in the world. And the challenges in once far-off locations are challenges that we must address. We are moving into a global economy that is affecting all of us, whether you are a small local company or a global company based locally, such as Cargill. We all need to work for healthy communities and a healthy world. It is critical for our businesses success, as healthy communities mean healthy customers. It is smart business to be involved and engaged. Governments, foundations, nonprofits and businesses cannot solve (or fund) all of the solutions. It takes engaged citizens to truly create change. A change that is effective and sustainable. Water issues in Africa, tolerance in Europe, air pollution in China, poverty in India, education in the United States. Each one of these issues is not unique to the region I mentioned, but something that we all share. Volunteerism is making an impact on all of these issues. Engineers building wells, Arab/Jewish alliances working to stop bullying and foster understanding of differences, scientists donating their time to reduce pollution, social entrepreneurship creating industries and therefore jobs, employees reading and mentoring children. Sometimes the volunteers are serving in their own communities, sometimes they are dispatched where they can provide the valuable services that are not available locally or to teach skills for self-sufficiency. Companies are providing valuable resources to help Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) better do their jobs. The Brookings Institution, the Points of Light Corporate Service Council and the International Association of Volunteer Efforts' (IAVE) Corporate Volunteer Council have all been working to provide companies with the tools and resources to better equip their employees within countries, and those they want to deploy to their locations, to create lasting impact.

Before I leave the global stage, I should mention that next year is the 10th anniversary of the United Nations' International Year of the Volunteer. United Nations Volunteers will be celebrating throughout 2011, beginning with their launch event at the biannual IAVE Conference to be held in Singapore in January.

Here in the United States we have a long history of volunteerism. The founding of our nation more than 230 years ago happened because of a brave group of individuals who could imagine a better life for the colonists and gave of their time, intellect and determination to forge a new nation. And what better early example of a community working together than neighbors coming together for a barn raising. Fast-forward to the last century and we saw volunteerism become more formalized in nonprofits, civic organizations, faith-based institutions and companies. National service beyond the military appeared during World War II with the Conservation Corps, then the Peace Corps, VISTA (celebrating its 45th anniversary this year) AmeriCorps, Senior Corps and Learn and Serve America. We have seen presidents supporting service and volunteerism. President George H.W. Bush created the Points of Light Foundation with a merger of the National Volunteer Center. President Bill Clinton established AmeriCorps, President George W. Bush established USA Freedom Corps and its Business Strengthening America, in which many of you were members and I co-chaired. And now President Barack Obama has established the White House Office of Social Innovation and Civic Participation. Last week I had the privilege of being in Washington, D.C., for the Service Nation Summit, held during National Volunteer Week and on the one-year anniversary of the signing into law of the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act. This was a bipartisan effort led by Senator Orrin Hatch and Senator Kennedy. The bill was under

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both of their names, but after passage by the Senate, Sen. Hatch called on the Senate to unanimously rename the bill the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act after his good friend and colleague. This is one of the last true bipartisan efforts we have seen coming out of Washington. And service truly is bipartisan. There is much work to be done, and I encourage you to contact your respective House members and encourage them to vote for the full appropriation that was authorized in the Act. When the Act is fully realized, we will take AmeriCorps from 75,000 members to 250,000 members. This is a very cost-effective way of helping to assist with and help solve some of our most serious problems. There is also the Social Innovation Fund, which has been getting a lot of attention that will hopefully help develop models that are scalable to assist the important work of nonprofits. The Act has a lesser-known component, and that is the Volunteer Generation Fund. This fund, when funded at an appropriate level, will support organizations such as your own HandsOn Twin Cities to more effectively connect those who want to serve with opportunities and better develop the capacity of nonprofits to more effectively utilize volunteers. Speaking of HandsOn Twin Cities, I had the opportunity this morning to visit the HandsOn offices and meet with its staff and learn more about the amazing work they are doing in your community.

Let me move to the state level as AmeriCorps and Volunteer Generation, while funded federally, is and will be administered in most cases on the state level through the State Service Commissions. I chair the State Commission in California and have seen firsthand the work that AmeriCorps members do and I know do here in Minnesota. In California, we have elevated the executive director position of the Commission to the Cabinet level, and we have Karen Baker, the nation's first Secretary of Service and Volunteering appointed by our governor, Arnold Schwarzenegger. Having this position has proven critical, as volunteers are part of the solution just as the other secretaries and their respective fields are, such as education, commerce, labor, disasters and employment development. Also in California, we have recently established a statewide CVC, staffed by the Commission office, called the California Business Partners Program. We have a meeting next week in Sacramento in conjunction with the governor and first lady's Medals of Service Awards gala and the State Commission Meeting. While our business leaders are in town, we will be meeting with our legislators talking about the state Commission efforts and business volunteering. We also have a consumer-facing program to connect Californians with volunteer opportunities and to encourage them to serve. We call this California Volunteers; in fact we label all of our state-level programs under the California Volunteers banner.

Locally, you exemplify an engaged community as evidenced by your CVC award and national ranking. There is a movement to take the inertia of the volunteer movement to cities across America with the Cities of Service initiative. Launched by Mayor Michael Bloomberg and the city of New York last year, the mayor has been leading an effort to engage mayors across the nation to be a City of Service and to create a Chief Service Officer within a city. I have seen many instances where businesses are playing an integral role in the establishment of both the Cities of Service and the Chief Service Officer. HandsOn Action Centers and Volunteer Centers are also and should be integral to the process. You, a strong CVC, have made the job that much easier for your two cities.

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In our remaining time, let's take a look at the changes in workplace volunteering. Note I used the term workplace and not corporate. I did that purposely, as what we do in corporate volunteering is engaging our employees. Corporations are not the only entities with employees. Medium-sized and small businesses, governments, hospitals, nonprofits, universities – all have employees, and I have seen some outstanding employee volunteer programs at these types of organizations. I'm not suggesting you change your name; I am merely pointing out that most people work, and employee volunteering strategies and tactics have a broader application.

I have been involved with workplace volunteering for more than 25 years. I have seen many different models for effective programs. There is not a right and a wrong way of doing it. Company cultures, products, locations, work force, community needs, and regulatory issues – all play a big part in the design. Let me use an example of how one company can have a program with an overarching theme but manifests itself differently. The Walt Disney Company is the world's largest entertainment and media company. Disney VoluntEARS is the name of the employee volunteer program. Just looking at the United States, they have sites ranging from one employee to 60,000 employees. The latter, of course, is Walt Disney World Resort in central Florida, the nation's largest single-site private employer. They are a seven-days-a-week, 24-hour-a-day operation that has a huge impact on the economy and culture of central Florida. There are things that the company and VoluntEARS do in Florida, due to the size and scope of the operation that would not make sense in New York City, where Disney has 7,000 employees who primarily work in a Monday-through-Friday office environment. And then there are both Disney Stores and a Disney Consumer Products office here in the Twin Cities that also have Disney VoluntEARS who are engaged in this community. There are way more people in this room than there are Disney employees in the Twin Cities, so you can see how the difference needs to be addressed between the sites and types of business. Whether VoluntEARS are in Florida, Tokyo, Paris or Mumbai, they focus on children in need but also respond to interests of the employees and needs of the local communities.

As workplace volunteering has matured, it has increasingly taken on different forms. What were once primarily group episodic projects have turned into an array of types of programs. Also, where the program is housed within a company has changed. Originally, such as with Disney, volunteering was housed in human resources. Now in many companies, it is part of a company's philanthropic and community relations group. This helps foster the trend of looking at all of companies' giving, dollars, in-kind support, product donations and volunteering as part of the same tool box. Companies are looking at the total investment. How can the company best use its resources to maximize the work of the chosen organization's mission while adding value to the company and its employees? Pro bono and skill-based volunteering is one way companies are better utilizing their expertise.

Let's look at a couple of slides that illustrates the different types of volunteering and the impact those activities make. The first slide illustrates the spectrum of service from the one-time project on the far left to the strategically focused in-depth partnership on the right. You can see the progression of the level of engagement. All of these have their place. A charity that is conducting a walk-a-thon could not do so without the volunteers that come out for one day and work registration and collect the pledges,

monitor the route, staff the water stations and cheer on the walkers. This can be an important source of revenue, build a relationship between the participants and the organization and build awareness for the cause. For the company, it can be fun team building, create visibility and demonstrate a company's support for the cause and is often an easier sell when recruiting employees to volunteer. But let's take a look at skills-based volunteering, or more often called pro bono volunteering. The nonprofit sector is increasingly being tasked to do more, more often, with fewer resources. This has been particularly evident over the last two years with the downturn in the economy. Organizations need help with strategic plans, financial management, human resources, marketing and communications, staff development, volunteer management and capacity building. Within our companies, we have people who have expertise in these various areas. This is beyond the important aspect of board placement and participation. Pro bono volunteering specifically will address a need or deficiency in an organization with the goal of making it more effective in achieving its mission. One issue that many nonprofits face that business can help with is scalability. How do you take an effective program that is meeting community and societal needs and grow it so more people are served with the same quality, and hopefully as the program grows, more efficiency. Let's take a look at the next slide. This one is fascinating to me as it illustrates that the number of volunteers involved in an activity has an inverted effect on long-term impact. Example: The hundred volunteers at the walk-a-thon we discussed were critical for that day. And those efforts will aid the organization in the near term with the money raised and the visibility and relationships made. But look at the pro bono work done by a small few in taking the organization to scale, which will have a long-term sustainable effect on the viability of the organization to provide more services and better impact the problems that it is working to solve. For a company, it deepens the relationship with the organization and its desire to help solve serious problems. It provides an opportunity for its employees to use their skills in a different way, to not only help the organization but also to help refine and develop their skills for their personal growth and for the benefit of the company. It is an overall win-win-win situation.

As mentioned, many companies are looking at how they can make a greater impact with their investments for the community, the issue, the organization and the company. Philanthropy, community relations, volunteerism and cause-related marketing are now being planned and executed in a more holistic fashion, creating exciting results. Let me use a Disney example that I was instrumental in creating. Earlier this year, Disney Parks had an initiative called Give A Day, Get A Disney Day. This was a continuation of the What Will You Celebrate campaign, where last year you could get in free to a Disney Theme Park on your birthday. With what has gone on economically in the country, there was a desire to do a cause marketing campaign that would not only generate an incremental increase in Park attendance but would also have a community benefit at the same time. With Disney's long history of supporting volunteering both with its employees as well as through its voice with children and families through such platforms as Disney Channel, it was a natural extension of this core company value. Working with the Points of Light Institute and its HandsOn Network, a plan was crafted where a day of service, once validated, would mean a Disney Park experience for the volunteer. Here are the less-obvious benefits of this campaign. HandsOn technology was invested in by Disney to handle both the expected volume but also to create a mechanism for the validation of the service, which did not previously exist. This investment will serve HandsOn and volunteer matching for many years to come.

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Local HandsOn Action Centers and Volunteer Centers saw a dramatic increase in their traffic and enabled them to register thousands of new volunteers that they can interact with in the future. In order to meet the demand, Centers were given seed grants to work with nonprofits in the community to develop projects. In many cases, this helped strengthen existing, and build new, relationships between community organizations and the Volunteer Centers. The Disney campaign brought additional awareness of local Action Centers, the HandsOn brand, the notion that volunteering is not only important but can be fun and promoted families volunteering together. For Disney it was a campaign whereby the company could demonstrate further that it is socially responsible, cares about the communities where its guests (customers) live (in addition to the communities where Disney has a presence), put a spotlight on the internal Disney VolunteARS program, showcase the underutilized Muppets as the Give A Day “spokescharacters,” and achieve the goals of a major marketing campaign with a huge amount of press to supplement the ad buys. Disney also continued to invest in Family Volunteer Day, a HandsOn initiative, as a way to further invest in the volunteer movement and encourage youth to volunteer. There are many ways a company can do this on a small scale or on a big scale. Target has also been instrumental in encouraging its customers to volunteer with their past involvement with National Volunteer Week and encouraging members of communities to get involved.

Volunteering needs to be invested in, just as companies invest in other issues and causes, for it truly to be able to effect social change and address some of societies more serious issues as well as supporting important cultural programs. Volunteering is a cost-effective way to address needs, but it does have a cost.

One last note I would like to mention is family volunteering. What better quality family time is there than working together for the benefit of the community? Youth can make an import contribution today and develop the passion for giving back that will stay with them for life. Many schools have service learning programs, and often there are service graduation requirements. One way to grow an employee program is to develop opportunities where employees can help their children fulfill these requirements through the company program. It helps build a close relationship between the employee’s family and the company and can also be looked at as another benefit, especially in regard to work/life balance. I didn’t go into all of the HR benefits, as you all know these, but I believe family volunteering, along with pro bono, skill-based programs, is a truly impactful way to grow your programs and to create more positive outcomes.

Society, neighborhoods, governments, schools, nonprofits, communities of faith, families, friends, companies – all have a symbiotic relationship. Volunteerism is a thread that is woven through all of these and creates an important benefit for all. I want to thank you for your involvement within your own companies, as part of the Corporate Volunteer Council and as members of the community. You are truly making a positive impact. Thank you for the opportunity for me to be with you today here in Minneapolis, and I look forward to your questions.