

Minnesota Summit Statement on Corporate Volunteerism

Our community and the world have reached a point where old models and systems are no longer able to provide effective answers to community and business problems. Potential solutions will depend on multisector approaches and collaborations. It is time for each of us to create personal vision and to enroll others in actions which will collectively make a positive difference within our communities and our companies.

We believe that corporations should focus on employee and retiree volunteer programs as a significant business strategy. Corporate volunteerism impacts workforce issues, increases the productivity of business, and positions business as a responsible citizen in the community.

Our experience indicates that volunteerism strengthens the human capital of a corporation by fostering creativity and cooperative effort, expanding awareness of the diversity in our society, developing new skills, increasing morale, and retaining quality employees.

Corporate volunteer programs can take many shapes. They may be as elaborate as professionally staffed efforts with corporate philosophies, personnel policies, release time and retiree programs. Some are corporate-sponsored projects or collaborations among groups of companies and non-profits. Or they may be as simple as a company leader encouraging employees to volunteer where they believe they can make a difference.

Successful volunteer programs demand leadership from the top, employee involvement in the design and management of the program, adequate financial and human resources to support the program, and true partnerships with the community based upon mutual respect, cooperation and a willingness to learn.

We urge business people—executives, managers, and supervisors alike, from both small and large organizations—to initiate and make a long-term commitment to volunteerism. Corporate volunteerism addresses the community's needs while building a skilled and highly motivated workforce.

For more information, we encourage you to contact the Corporate Volunteerism Council of the Minneapolis/St. Paul Metro Area, 404 South Eighth Street, Minneapolis, MN 55404. Telephone, (612) 340-7532.

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In cooperation with the Corporate Volunteerism Council of the Minneapolis/St. Paul Metro Area, Management Assistance Project, Minnesota Business Partnership, Minnesota Center on Corporate Responsibility, Minnesota Council on Foundations, Minnesota Office on Volunteer Services, Minnesota Retiree Volunteer Center, National Council on Corporate Volunteerism, Retired Senior Volunteer Program, United Way of the Minneapolis Area, United Way of the St. Paul Area, United Way's Volunteer Center, and Voluntary Action Center of the St. Paul Area.

This statement was developed October 16, 1990 at the 1990 Minnesota Corporate Volunteerism Summit. Over 30 top executives from Minnesota corporations attended the Summit; they were joined by several members of government and nonprofit organizations.