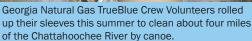


WildaboutImpact

24TH ANNUAL IMPACT AWARDS





t a time when corporate volunteering is changing, it is also most in need. Corporate Volunteer Council of Atlanta (CVC) members continue to respond to the call to give back, despite adversity. The CVC recognizes leading companies through the IMPACT Awards, the only annual awards program of its kind spotlighting the city's most philanthropic corporate citizens. The IMPACT Awards are judged by a national panel of corporate social responsibility (CSR) professionals outside the Atlanta market. Awards are given to individual companies, but the reach of the CVC is always strongest in its collaborative service spirit. In its 24th year, the 2021 IMPACT Award winners and finalists are:

IMPACT Corporate Program of the Year

This award is presented to an outstanding corporate employee volunteer or corporate social responsibility program that went above and beyond between Jan. 1, 2020 and Jan. 1, 2021 to effectively integrate community service and impact and/or volunteering into the company's business culture.

The winner of the Corporate Program of the Year Award is JLL. Created 9 years ago, JLL's employee volunteer program is focused on giving back to children/education, hunger/homelessness and health/wellness. Employees are offered paid time to volunteer and ILL Atlanta's EVP is used as a model in other markets. While the commercial real estate company faced challenges in 2020 and 2021 due to COVID-19 restrictions, it found ways for its team to volunteer at home. Employees packed donation kits with their families, filmed encouraging messages for seniors living in isolation in residential centers and volunteered at an urban farm and senior center in small groups. outdoors. They also adopted senior and children "angels" through the Angel Tree Program, virtually buying and shipping gifts during the holidays.

The finalist in the Corporate Program of the Year Award is **Frazier and Deeter**. The accounting firm offered in-person and virtual volunteering and giving opportunities this year. It transitioned

its Community Day to a week-long program to avoid large gatherings of people and created new ways for its people to donate to community partners. To engage and recognize employee involvement in the community, the firm also created a Microsoft Teams page where anyone can post testimonials, resources or ideas.

IMPACT Corporate Project of the Year

This award is presented for a short-term corporate employee engagement/volunteer project or social impact project completed between Jan 1, 2020 and June 1, 2021 that achieved significant measurable results.

The winner of the Corporate Project of the Year is **WarnerMedia**. To encourage employees to volunteer, the company offers an annual paid workday called WarnerMedia Global Volunteer Day. In 2020, this program went fully virtual as a result of the global pandemic. WarnerMedia worked with individual nonprofits to create

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Welcome Note

he Corporate Volunteer Council of Atlanta (CVC) delivers business results by supporting member companies in their strategic commitment to employee volunteerism and civic engagement. We offer monthly programming to support community-facing professionals from Atlanta's most civically minded businesses.

Our world is evolving and changing each day. The CVC provides a forum where business professionals can share best practices and fine-tune their community investment strategies for maximum social impact. From COVID response to climate change to racial injustice, CVC member

companies are addressing difficult issues head-on and thoughtfully designing solutions.

I hope that you enjoy reading about what CVC members are doing to enhance and improve Atlanta. If your company is not a member of the CVC, we invite you to join us today to connect, inspire and impact at excofatlanta.org.

Cheryl Kortemeier Executive Director CVC of Atlanta @cvcofatlanta

A Letter From The President

ear Community Friends,
We are so pleased that you
are taking time to learn more
about the Corporate Volunteer Council of
Atlanta (CVC) and reading through this
special publication. Since 1992, the CVC
has been "Wild About IMPACT," and
supported member companies to deliver
business results through social impact
and civic engagement. Our members
are passionate about leveraging corporate resources and talent in meaningful
ways that help lift-up our community.

Volunteering and service look different today than in the past, and measuring results has become more challenging than ever. Many employees continue working remotely and teams that do come together in person are often masked and distanced. Meanwhile, community needs continue to grow, and corporate volunteerism, philanthropy and donation of goods and services are needed now more than ever. Navigating all of this success-



CVC OF ATLANT

fully is difficult and takes tremendous creativity and innovation. Fortunately for Metro Atlanta, the CVC offers consistent opportunities for members to learn, share ideas and offer constructive feedback to one another.

And let's talk about the growing expectations that we all have for corporate leadership. Today, corporate executives are expected to take a stand on difficult

topics and pressing social issues. The CVC consistently provides a sense of community and a safe forum for Metro Atlanta business leaders to have tough conversations around topics such as COVID response, structural racism, the corporate role in equity, disaster response and more. Members hold each other accountable while thoughtfully offering guidance, feedback and support.

My employer, WarnerMedia, has been part of the CVC for more than two decades. Standing shoulder-to-shoulder with other civically minded companies is important to us, because at WarnerMedia, our corporate social responsibility (CSR) efforts are part of our DNA. Our diverse and original content helps to deepen the conversation on issues that matter in society. We act ethically and with integrity and work to reduce our environmental impact as we serve an increasingly global audience. Across the board, we find ways to help develop the next generation of

storytellers from diverse backgrounds. WarnerMedia prides itself on being a pro-social force for good in our communities and our world. But this work isn't always easy, and my colleagues and I are grateful for the consistent community within the CVC. We learn so much from fellow CVC members and the national CSR thought leaders who regularly engage within our network.

As our world continues to evolve and change, it is important to have a professional community that you can lean on when making challenging decisions and taking bold actions. We invite you and your colleagues to join the conversation. Learn how your company can connect, inspire and impact at: www.cvcofatlanta.org/join.

Together in service, Sydney Langdon Senior Director, Corporate Social Responsibility, WarnerMedia 2021 Corporate Volunteer Council of Atlanta President

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

relevant, engaging projects tailored to the organization's goals and WarnerMedia employees' interests and skill sets. The silver lining was the ability for WarnerMedia employees to include family members and roommates in volunteer efforts for the first time. Volunteer Day has now grown to be a global initiative, including offices from 30 countries around the world, with Atlanta representing 61% of global participation. In 2020, WarnerMedia's Atlanta-based employees also volunteered with nonprofit partners on projects ranging from coaching high school students in creating professional branding to recording bedtime stories for children to encourage their love of reading. Employees also engaged with the local community through putting together care packages for children in foster care, assembling hygiene kits for the homeless, sending notes and cards to isolated seniors and much more.

The finalist in the Corporate Project of the Year Award is **Cox Enterprises**.

When COVID-19 closed schools, it also halted the installation of an Outdoor Learning Lab, a STEAM learning environment, slated for Harper-Archer Elementary School. Cox Enterprises and nonprofit Out Teach rallied volunteers to create the Outdoor Learning Lab from home, providing contactless pick-up of materials and instructions to build STEAM, environmental, earth science and life science stations for the Outdoor Learning Lab. Once projects were completed, the volunteers returned the learning features via contactless drop-off and they were installed by the nonprofit project management team to bring the Outdoor Learning Lab to life. When students returned to campus, they discovered a new space to engage in hands-on STEAM learning.

IMPACT Corporate Skills-Based Award

This award is presented to a business in recognition of its efforts to leverage

the skills of the company's employees to build operational capacity of nonprofit or community partners while fostering professional growth.

The winner of the Corporate Skills-Based Award is the AT&T/Kilpatrick Townsend/WarnerMedia/Pro Bono Partnership Atlanta. When COVID-19 hit, these organizations looked for a way to help Georgia communities disproportionately affected by the crisis. They honed in on helping small Georgia nonprofits procure Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans or Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL) so they could continue serving clients through the pandemic. These organizations created a pro bono legal clinic to help with the loan application process, training pro bono attorneys at the firm and the global corporations' legal departments on eligibility and legal requirements for the federal loans. Trained attorneys were paired to work directly with nonprofits on their applications, and they continued to support these clients through the application process and loan forgiveness period. As a result, 11 Georgia nonprofits secured more than \$575,000 in PPP and EIDL funds, allowing them to continue essential services to the community.

The finalist in the Corporate Skills-Based Award is King & Spalding/Russell **Innovation Center for Entrepreneurs** (RICE). In early 2021, King & Spalding formed a strategic partnership with RICE to empower Black entrepreneurs through pro bono legal counseling, a multi-year financial commitment and the launch of the reimagined "King & Spalding Think Tank." King & Spalding's IT department has also created a technology platform to help lawyers provide pro bono services to the entrepreneurs through one-on-one legal counsel, periodic presentations on legal topics and a digital video library of legal curriculum covering a range of business-related topics. To date, sixty lawyers have invested more than 200 hours of pro bono time.



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Going Beyond The Statement

he last year and half has forever altered the way companies do business and communicate their stance on social issues. But many companies are going beyond just making statements, including CVC members that are making their organizations and communities more equitable places to work and live

WarnerMedia has been looking at metrics to ensure equitable practices in hiring and promoting. It has also stepped up education for employees and provided opportunities to have candid conversations during difficult times. Externally, Warner-Media has partnered with nonprofits on several PSAs with topics ranging from civic engagement and voting to social justice.

Genuine Parts Company recently hired a director of diversity and inclusion at its headquarters. Gas South is also expanding its DEI team with a manager of diversity, equity and inclusion along with two coordinators. The natural gas provider is also looking at how and where it recruits employees and uses technology platforms to remove unconscious bias and create a more equitable hiring process.



For the 7th year, IHG has earned the designation as a "Best Place to Work for LGBTQ Equality" by the Human Rights Campaign.

"One thing we're trying to do from a philanthropic standpoint is really involve the community's voice in how and where we're giving, so we are conducting a pilot program in the Thomasville Heights area with the **Atlanta Community Foundation** and **THRIVE Thomasville**. It's a community grant making initiative where residents identify the needs of their community and the solutions to those needs," says Carley Stephens, Gas South's manager of community affairs.

Cox Enterprises recently donated \$1 million to social justice and equity, allocating funding to a variety of organizations, including The National Center for Civil and Human Rights, National Urban League, The King Center, United Negro College Fund (UNCF), Equal Justice Initiative and Asian Americans Advancing Justice.

"We're investing in programs that are uplifting these communities in workforce development, job creation and working with STEAM initiatives," says Brien Faucett, CSR corporate giving and public affairs manager, Cox Enterprises.

IHG Hotels & Resorts, which maintains its Americas headquarters in Atlanta, is focused on creating a diverse culture where everyone can thrive. In June 2020, the company made a series of commitments in the Americas to help break down barriers both within the company and its communities.

"We are taking action beyond just giving public statements on social issues, creating programs and initiatives that are engaging, measurable and have a long-term impact," says Geneva Hall-Shelton, Corporate Responsibility, IHG.

Some of the progress milestones include the company's involvement in Georgia Legislative change. IHG also gave U.S.-based corporate colleagues a day of paid time off to vote in national elections. Other actions include launching multiple DE&I resource and support channels for corporate colleagues, establishing new DE&I recruiting standards to support diverse candidate slates and having more than 1,500 of U.S. and Canada colleagues completing unconscious bias training.



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Law Firm Action

Law firms are continuing to make a difference in social issues through pro bono efforts. The social unrest in 2020 rallied **King & Spalding**'s lawyers and staff to redouble efforts with some of its long-standing pro bono partners. The firm also launched new programs that promote social justice and criminal justice reform in partnership with the **American Civil Liberties Union** and the **Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights**. Some of the ongoing efforts include taking on new civil rights cases and a project to identify pragmatic policing reforms. A team in Atlanta hosted a "Know Your Rights" seminar for teenagers struggling with mental health issues, who are at a higher risk for interactions with law enforcement. And, during the early voting period and on Election Day 2020, firm lawyers manned the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights' nonpartisan Election Protection voter hotline to answer questions and address concerns.

Several cross-office King & Spalding teams also continued their pro bono work assisting families separated at the U.S. border, which began in the summer of 2018. More than 30 firm lawyers have worked over 3,000 hours assisting these families and have been successful in reuniting four families to date.

Alston & Bird, is also doing its part. The firm is one of nearly 300 law firms—including CVC members Eversheds Sutherland; Kilpatrick Townsend; Morris, Manning & Martin; Troutman Pepper and King & Spalding — to become a part of the Law Firm Antiracism Alliance (LFAA). The LFAA is working collaboratively to identify and dismantle systemic and structural racism in the law. The collaboration is structured with working groups that focuses on wide range of topics ranging such as access to justice, public benefits, housing and home ownership, philanthropy, child welfare and more.

"This ambitious volunteer initiative is working to promote racial equity in the law," says Cheryl Naja, Alston & Bird director of pro bono and community service. "There is so much motion going on across the country and it's been really exciting as a group of members of the legal community to go at systemic racism in such a way."

Alston & Bird is also working to fight racial injustice in its broader external community. Last year, the firm created the A&B Racial Justice Fund and, through individual and firm giving, successfully funded a two-year public interest law fellowship with Equal Justice Works focused on racial justice work. The firm's selected legal fellow will be addressing housing inequities by working to create and pass tenant's right to counsel legislation.

"It was really such an organic, wonderful thing to see that much focused fundraising efforts come together to be able to pay for that legal work and people just did it because they cared," Naja says. ■

IHG also formed key partnerships with organizations like the Urban League of Greater Atlanta and Atlanta CareerRise to support apprenticeship and workforce development programs, and is working with students and families at Booker T. Washington High School, Boyd Elementary School and the Atlanta Technical College.

"At a high-level, our Regional Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Council, which is chaired by our Americas CEO, Elie Maalouf, together with our global DE&I board, work to roll-out impactful initiatives where they are needed most," Hall-Shelton says. "We're also committed to increasing the diversity of our senior leaders and bringing more women into management roles."

To create a culture of anti-racism and inclusions within its community, **JLL** Atlanta joined the ATL Action for Racial Equity initiative through the Metro Atlanta Chamber.

Diversity and inclusion is also a top priority internally. In 2020, the JLL Americas Executive Committee introduced a new D&I framework to align the Americas around a common set of measurable goals. JLL Atlanta also created the Atlanta Market Diversity and Inclusion Council, an advisory board consisting of representation from all business lines and corporate functions of the business.

At **Ryan**, the discussion of a Diversity, Inclusion and Equality group began prior to 2020. From this grew Ryan-MOSAIC, a diverse group of 14 council members with a mission to foster diversity and inclusion.

"In the fall of 2020, we conducted a listening tour, hosting 12 listening sessions with team members across the globe," says Tony Bridwell, senior vice president, chief people officer, Ryan. "We listened closely, and we used the team member feedback to create our roadmap. Some of our takeaways were easily implemented, and others will take time to roll out, but Ryan is determined to continue this journey."

This year, Ryan launched a monthly Diversity and Inclusion (D&I)-focused speaker series based on the chosen awareness topic, from race and social injustice to a women's panel.

workplace development, diversity and inclusion. In 2020, the company established Juneteenth as a U.S. holiday, hired a U.S. D&I Lead, provided recommended resources and readings for employees and supported the establishment of new Employee Resource Groups (ERGs). UCB also continues to prioritize diversity and inclusion in clinical trials and is working to find new ways to connect to unique patient populations through digital and data-driven approaches as well as connecting in communities

Mercedes-Benz USA is making a difference by giving its support to the ATL Partnership for Education, Lenora P. Miles Elementary and Michael R. Hollis Innovation Academy. In addition to providing students with essential resources to assist with virtual learning, the company also extended its altruism to the broader community through food donations and special events.

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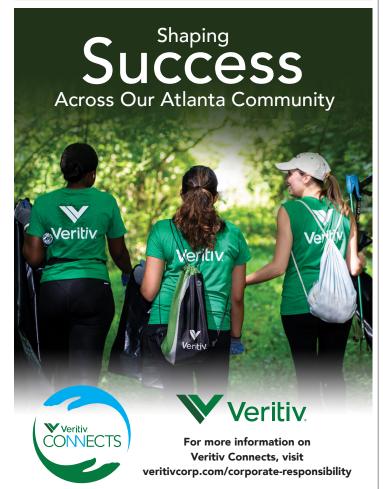
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CONGRATULATIONS TO THIS YEAR'S IMPACT AWARD FINALISTS!

As a proud sponsor of the Impact Awards, NCR is thrilled to celebrate this year's finalists. Rewarding companies and individuals for innovation that makes the world better is a key part of NCR Foundation's vision. We stand with and behind the Atlanta community, and the local dreamers and thought-leaders striving to be catalysts of opportunity for the good of the neighborhood.

NCR: Powering what's possible.



SOUTHERN COMPANY GAS: Fueling Hope in the communities we serve

By Kim Greene

Chairman, President and CEO, Southern Company Gas

t Southern Company Gas we're not only committed to providing outstanding service to our growing and diversifying customer base, but we're also focused on ensuring the communities we serve are better off because we're there.

In 2020, a year unlike any other, our employees responded beautifully. They came together to support each other and our communities. While navigating one of the most challenging issues of our time—the COVID-19 pandemic—we provided exceptional levels of service and support directly to our customers. Our company also invested more than \$3.4 million to support relief efforts throughout our service territories.

And despite the challenges our employees faced, they NEVER stopped working and never stopped serving our customers during those difficult times. We remained committed to our vision of providing "Fuel for Life" to all of our 4.3 million customers. I have never been prouder of them.

Additionally, there were staggering levels of civil unrest, animosity and division that unfolded in 2020. Witnessing our nation react to the recent events of racism and racial injustice was heartbreaking.

As the chairman, president and CEO of one of the nation's largest energy companies with over 4,400 employees, I felt a deep sense of responsibility to our people and the communities we serve to lead the pursuit of achieving a more equitable future for everyone. Diversity, equity and inclusion are ingrained in our company culture, but the events of the last year made clear that we must do more. We must move to more clear, open and honest personal dialogue that



is then followed by positive action.

We recently launched a companywide initiative, Fueling Equity, aimed at making our workplace more equitable. Fueling Equity is more than an ambition, it's an opportunity to engage in the hard work necessary for creating a workplace culture that reflects the kind of world we desire. Through the program, we introduced new processes and metrics—from the way we recruit and promote talent to the way we engage with communities and execute supplier diversity.

The culture we are establishing around diversity, equity and inclusion is a culture of respect and understanding, guided by three tenets: Listen. Learn. Lead. While we are far from perfect, I am energized by the fact that employees across the company are committed to becoming comfortable having uncomfortable conversations and learning the skills it takes to do so. It can be overwhelming to look at the scale of injustice and figure out where to start. But through these initiatives, we are not only building a more equitable workplace, we are providing the tools and resources for every employee to begin the important work of combatting inequity.

I am so proud of the work we're doing, but I'm even more excited for what's to come as we make our workplace and our communities better.

Engage

King & Spalding proudly supports the Corporate Volunteer Council of Atlanta and the 2021 Impact Awards.

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THE PHOENIX RISES: Corporate Atlanta's Resiliency In 2020

VC member companies had to power through a year of unique adversity. During this time, they discovered a resiliency that got them through the most trying of times, discovering new found ways to embody the service spirit.

In 2020, **IHG Hotels & Resorts**' volunteering looked different with some employees placed on temporary furlough due to the pandemic. Sima Parekh, director of operations strategy and programs at IHG, used her furlough period to enhance her support of **48in48**, a local organization that builds 48 websites in 48 hours for nonprofit organizations for free by staging weekend hackathons. Parekh, who began supporting the nonprofit in 2015, worried the organization would not survive during the pandemic so she helped it change its operating model to host virtual events.

"The organization thrived," says Geneva Hall-Shelton, Corporate Responsibility, IHG. "Because of Sima's volunteer efforts, some of her IHG teammates joined her at 48in48's Women's Build event in April, which featured their first female-only expert teams."

Another furloughed IHG employee focused on helping The Empty Stocking Fund (ESF) change its delivery package to an online delivery for all its products, which includes toys and gifts during the holiday season and other core essential supplies throughout the year for disadvantaged kids.

IHG also continued to support nonprofit partners in education, many that created platforms during the pandemic to provide resources online.

"We've been funding those transitions to online learning, we've been supporting them with volunteer opportunities and we've been helping to create open source curriculum that could be dropped in on all different platforms," Hall-Shelton says.

At the beginning of the stay-at-home order in 2020, **JLL** was in the midst of



JLL employees worked at home to build kits for several nonprofits during the pandemic.

planning for a large on-site volunteer event to benefit four nonprofit organizations. The event had to be put on hold indefinitely, but many of the supplies were already purchased and JLL knew the nonprofits were still in need.

"Two JLL Atlanta employees stepped up and offered to take all supplies home and work with their families to pack and deliver 350 kits," says Greta Wilson, JLL assistant property manager.

King & Spalding's 2020 Founders Day was restructured from traditional community service activities into a global, socially-distanced step challenge. More than 400 lawyers and staff collectively walked, ran and cycled 25,057 miles—the distance it takes to circle the globe—to raise \$25,057 for the firm's longtime partner MedShare.

"MedShare leveraged our contribution to provide lifesaving medical equipment and personal protective equipment to healthcare workers in underserved communities around the world," says Josh Toll, King & Spalding, pro bono partner.

Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton LLP also had to rethink how to maintain its longstanding partnership with the Barack and Michelle Obama Academy (BAMO) as education went virtual in 2020. Instead of volunteering in person at the elementary school, the firm supported the school with remote learning in multiple ways, from providing lap desks and headphones, to sponsoring take-home activities and family games for I Love Math Day. Other efforts included working with school counselors to expand career day into a virtual College and Career Week. The firm's recruiting team also virtually hosted



The events of 2020 led to growth of Kilpatrick Townsend's long-standing partnership with the Barack and Michelle Obama Academy.

a job search workshop for parents, and its attorneys continue to provide pro bono legal support to BAMO families.

"As BAMO Academy returns to their newly renovated campus for the new school year, we look forward to applying lessons learned since March 2020 to continue to evolve our partnership," says Katie Beacham, chief corporate citizenship officer, Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton.



WELLS FARGO

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Embracing ESG

nvironmental, Social and Corporate Governance (ESG) refers to the three central factors used to measure the sustainability and societal impact of an investment in a company or business. While CSR relates to a company's internal commitment to strong corporate values, ESG is a broad rating of a company's commitment to sustainability and other values. More and more companies are beginning to follow these standards, particularly as the United Nations developed the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015 and the European Union approved a new climate law in 2020 making net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 a binding legal obligation. "Multinationals that operate out of the United States have to get with the program pretty quick," says Jennifer Hartz, an Atlanta-based CSR/ERG consultant founder and president of Corporate Hartz LLC. Wall Street investment houses are also scrambling to figure out how to meet the UN-supported Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI), a voluntary and aspirational set of investment principles that works to promote sustainable investment through the

incorporation of environmental, social and governance factors into investment decision-making.

"Particularly in Atlanta, companies, are eager to get it right; they see the writing on the wall, and the non-monetary value as well," Hartz says.

The Framework

Invesco, which operates in 26 countries, has both ESG and Corporate Responsibility divisions. Its UK-based ESG team focuses on evaluating and reviewing the company's investment products, while its CR department deals with anything corporate related, from diversity and inclusion to operations



to cyber security. As part of CR, the company does materiality studies every 24 months, surveying stakeholders to find out what issues are most important. COVID has

impacted many of these priorities, says Kellie Schonberg, Invesco's global head of CR. "The health and safety of our employees has been our top priority fol-



IHG Hotels & Resorts is committed to ensuring its responsible business targets contribute towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

lowed by focusing on our clients and our communities".

"Recently our CEO commented on racial injustice issues as they are greatly impacting local communities. The responsibility for CEOs to make strong public statements is on the rise" Schonberg says. "Going forward, the trend is for these statements to accelerate as stakeholders want to know where companies stand on key issues. Publicly disclosed metrics that companies produce in their Corporate Responsibility reports are being noted by rating and ranking agencies."

At **Bank of America**, the ESG framework is used in all lines of business. It's behind how the bank looks at deploying capital, managing its environmental and social risk and more. It's also behind Bank of America's mission to make the bank an inclusive place to work.

"There is a whole series of metrics for each line of business on how we are



delivering on our ESG strategies," says Terri Block, senior vice president and Atlanta market executive, Bank of America. "In the financial services industry, we've seen the

ESG strategy used more and more."

ESG is also embedded in how AT&T does business. Brooke Hanson, AT&T's Director of CSR Strategy explains it as the intersection between the company, its purpose and society.

"Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) represents the intersection of business and society with work that's of interest to numerous stakeholders, such as volunteerism, environmental stewardship and programmatic initiatives like our digital divide work," Hanson says. "ESG focuses on that same intersection, but through the lens of rigor, measurement and accountability demanded by financial markets."

Reporting is a vital part of holding companies accountable for their ESG and

CSR strategies. Invesco does both ESG and CSR reports, while AT&T publishes an annual summary each year that combines the two concepts. For companies that are new to the ESG model, Schonberg suggests first asking, "What are the business issues that are most important to your key stakeholders?".

"If I was starting this process, I would focus on our clients, our employees and our local community partners. DEI is one of the most important issues for all of our offices as an inclusive culture helps us create better outcomes for clients and provides a more rewarding work environment for our employees" Schonberg says.

To help strengthen DEI, Invesco established business resource groups, including an Invesco Black Professionals Network, which was launched in February 2020 along with many others.

"By forming Business Resource Groups we are committed to fostering a more inclusive workplace that cultivates awareness and understanding of diverse talent. We have open dialogues with these BRG groups which contribute to more diverse viewpoints on currents events such as racial injustice and being more inclusive. Additionally, these groups provided valuable input during COVID-19 on suggestions for corporate donations and where they would be most impactful in our local communities," Schonberg said.

While the ESG acronym has recently gained in visibility, it's been around for



more than 15 years, Hanson says, and the framework has been around for even longer.

"Environmental, social and governance issues have always been relevant to companies,

and really well managed companies have always had a solid understanding of the material issues for their business and what they need to monitor to mitigate that risk," Hanson says. "ESG puts



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Leveraging collective action through the Drawdown Georgia Business Compact

By Michael Oxman

Managing Director, Ray C. Anderson Center for Sustainable Business; Professor of the Practice, Sustainable Business, Georgia Institute of Technology

hat can Georgia businesses do to address carbon emissions in our state? They can join the Drawdown Georgia Business Compact!

An increasing number of Georgia businesses are taking meaningful steps to reduce their carbon footprint with, for example, at least 38 large companies setting ambitious net zero or similar targets. These and other companies are addressing their carbon emissions to mitigate climate-related risks, to take advantage of opportunities throughout their value chains (from suppliers to customers) and to enhance stakeholder relationships with NGOs, employees and investors. Given this momentum, there is an opportunity for concrete, regional and collective impact initiatives to help achieve targets, inspire other companies to establish similar levels of ambition, accelerate action in a state



that is anticipated to face severe climate change impacts and position Georgia as a leader in climate action.

The Ray C. Anderson Center for Sustainable Business at the Georgia Tech Scheller College of Business is launching the Drawdown Georgia Business Compact ("Compact") to leverage the collective impact of our state's business community towards achievement of net zero carbon emissions in Georgia by 2050 through a just, competitive and sustainable transition. This unique, state-focused initiative seeks diverse participation while building on the climate action leadership of businesses head-

quartered and/or operating in Georgia. Founding members to date include Anthem, Better Earth, Cox Enterprises, Delta Air Lines, Google, Interface, Norfolk Southern, Southwire and TKE.

The Compact builds on companies' individual commitments through a collaborative approach that is informed by the multi-university research project, Drawdown Georgia. This project, funded by the Ray C. Anderson Foundation, was led by Georgia Tech, and included researchers from Emory University, University of Georgia and Georgia State University. The research team identified and evaluated the 20 highest impact solutions for reducing greenhouse gas emissions in Georgia over the next decade. The research also examined how to leverage these solutions to increase economic opportunity, equity, environmental quality and public health.

By engaging in collective action through the Compact, organizations have an opportunity to advance their sustainability aspirations and make progress against carbon reduction targets. In addition, the Compact offers opportunities for companies to share costs and risks, engage existing and future employees, tap in to Drawdown Georgia research, access university and NGO sustainability experts and learn about potential collaborative projects. Organizations also can benefit by participating in and contributing to a community of practice that exchanges lessons learned, crowdsources solutions and catalyzes innovation opportunities in support of a competitive, low carbon transition for Georgia's economy.

"Southwire has set a goal to be carbon neutral for Scopes 1 and 2 for our operations by the end 2025," says Burt Fealing, EVP, general counsel and chief sustainability officer for Southwire. "While we can have a limited effect as an individual company, we can make a greater impact by partnering with like-minded organizations in our state through our affiliation with Drawdown Georgia."

The Compact welcomes new founding members. The point of contact for this initiative is David Eady, who can be reached at david.eady@scheller.gatech. edu or 404.894.3038.

structure around that work. It's the recognition that this body of work is connected, meaningful and it impacts company performance."

Taking Action

IHG Hotels & Resorts recently embarked on a 10-year responsible business plan called Journey to Tomorrow. With hotels in thousands of communities all over the world, IHG is committed to ensuring its responsible business targets contribute towards the UN SDGs to tackle societal problems. In its Responsible Business Report, IHG outlines examples of these business targets.

"To ensure we stay on track, we'll be logging our progress against a set of performance metrics on an annual basis. We recognize the importance of reporting against core ESG frameworks to continue to drive transparency and comparability of performance across all businesses," says Catherine Dolton, chief sustainability officer and vice president of corporate responsibility, IHG. "Our shareholders are making an increasing number of investment decisions based on ESG factors, so it's important we regularly inform them of our responsible business practices and progress."

As part of IHG's launch of Journey to Tomorrow, the company commissioned a survey which found that more than 80% of people say it is important to choose a hotel brand that operates responsibly. The research also showed

Trend Watch

According to CVC member

For Momentum's newly released
Compendium, we can expect the following trends as we move
into 2022:

- Companies are moving toward human-centric employee engagement efforts with talent retention and acquisition driving the trend;
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) is top priority for companies. Many companies will be leveraging nonprofit partnerships to support this work, and we will continue to see new DEI positions offered by mid-size and large companies;
- Companies are moving toward a new focus on governance, data integrity, and accountability while continually keeping an eye on profitability; and
- From the Environmental, Social, Governance (ESG) lens, sustainability and climate change is top of mind.

that 60% of the 9,000 adults surveyed across the U.S., UK, Germany, Greater China, the UAE and Australia agree that they want to be more environmentally and socially conscious on their travels.

"Journey to Tomorrow embodies IHG's strengthened commitment to make sure we do what's right, not just what's needed, and we are determined to contribute towards positive social and economic change, to stand up for key issues such as diversity, equity and inclusion, and human rights, and to make more responsible environmental choices," says IHG's global CEO Keith Barr.

UCB is also embracing its role in ensuring a sustainable future. More than five years ago, the company laid out its 2030 Green Goals to minimize its environmental footprint across business activities and operations. In 2020, UCB saw a 19% reduction in energy consumption, a 30% reduction in water withdrawal, and a 38% reduction in its waste production. Its carbon dioxide emissions due to its car fleet were reduced by 29%, while business air travel was reduced by 87%. The

company is also leveraging its expertise to integrate sustainability into its business approach and improve societal health with a focus on scientific innovation, access to medicines , employees' health, safety, and wellbeing, and health of the planet.

"UCB knows the challenges facing the world, from climate change to rising inequalities, are inextricably linked and that businesses have a key role to play to ensure a sustainable future for all," says Allyson Funk, head of U.S. communications and public affairs. "UCB's commitment to driving business, social and environmental impact spans the entire company and is interwoven into the day-to-day business activities."



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Remote Working Boosts Virtual And Skills-Based Volunteering

OVID-19 created many challenges in volunteering, including bringing most inperson projects to a standstill. Adapting to the changed world hasn't been easy, but the remote workforce has, in some ways, enhanced virtual and skillsbased volunteering.

During the pandemic, King & Spalding's lawyers and staff recreated many of its pro bono and community service projects in a virtual format. The firm invested 4,500 community service hours and 46,000 pro bono hours into its communities during the pandemic. It completed 95 community service projects, raising more than \$1 million for United Way and donating \$160,000 to COVID relief efforts. This includes volunteers in the Atlanta office raising more than \$30,000 to provide grocery store gift card to families served by Truancy Intervention Project. Volunteers also packed and delivered lunches to children attending summer camp at the Andrew P. Stewart Center. Other efforts include sewing face coverings, donating blood through American Red Cross, donating games, puzzles and cards to isolated seniors at assisted living facilities and contributing more than 300 pairs of headphones to students at Gideons Elementary School for remote schooling.

To help small businesses and nonprofits that were struggling to stay afloat during the pandemic, King & Spalding Atlanta lawyers coordinated the Georgia Small Business/ Nonprofit COVID-19 Remote Legal Clinic. Lawyers also prepared a webinar on the CARES Act legislation for more than 200 nonprofit partners and pro bono clients. Other virtual projects included a career program with nonprofit Next Generation Men and Women (Next Gen) and interactive mock contract negotiation with student teams to demonstrate the type of work transactional lawyers may participate in. Atlanta lawyers also took part virtually in Youth About Business, a summer camp aimed at increasing leadership and business literacy skills among high school students. For a 14th year, firm personnel coordinated the Justice Robert Benham Law Camp, which exposes Atlanta-area high school students to the field of law. The program was able to nearly double the number of participants through a virtual program developed for 2020.

Cox Enterprises also went virtual, building robots and tablet computers for Girls Inc.; building circuit kits and packing school supplies for Boys & Girls Clubs; and helping youth innovators use STEAM to solve community problems through United Way of Greater Atlanta's STEMUp



Cox Enterprises donated 85 Brown
Toy Boxes with hand-written personal
notes to the YMCA's After School
Enrichment Scholars.



PNC volunteers participated in YMCA of Metro Atlanta's virtual reads, uploading a video of them reading their favorite childhood story or scheduling a zoom read in the classroom.

Youth Maker Competition. Cox also participated in career preparation events, including assembling career backpacks to help homeless youth at **Covenant House** prepare for the next stage in their career trajectory. Cox was also one of several companies that participated in **48in48**'s social justice event. The organization, which builds websites for 48 nonprofits in 48 hours, held an event specifically targeted to organizations that were founded or led by a person of color or that had a mission to fighting social justice.

"One of the things that we really liked about being virtual is that we've been able to expand a lot of our key signature projects beyond Atlanta and have employees all across the country participate in them," says Shawan Allen, senior community relations specialist, Cox Enterprises. "We've also been able to participate with our employee resource groups a lot more and integrate some volunteer components into heritage months like PRIDE or Women's History Month."

Cox Automotive employees from Manheim and NextGear, also took part in a virtual outreach event benefiting the YMCA of Metro Atlanta's After School Enrichment (ASE) Scholars at the Carl E. Sanders Family YMCA. As a part of Cox's corporate social responsibility focus on STEAM education and lifting up minority-owned businesses, the team donated 85 Brown Toy Boxes with hand-written personal notes to the Y's ASE scholars. Brown Toy Box is a Black-owned STEAM company.

"You should have just seen the expression on the kids' faces when they received them," says Chaundra Johnson, director of community and volunteer engagement at YMCA of Metro Atlanta. "[The Cox team] wrote encouraging notes to the parents

to motivate them, telling them any dreams they have could be realized and could come to fruition and it was just very impactful."

PNC partnered in a virtual reading program with the YMCA of Metro Atlanta that benefitted its more than 30,000 children who participate in early learning, after school and day camp annually. Volunteers uploaded a video of them reading their favorite childhood story or scheduled a Zoom read in the classroom.

The virtual format also worked for JLL's participation in the Salvation Army's Angel Tree program. Items purchased off an Amazon wishlist by JLL employees where shipped directly to a Salvation Army warehouse making it easy for many to participate despite pandemic restrictions. Genuine Parts also took part in Salvation Army's Angel Tree program virtually and made changes to its two large annual volunteer events at the Center for Family Resources (CFR) to be able to execute them safely during the pandemic. Rather than pack food at the nonprofit's warehouse, the company provided employees with a food list and asked them to pack food boxes, which were then sent to the CFR and delivered to the families in need.

WarnerMedia hosted a successful Global Volunteer Day in a completely virtual format in December, partnering with organizations such as Give to Get, Clean the World and Project Helping/KYND Kits that offer volunteer-projects-in-a-box. The company tied the event into the United Nations International Day of Volunteers and had 4,500 volunteers participate through nearly 10,000 kits sent through the mail.

"They were knitting with each other on Zoom calls, they were reviewing resumes, they were talking to young people, they were building little kits—all kinds of stuff happening," says Sydney Langdon, WarnerMedia senior director, CSR. "That was a really nice way to pivot from our normal global volunteer day."

One unexpected benefit from taking its Global Volunteer Day virtual was that many employees had their families, roommates and significant others also volunteer with them.

"We really opened it up and said, 'If you want to have your kids participate, these are the ones that are really kid-friendly and these are the ones that you do as a team," Langdon says. "The unexpected benefit is the numbers and the activation that we saw from those who normally wouldn't be able to participate and the fact that employees could bring their families in to join in the fun."

Invesco recently entered into its third year of partnership with Rock The Street, Wall Street, a financial and investment literacy program designed to spark the interest of a diverse population of high school girls into careers of finance. In Atlanta, Invesco is working with Grady High School where female executives from across Invesco's investment, strategy, marketing, distribution and real estate teams led weekly classroom-based workshops. These executives also met regularly with the girls as part of the ongoing mentorship element of the program during the school year.

"Rock The Street Wall Street has been an impactful relationship because it engages with girls' interest in finance before they choose a path in college," says Kellie Schonberg, head of global corporate responsibility at Invesco. "Our goal is to introduce more young women into a career in the asset management business as the gap is larger in our industry than others."

Where Do We Go From Here?

or more than a year, CVC companies have been working to keep remote employees engaged in community. The future of Employee Volunteer Programs (EVPS) is still unfolding, but as companies move forward, they will continue to explore new strategies for engaging, measuring and reporting.

"In the year ahead, changes are anticipated. Just as workplaces are redefining the work week and providing more flexible work schedules, this is the perfect time to rethink how we look at traditional volunteering," says Cheryl Naja, **Alston & Bird**. "As our workplaces adapt, it's the perfect time for CSR professionals to use some of the lessons learned from the past year and rethink how we engage, leverage technology, collaborate and fund in ways that will have even greater impact."

One creative idea that emerged at Alston & Bird during the pandemic was a "design-your-own" volunteer experience that allowed for small groups of volunteers or departments to make their own decisions on project focus areas and receive funding for supplies. Volunteers took corporate volunteering projects to their neighborhoods, rather than joining together in the corporate volunteer experience.

"In-person mentoring and reading programs converted to electronic platforms. Organizations that normally functioned in a limited location realized they could have greater impact and are now planning to expand their reach to a broader metro Atlanta. The use of these platforms allowed for greater flexibility but they also highlighted the technology divide," Naja says.

Cox Enterprises is becoming more



Gas South's employee-led volunteer effort resulted in 2,000 period packs for local girls in need of feminine hygiene products.



About 20 Gas South volunteers got together this summer to support The Period Project.

focused on measuring the impact of its volunteer projects. The company recently released a goal to empower 34 million people to live more prosperous lives by 2034 and has partnered with True Impact, a social impact measurement tool for philanthropy.

"We're working with our nonprofit partners to aggregate our contributions and volunteer work so that we can measure how many people are being empowered by our work," says Maury Wolfe, AVP corporate responsibility and public affairs, Cox Enterprises. "This goal focuses on our value chain, including our responsible supply chain, our Inclusion, Diversity & Equity initiatives, our employees as well as our communities. Our goal is to help our suppliers grow their business, our employee to flourish and uplift all communities."

Gas South is also shifting its volunteer focus by "putting the keys in the hands of employees." The company recently kicked off its Team Grants Initiative, volunteer events that are coordinated by employees but funded by the company—from virtual volunteer events to in-person efforts. For its first grant, Gas South funded an employee event in partnership with the Period Project.

"We purchased all the supplies that [the employee] needed and she got about 20 volunteers together and they created over 2,000 period packs for local girls in need of feminine hygiene products. She then coordinated with the nonprofit to come pick up the items," says Carley Stephens, Gas South's manager of community affairs. "It's worked really well so far. It's meant for individual employees, teams or departments ... we have a certain budget set aside each month to approve team grants and fuel our employee's passion."

To plan for the future, Cox recently surveyed its nonprofit partners to see where the organizations stand in terms of needs for 2021 and 2022 and how it can support them through volunteer projects either virtually or at their facility. Virtual volunteering is likely here to stay, but keeping employees engaged long-term will require re-evaluation, says Jennifer Bronner, senior manager Community Impact, Cox Enterprises.

"The name of the game is flexibility; keeping the pulse to where your business is moving, what your executives are looking for and how you're meeting company and community needs at the same time," Bronner says. "That's where I think we, as CSR professionals, are in a unique position to be able to influence find that sweet spot; making our executives and our leaders happy and community needs are met in an ever-changing way."

To showcase the CSR work it's been doing over the past several years, Mailchimp recently launched Big Change Starts Small, which is focused on empowering small entrepreneurs doing social impact and grassroots work. In the past 6 years, Mailchimp has invested more than \$12 million and sponsored more than 200 small, local nonprofits in Atlanta. Most of its investments have been unrestricted, meaning Mailchimp doesn't determine how the recipients use those funds. Nonprofit partners have included Moving in the Spirit, the Center for Civic Innovation, the Atlanta Music Project and more. During the pandemic, MailChimp also began investing in more real time response needs surrounding racial justice, voter engagement and COVID-19 response.

"At Mailchimp, we know that big change starts small, whether you're a social entrepreneur with a great new idea, or a smaller nonprofit that knows the community best," says Lain Shakepeare, Mailchimp senior director of corporate citizenship. "We've invested unrestricted dollars in these kinds of organizations for years, and don't plan to stop anytime soon. We hope to inspire others to celebrate the contributions of small world changers and also provide unrestricted funding."

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