

CORPORATE **SOCIAL** RESPONSIBILITY



The building crew for Habitat for Humanity during an AAE conference.



Staff participate in a Sleep in Heavenly Peace bed build at a C&S facility.



The C&S Foundation donates to Meals on Wheels in recognition of the firm's volunteer efforts.

EMPLOYEE-LED BENEVOLENCE MAKES A HUGE IMPACT

C&S Companies shows its compassion through wide-ranging community assistance programs

BY MICHELE MEYER

C&S COMPANIES GIVES BACK

150,000+ community service hours logged in the past 20 years

1,500 hours served by 325 volunteers in 2022

\$450,000 in C&S Foundation grants to 200 groups

\$30,000 in matching gifts

\$10,000 in donations to honor employees who volunteer 40+ hours in a year (\$500 donated to each worker's organization of choice)

There's a secret to inspiring employee engagement in a corporate social responsibility (CSR) program, according to C&S Companies: Take a personalized approach to giving by supporting the causes that mean the most to your staff. "You should never underestimate someone's passion," says Terry Hopkins, administrative principal at C&S. "When they pursue personal passions, nothing will stop them."

Philanthropy has been central to C&S since the company was founded 55 years ago, and the A/E/C firm launched its Community Service Team (CST) in 2002 to formalize those efforts. Then in 2019, the C&S Foundation was formed to direct some of the company's profits toward charitable causes.

"Having a foundation opens up the number of nonprofits receiving grants," says Hopkins, explaining that funds can benefit 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofits.

As foundation board members, Hopkins and 16 others in the firm's 20 offices encourage local largesse.

TEAM SPIRIT

Since 2003, C&S volunteers have contributed a total of more than 150,000 community service hours.

The Link, the firm's intranet, devotes a page to charity to inspire workers about ways to help and to commend those who do. Once a teammate logs 40 hours of service in a year on The Link, C&S donates \$500 to the charity of the employee's choice. The company

has donated \$10,000 toward such causes since 2019.

Employees take the lead on CSR projects. “We trust our teammates to invest their time well, balancing work and community efforts,” says CEO Michael Hotaling.

Hotaling isn’t on the board of the foundation or the CST. That’s by his and the committee’s choice. “We feel those closest to communities should decide where dollars are invested,” he says.

But leadership gets involved in other meaningful ways. Hotaling and other executives helped pack boxes for those in need when C&S’s aviation team met recently in Portland, Oregon. “When we volunteer alongside teammates, it sends a strong message that we support their efforts to engage in their communities,” Hotaling says.

Hotaling believes the culture at C&S is what makes it special. “We’re a low-ego, noncorporate type of organization focused on core values of integrity, authenticity, and team spirit,” he says. “I may be CEO, but we’re all teammates.”



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TERRY HOPKINS
ADMINISTRATIVE PRINCIPAL
C&S COMPANIES

COMMUNITY CAUSES

Emma Phillips, project planner at C&S, joined the firm in part because of its focus on impacting local communities. “As a planner, that’s all you think about,” she says.

Her goal is to volunteer one hour per week, though she’s on track to surpass that in 2023. She even double-books herself: Recently, she planned a spin class fundraiser for Parkinson’s disease and a 5K walk to raise funds for the homeless—on the same

Saturday. That day of exercise raised \$2,500.

Last May, after 10 people lost their lives in the Tops supermarket shooting in Buffalo, New York, Phillips knew she had to step up. She asked C&S, which has an office only two miles away from the store, for aid. The firm promptly agreed to match all employee contributions. With direct donations, Phillips bought food, diapers, and formula for families on the East Side of the city. "I'd deliver the groceries to the East Side, and in five minutes they were gone," she says. "People would grab bags out of my trunk."

Donations from staffers nationwide helped Phillips and her teammates provide groceries for weeks. "I learned that when C&S employees see a community in need, they jump to help," she says.

Another case in point: When a Syracuse, New York, staffer introduced the office to Sleep in Heavenly Peace, which builds beds for children in need, 40 employees joined a C&S bedding drive. They provided each child with pillows, a comforter, and a set of sheets and also raised \$18,500 for the charity.

"Kids were sleeping on the floor, couches, and piles of clothes," says Hopkins, vice president of the C&S Foundation and a CST member. "Now those children have small spaces of their own—and their smiles were awesome."

When Hopkins was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2004, many in the Syracuse office united to support the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure. "It was so heartwarming and empowering," she says.

The cause closest to home for Hotaling is Huntington's disease, which has affected members of his family. "I was blessed to be spared, but it's important to me to raise money for the Huntington's Disease Society of America," he says.

And the Cleveland C&S office has participated in the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society Light the Night event since a staffer's mother died of leukemia.



Employees build and sand a bed for Sleep in Heavenly Peace to support children in need.



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EMMA PHILLIPS
PROJECT PLANNER
C&S COMPANIES

C&S also supports the American Heart Association, local food pantries, The Salvation

Army, and The Rescue Mission, a nonprofit for the homeless.

“When you find something that pulls at your heart, ask to do more,” says Nick McLaughlin, an aviation service group manager and CST member. “I’ve never heard a community organizer say no to that.”



C&S mentors support students throughout the summer.



Employees volunteer at the Oregon Food Bank in Portland.



Staff supports HomeAid San Diego on an awareness and fundraising walk.



Teammates have fun with 'canstruction' in Phoenix to support a local food bank.

WINNING WAYS

In 2007, the Mac, an annual award, was created to honor an employee who goes to great lengths to help others. The prize is named after former ACEC Chairman Orrin “Mac” MacMurray, a former C&S president and CEO.

“He was deeply engaged in helping the community—and still is,” Hotaling says. “He helped us understand the importance of giving back.”

The winner of the Mac award gets a plaque and \$2,000 for the charity of their choice. Phillips won in 2022, McLaughlin in 2016, and Hopkins in 2011.

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All were surprised that they won.

"When you do things for your community, you don't do it for recognition," Phillips says.
"You do it because it's the right thing to do."



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MICHAEL HOTALING
CEO
C&S COMPANIES



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NICK MCLAUGHLIN
AVIATION SERVICE GROUP MANAGER
C&S COMPANIES

3 Ways To Inspire Giving

Galvanize charity work at your firm with these strategies from C&S Companies:

1. THINK BIG—BUT START SMALL.

You can't solve the world's hunger crisis, but you can donate to food banks in your office's community. And you can show support by matching workers' donations. "If you can't match \$500, match a smaller amount," says C&S Administrative Principal Terry Hopkins.

2. EMPOWER EMPLOYEES.

Employee-led giving has more impact. Allow staff to select charities they care about and participate in fundraising or volunteer events. "We put people before profit at C&S," says Aviation Service Group Manager Nick McLaughlin. "That may be new for some companies, but it has always been true at C&S in the years I've worked here."

3. ADD A DAY FOR GIVING WHEN TRAVELING FOR BUSINESS.

On work trips, encourage employees to volunteer for a charity that matches the passions they pursue at home, says CEO Michael Hotaling. "It's our responsibility to help people who aren't as fortunate have better lives," he says.

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