

From Local to Global, Measuring Corporate Philanthropy's Impact

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Stronger communities and motivated employees create a double bottom line that should encourage corporate philanthropy, even in challenging economic times; that message was clear during the day of festivities and discussion marking National Corporate Philanthropy Day Monday, February 25.

Recognition events in New York City, aimed at "building awareness of the benefits of corporate community investment," began with a CEO conference in mid-town Manhattan, and ended with the Empire State Building lit in blue and green, the official colors of the day. The events were organized by the Committee Encouraging Corporate Philanthropy, an international forum of more than 165 CEOs and board chairs pursuing a mission focused exclusively on corporate philanthropy.

Later in the afternoon, the NCPD festivities continued in the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) chamber at the United Nations. CEOs, giving officers, and UN delegates from around the world participated in an ECOSOC special event, jointly organized by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the UN Office of Partnerships, and CECP, focused on "How corporate philanthropy can contribute to advancing the Millennium Development Goals, particularly for sustainable development."

The eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which range from halving extreme poverty to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS and providing universal primary education, all by the target date of 2015 form a blueprint agreed to by all the world's countries and all the world's leading development institutions. They have galvanized unprecedented efforts to meet the needs of the world's poorest.

The event, the first of its kind, served as an opportunity for ECOSOC to garner corporate insights that will be considered in its first Development Cooperation Forum this July. The highlights of the event were its two panels, the first focused on applying strategic philanthropy to the MDGs, and the second on leveraging leadership and strengthening partnerships through positive dialogue.

Moderators and panelists including Jeffrey Sachs; Akhtar Badshah, Senior Director, Community Affairs of Microsoft Corporation; and Christina Gold, CEO of Western Union discussed needs and opportunities with the likes of Kathy Bushkin Calvin, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of the United Nations Foundation and Hilde Johnson, Deputy Executive Director of UNICEF.

The panels sought to cover a lot of ground in little time, and although it was a day for discussion, not action, the conversations were important in terms of opening up a dialogue between corporate and NGO leadership. It was particularly interesting to see delegates from places as diverse as Afghanistan and

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Cape Verde, Belgium and the Philippines, sharing with corporate attendees the importance of reaching the MDGs for their own nations. Indeed, the delegate from Cape Verde sought to hold the speakers' feet to the fire, asking the private sector to bring their influence to bear on wealthy member states to keep their commitments: “Small, poor countries need the capacity to make these promises come true. We cannot live on hope alone; we must also have sustenance.”

Sachs underscored the critical nature of these commitments to global security: “If rich countries cannot meet the commitment of a fraction of 1% to meet these goals, it will be impossible to keep peace in this world.”

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Earlier, at a luncheon at the McGraw Hill headquarters in midtown, CECF gave its Excellence in Corporate Philanthropy Awards to three different programs.

PNC Financial Services Group won the large company award, which was presented to CEO James E. Rohr. Through the PNC Grow Up Great initiative, the company implemented a ten-year, \$100 million investment to help prepare children from birth to age five for success in school and life. This early childhood education effort, with a focus on underserved children, leverages PNC's corporate and philanthropic assets to advocate for a poorly understood but critical economic issue: ensuring children enter school ready to learn. PNC Grow Up Great is grounded in evidence that children with quality preschool do better in school and life. Through the investment in this program, PNC recognizes that learning in a child's early years is essential for long-term success and PNC has the opportunity to provide leadership, advocacy, funding,

tools, and volunteers to help educate parents, caregivers, and communities to prepare children to enter school ready to learn.

The winner of the small company award was Moody's Corporation, represented by CEO Raymond McDaniel. Moody's targeted giving program encourages students to develop a passion for mathematics, economics and finance — a focus that is relevant to Moody's core business. In partnership with the Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics, Moody's created the Moody's Mega Math Challenge, an Internet-based applied mathematics competition for high school students, accompanied by scholarships from the company. The Moody's Mega Math Challenge helps excite students about employing mathematics to solve real world problems. Moody's selected a project that helps students to become more engaged in math, understanding that proficiency in mathematics is a cornerstone of success for many careers in the 21st century, thus building a talent pipeline for the business.

The third award was given to a nonprofit, in this case Community Voice Mail, which was nominated by its corporate partner Cisco Systems. Executive Director Jennifer Brandon explained that the organization, which provides free, personalized telecommunications access to poor and homeless people, empowers these individuals by providing reliable and confidential communication access for prospective employers, landlords, medical providers, case managers, and family members. CVM has a measurable impact on a person's ability to emerge from a sometimes desperate situation, providing the critical link to accessing basic human services. After using CVM for an average of seven months, nearly 70% of clients achieve at least one of their goals of finding a job, housing, or healthcare. This small organization successfully serves 41,000 clients by skillfully leveraging Cisco Systems' financial support and technological capabilities and by partnering with community-based organizations in over 40 cities nationally. Whether on the community, national or international level, corporate philanthropy often in partnership with NGOs and governments is increasingly seeking, encouraging and achieving a measurable and sustainable impact.