

# Companies Giving Back

## Volunteering Is a Win-Win for Businesses

It's a common misperception that only large corporations with deep pockets can tackle big social problems. But investing in communities and improving society—also known as corporate social responsibility or CSR—have become increasingly more attractive to small and medium-size companies. These companies are discovering that being socially responsible is more than just a nice thing to do—it's also good for their bottom lines.

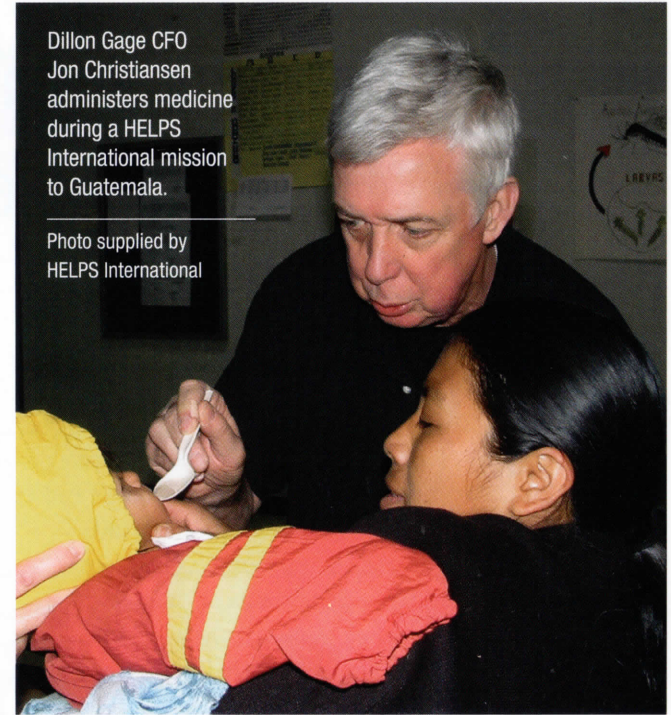
According to recent surveys, 88% of consumers say that they would switch from one brand to another (all else being equal) if the brand was associated with a good cause. Further, companies that engage in CSR activities are more attractive to prospective employees. Seventy-nine percent of people say that they would prefer to work for a socially responsible company.

One such company is Dallas-based Dillon Gage, whose CEO Steve Miller and its 80 employees provide technical expertise to improve corn crop yields and replace open flame stoves in Latin America. Such stoves cause respiratory problems for those operating them and pose risks to children. Dillon Gage employees “like knowing that their company is involved in making the world a better place and that they can help,” says Miller, who in 1984 started HELPS International. HELPS is a nonprofit corporation that partners with individuals, businesses, corporations, and local and national governments to alleviate poverty in Latin America.

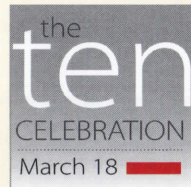
For Stan Friedman, CSR has created new business opportunities for his franchising company, RetroTax®, which has approximately 20 employees at its headquarters in Indianapolis. RetroTax helps other small and medium-size companies collect tax credits for hiring disadvantaged employees in distressed communities. RetroTax's clients get a slice of the \$12 billion set aside by the government each year, RetroTax gets more business, and disadvantaged employees get more jobs. Says Friedman, “It makes me feel good knowing that we're encouraging and incentivizing companies to place people who might have otherwise been overlooked.”

Dillon Gage CFO  
Jon Christiansen  
administers medicine  
during a HELPS  
International mission  
to Guatemala.

Photo supplied by  
HELPS International



## BCLC Celebrates 10th Anniversary



The U.S. Chamber's Business Civic Leadership Center (BCLC) is celebrating its 10th anniversary serving as the voice for businesses and their social and philanthropic interests. The center offers several resources for small businesses and local chambers, including:

- **1-888-MyBizHelp**—National Disaster Help Desk, sponsored by the Office Depot Foundation, connects small businesses and local chambers with the larger national response effort to a disaster and helps businesses affected by disasters.
- **<http://bclc.chamberpost.com>**—Examples from the front lines of the CSR field.
- **[www.TogetherForRecovery.org](http://www.TogetherForRecovery.org)**—Free business resources to help the unemployed and small businesses get back on their feet.