

PORTLAND IS BETTER TOGETHER

Portland is Better Together Launches Corporate Volunteer Challenge

Portland is Better Together's History and Mission

As Portland navigates the economic downturn, the fabric of our community grows stronger as we help each other. The [Portland is Better Together](#) campaign represents a partnership between local government, businesses and individuals to serve our community by promoting practical ways to make a difference.

It goes without saying that the current local, national and global economy is tough. Portland neighbors and businesses are feeling the impacts and may lack the access and information necessary to get needed help or contribute in meaningful ways. This campaign is one of the City of Portland's initiatives to transform the relationship between community members and government by sharing local stories, encouraging local action, and helping you make the connections you need to Give Help, Get Help, and Choose Local. We're all in this together and can all be a part of proving that Portland is Better Together!

The main source of information is online at <http://www.portlandisbettertogether.com>. This last year, the Better Together Web site has experienced exceptional growth, averaging 10,401 hits per month over the past six months, with a total of 112,135 since it went live. In addition to the Web site, updated information and stories are posted to Better Together's [Facebook page](#) and [Twitter account](#).

The Corporate Volunteer Challenge

What is the Corporate Challenge?

The Corporate Volunteer Challenge is an initiative of the Portland is Better Together campaign and the Corporate Volunteer Council to encourage local businesses to engage in volunteerism, as part of a larger effort to promote local volunteerism and boost Portland to the number one volunteer city in America.

The Corporate Volunteer Challenge kicks off with a volunteering event with Mayor Adams, city employees and local businesses at 9:30 a.m. on March 26th at School House Supplies, located on Madison High School's campus. The Challenge will run through July when the [Corporation for National and Community Service Volunteering in America](#) releases the names of the top volunteering cities.

What are the goals of the Corporate Volunteer Challenge?

The goals of the Corporate Volunteer Challenge are two-fold:

1. Increase and highlight the rate and number of volunteers in Portland.

According to the Corporation for National and Community Service Volunteering in America Survey, [Portland ranked #2](#) amongst large cities for its rate of volunteerism, behind first-place Minneapolis-St. Paul at 38.4% vs. Portland at 36.7%. This effort challenges Portland to maintain or surpass this level of volunteerism, while providing a means of addressing critical community needs.

2. Raise awareness about the variety of opportunities and needs within the community.

Here are a few key education-related issues in our community:

- According to Oregon Mentors, more than 165,000 young people in Oregon are seeking a mentor.
- [50% of Multnomah County's students](#) are receiving free or reduced lunch.
- Both of the above factors contribute to Portland's graduation rate of 63%.

What are the benefits of participating?

The Corporate Volunteer Challenge is a great opportunity for organizations to directly connect with the community while networking with other businesses. By participating, businesses will build brand awareness and corporate image while providing the community with a skilled and talented volunteer pool.

By participating in the Corporate Volunteer Challenge, businesses can track their volunteer hours online and receive recognition on the Better Together website. Participating businesses will also get connected to other volunteer resources and best practices to help them get started.

Who are the primary partners for the Corporate Volunteer Challenge?

1. [Corporate Volunteer Council of Greater Portland](#)

The Corporate Volunteer Council of the Greater Portland Area is a resource for businesses that share a common interest in employee volunteering. Managed by Hands On Greater Portland, the "CVC" provides networking, professional development and sharing of best practices. Members learn from one another and build more successful employee volunteering efforts. Members frequently fill community relations/corporate responsibility roles but membership is open to all businesses. Meetings are held the second Wednesday morning of each month. Annual membership dues are just \$200. For more information, or to join, please contact Katie Paullin at paullik@odscompanies.com.

2. [Hands On Greater Portland](#)

Want to get your employees volunteering? Hands On Greater Portland can help. Hands On researches, develops and manages volunteer projects for employee groups from 10 to 500. With more than 14 years of experience, Hands On creates well-organized and meaningful volunteer projects that meet critical community needs. Through Business Cares, Hands On works with leading businesses and corporations to create customized employee volunteering events. To learn more about how Hands On can help you engage your employees in service, contact Dwight Adkins at dwight@handsonportland.org.

3. [Entrepreneurs Foundation of the Northwest](#)

Entrepreneurs Foundation of the Northwest (EFNW) helps small and mid-sized companies develop and implement strategies for community involvement that jointly meet the goals of the company, the passions of the employees and the needs to the community. Companies become EFNW members for a small annual fee or by contributing equity. EFNW works one-on-one with companies to identify their priorities and effectively plan annual activities to foster team-building, corporate social responsibility and community leadership, making it easier for them to focus on their prime goal of building successful companies. To find out more about membership, contact Lisa Sloan at lsloan@efnw.org.

Where do I go to learn more or sign up for the Corporate Volunteer Challenge?

Organizations can learn more and sign up at the Corporate Challenge at the [Portland is Better Together Web site](#).

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