

Day of Caring 2012 – Building Community and Camaraderie

Blackbaud's Charleston-based employees look forward every year to Trident United Way's Day of Caring. In 2001, the event's second year, the Day of Caring happened to fall on September 11th. After the events of that morning unfolded, and we all collectively dealt with the shock, a decision was made to make each year's Day of Caring a way to very intentionally remember 9/11 and the goodness we create by giving back. Since 2011, the Day of Caring has been held on the Friday before September 11th, and this year alone, more than 8,500 volunteers from around the tri-county area turned out to help with more than 350 projects.



Blackbaud's participation in Day of Caring continues to grow along with the event. In 2012, 253 employees worked on 17 projects with 11 different organizations, totaling 1,032 volunteer hours. This year, we put together an employee Day of Caring steering committee that, together, selected and promoted the projects we would work on.

The committee strove to pick a variety of projects in different communities with unique organizations. Many of the organizations we worked with were new to us, but others are ones we have had relationships with for years. Employees from a wide array of divisions participated in the day, with people from marketing, sales, finance, human resources, consulting and product development joining in.

One project was with an organization called [Charleston Promise Neighborhood](#), which involved talking with students from Kindergarten through 5th grade about the importance of post-secondary education and what it means to a person's career. Volunteers used age-appropriate activities to stressed the importance of staying in school and talked about how "the sky's the limit" to what you can accomplish when you have an education.

Nakisha Scott, program assistant with Charleston Promise Neighborhood, had this to say, "If just one person could make a difference and transform a life, than Charleston Promise Neighborhood and Mary Ford Elementary, must hold the 50 volunteers from Blackbaud responsible for the enormous impact they made on the lives of over 100 students, just by "being there". Students were asking teachers



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if the volunteers would return the following Friday. I, personally walked away feeling inspired by the positive energy I felt from the volunteers and students. Charleston Promise Neighborhood could not have successfully executed our Day of Caring project at Mary Ford Elementary, without Blackbaud."



While [Communities in Schools of the Charleston Area](#) also works with at risk kids and helps them to stay in school, our projects with them allowed us to get our hands dirty. Four teams worked at four different Charleston County schools that have Communities in Schools programs. At Haut Gap Middle School, the team built a raised bed for the school's new vegetable garden, which will be used

to promote healthy eating habits. At Burke Middle High School, another team planted roses and weeded beds around the campus. At Morningside Middle School, more flower beds were built and annuals were planted. Finally, at Burns Elementary School, lots of weeds were pulled and mulch was spread, beautifying the campus for the students.

Jill Galloway, one of the leaders of our Haut Gap team, shared her thoughts. "Blackbaud allowing me a day off to both represent the company and also do what I sincerely love to do, is incredible. The Haut Gap Community Garden was a classic example of how people can come together and make a difference when given the time and resources. In just a few hours, we were able to give the school a project area that they will be able to use for many years. This garden will help foster new skills for the students along with a sense of community and involvement."

These are just a few examples of how our employees participated in skills-based and hands on volunteering in an effort to make our little corner of the world better. Day of Caring is about giving back to our community, working with colleagues from across functions and divisions and getting to know each other better.

One day can leave a lasting impact on the community. Charlotte Anderson, Vice President of 2-1-1 Services for Trident United Way, talked about our employees' service in these terms, "The message of Day of Caring is that this community cares. Blackbaud cares and that goes a long way, especially to folks who are struggling."

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