



Recognizing: Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP

Project Title: Skadden Chicago 30 Acts of Giving

Skadden Chicago's "30 Acts of Giving" took a new approach to public service by organizing a series of projects that together made a greater impact than any single project might, raising over \$165,000 and contributing more than 1,500 hours of service.

Description

To celebrate its 30th anniversary in 2014, Skadden Chicago decided that, rather than hosting a lavish party, we would embark on a project that would enable us to give back to the community we have called home the past three decades. Instead of focusing on a single endeavor, we undertook "30 Acts of Giving," a series of pro bono service and fundraising initiatives addressing poverty, hunger, health, diversity, education, veterans, the environment and the arts.

Challenge

Our Chicago office leaders recognized that the 30th anniversary presented a special opportunity to harness the firm's dedication to public service, but that no single project would capitalize on the broad skills of the entire team, including associates, counsel, partners, legal assistants, technology specialists and other support staff. We decided to pursue an alternative that would best utilize the diverse and substantial resources of the office to serve our community.

Originality

The typical approach for making a greater impact with public service is to think "big" — to select a single, ambitious project that through its size will have a significant impact. We instead devised a way for all attorneys and staff to get involved, at every stage of the process, from selecting the areas of need we hoped to impact and the organizations we would support, to participating in whichever of the 30 projects most interested them.

The diverse range of projects provided opportunities for everyone, no matter their passions or particular skills. The projects, each of which entailed either fundraising or direct volunteer services, included sponsoring the Chicago Urban League's College Trunk Party, which provided freshmen with trunks of class and dorm-room essentials; holding a gift drive for the Simpson Academy for Young Women, a school for pregnant and parenting teens; providing legal support for criminal record relief at Cabrini Green Legal Aid and for adults seeking U.S. citizenship at the Erie Neighborhood House; hosting a four-day software training with Urban Alliance for 200 high school seniors from underserved communities; raising \$10,000 for the Northern Illinois Food Bank; and 24 other projects, as detailed in the attachment.

Rationale

No single project could utilize all of the talent and resources Skadden has to offer, nor was any one cause likely to spark the interest of every person seeking to participate. Therefore, a small committee of attorneys and staff organized the "30 Acts of Giving" initiative, with the goal of finding a diverse set of projects focusing on such areas as poverty, education and pro bono legal services. The committee asked all attorneys and the entire staff for ideas and then, in recognition of the anniversary, narrowed the suggestions to 30.

We recognized that this unique approach also would enable the Chicago office to enhance collaboration with, and significantly deepen our connection to, the local community. By executing 30



different projects with 31 different charitable and nonprofit organizations over the course of a year, we would develop a wide range of new relationships that would present additional opportunities for us to give back in the years ahead.

Impact

The “30 Acts of Giving” initiative exceeded our expectations in terms of boosting participation, increasing the size and reach of our contribution, and strengthening our relationships with service providers throughout the Chicago area. With more than 200 Skadden attorneys and staff participating over the course of the year, we participated in five supply drives, two charity walks/races, seven service projects and three pro bono projects. We hosted three events, held four office fundraisers and made donations to seven nonprofits. Our attorneys and staff contributed more than 1,500 hours of service, raised over \$165,000 for charities and nonprofits, packaged more than 6,000 pounds of food, donated over 1,000 books and helped over 200 college-bound youth prepare for higher education.

The impact continues to grow even after the completion of the project: By building personal relationships with over 30 organizations, we’ve created and strengthened ties with many of the region’s most dedicated and accomplished nonprofits and charities, which will facilitate our continued service to the Chicago community. Indeed, we’ve already hosted a second, expanded “trunk party” with the Urban League, several Skadden staffers now regularly volunteer at Growing Home and a team of our associates conducted second criminal records relief clinic with Cabrini Green Legal Aid.

To view the video that captures the heart of the 30 Acts of Giving, follow this link - <https://vimeo.com/skaddenarps/skadden30actsofgiving>

Additional information on this project can be found in the below links:

30 Acts Infographic -

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/biooht9o8jjat2v/30%20Acts%20of%20Giving%20Infographic.pdf?dl=0>

30 Acts Appendix - [https://www.dropbox.com/s/qm7ttzdf1ajnwaa/30 Acts of Giving - Appendix.pdf?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/s/qm7ttzdf1ajnwaa/30%20Acts%20of%20Giving%20Appendix.pdf?dl=0)