



Each year, City Utilities employees give their time and treasure to the Springfield community. Community engagement starts at the top. The executive leadership team takes an active role by encouraging employee participation and joining fundraising events.

“Community engagement is at the core of who we are as an organization. Our mission is to advance the quality of life in our community. Giving back is key to that mission. We encourage giving back not only because it is the right thing to do, but because it develops a sense of fulfillment and helps us stay connected to our community. Our employees can better perform their job duties when they are connected to the neighbors we serve as our customers.”

– Gary Gibson, City Utilities of Springfield President/CEO

“We believe engaging employees in volunteerism is very important to our culture. Employees who volunteer often feel a closer connection to their colleagues and our company, which we feel plays a part in retaining employees. These interactions allow them to further improve their customer service skills, which include having engaging conversations, showing gratitude and demonstrating empathy.”

– Tony Polodna, JPMorgan Chase & Co. Executive Director

TAKE THE FIRST STEP

If your organization is experiencing a labor challenge – or expects to in the future – partner with United Way of the Ozarks. Let us help you connect the dots between your employees’ engagement in the community and your ability to attract and retain talent.

“The Community Engagement in a Box toolkit will help you find people who want to love their community. That can be the secret sauce to making better employees, better companies and better communities!”

– Peter Kageyama, author of *For the Love of Cities*

RESEARCH BACKS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Multiple research reports indicate that simply allowing employees to connect with their community improves their work engagement. Helping employees find volunteer opportunities that touch their heart:

- Significantly impacts their loyalty to their employer.
- Strengthens their pride in their employer.
- Contributes to them becoming their employers’ best recruiters.



Scan this QR code to learn more about the Community Engagement in a Box toolkit.

uwozarks.org/corporate-citizenship



uwozarks.org

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TOOLKIT OFFERS EMPLOYER ADVANTAGE

The changing dynamic of the workforce demands an overhaul to outdated approaches. The tools employers need to attract and retain talent are easily accessible and proven to work.

INVERSION OF THE LABOR CURVE

For more than 200 years, the number of workers exceeded the number of jobs available. But in 2018, the labor curve inverted. At that point, there was a fundamental shift that resulted in more jobs available than workers to fill them. Employers throughout the United States are experiencing a consistent No. 1 pain point – talent recruitment and retention.

The current labor shortage is the result of demographic changes that have been occurring slowly over time. As a result, the competition for talent today is fierce – and it will become more aggressive during the next decade.

CORPORATE CITIZENSHIP AS A DIFFERENTIATOR

Corporate citizenship refers to a company’s responsibilities toward society. It is increasingly an expectation of employees, customers and suppliers. Community engagement is a leading element of corporate citizenship that:

- Offers a competitive advantage to your organization.
- Boosts your corporate brand and reputation within the community.
- Creates a more engaging and healthy organizational culture.
- Helps attract new talent.

Can corporate citizenship work for you? How will you differentiate your company to potential employees and clients?

Employers – large and small – who drive community engagement within their workforce share how it’s working for them.

“At John Deere, we believe that for a community to thrive, every citizen must have a chance to help achieve its success. That’s why we’re big fans of the Community Engagement in a Box toolkit. Through innovative resources like this, United Ways unlock opportunities for businesses and their employees to do more than give and volunteer. They allow them to join with an entire community to create and realize a shared vision for a brighter tomorrow.”

– Nate Clark, John Deere Foundation President



Fewer than 25 employees

"We believe that who we are collectively as people inside our little company influences the product we make such that they are inseparable. And 'who we are' can be expressed, not exclusively, by service to others in our world whether that be across the globe, in our town or in our families. But the real transformation happens when we are offered the chance at reversing our roles, the teacher can become the student, the healer the healed, the one serving becomes the one served. The other word for this is compassion. This is why we promote engagement in the community however one might define it." – **Shawn Askinosie, Askinosie Chocolate Founder & CEO**

25-250 employees



"We've noticed a certain amount of pride in our co-workers when they get involved in community engagement activities. Quite frankly, they are our best recruiters."

– **Donna Roberts, SMC Packaging Group Human Resource Manager**

Arvest recognizes that younger workers not only want – but expect – a workplace environment where they gain a sense of fulfillment. That often comes from being able to give back in meaningful ways.

"By allowing us time during the workday to volunteer shows that Arvest really does value corporate citizenship. It isn't just giving out donations, but truly supporting us as we work with organizations that we are passionate about. I'm proud to work for a company that encourages giving back."

– **Kyle Hubbard, Arvest Bank Springfield President/CEO**

"Great Southern promotes community engagement. It benefits our employees because it gives them first-hand knowledge of what's going on in the community. It benefits the Bank because our employees come back excited, with a sense of satisfaction, and with ideas on what we as a company can do better in the community. Banking can feel intimidating to some and having volunteers out in the community can put a personal face on that and help people feel more comfortable."

– **Brian Davies, Great Southern Bank St. Louis Market President**

"We have a vested interest in helping address the needs in our community and making it a wonderful place to live. We need great people on our team and great clients to work with. A thriving community is more attractive to top talent and allows our clients' businesses to prosper. That's what we need to continue to grow our business."

– **Gary Schafer, BKD Managing Partner**

"AECI is – hand's down – one of the best places to work, anywhere. The level of commitment to the community starts at the top. Our leadership encourages employees to be active and involved with whatever nonprofit they are

– Lynette Myers, Associated Electric Cooperative, Inc., Sr. Legal Assistant

passionate about. I believe this stems from knowing that we serve our members who are our neighbors, families and friends. So by serving our community, we are bettering where we live, work and raise our families."



Business Volunteer Group of the Year



"ESC chooses to be engaged in the community because it makes a lasting difference in the lives of people around us. As an employer, we benefit from having an engaged team that gets a real sense of doing things that matter."

– **Scott Bybee, ESC Consulting President/CEO**

More than 250 employees

Mercy has historically encouraged team members to be involved in the community. Many departments volunteer together to make a meal for Ronald McDonald house or Rare Breed homeless youth services. During the holiday season, they adopt other coworkers/families who are in need. Community needs are a regular topic of leadership meetings.

"Mercy's mission and values advocate dignity for every single individual, so volunteering – especially for those partners who assist those in need – is a core to our roots. When our coworkers volunteer with partners whose missions align with our community needs assessment and

improvement plan, it can impact the number of unsheltered or less fortunate patients who use our emergency department. By volunteering for organizations that assist these patients with basic needs, it can have an added benefit of improving their health."

– **Bill Hennessey, Mercy Vice President, Mission**

"We believe that by promoting community engagement it allows our employees to find a sense of purpose within the community while simultaneously helping to develop our own skills in business, leadership and teamwork. It promotes a 'strength in numbers' concept to drive a better community to live in for all."

– **Jennifer Potts, SRC Holdings Corporation Community Relations Committee President**



"As an organization, it is so important to support the community in which you operate. Strong communities attract people to the area, which helps support revenue and families within the community. I encourage team members to get involve within the communities we serve as it not only builds a stronger sense of belonging, but it also builds engagement among the team to support something larger than ourselves."

– **Nichole Goddard-Bradford, Commerce Bank EVP Regional Manager, Retail Banking**