

Doubling Down!



Using Corporate Matching Gifts to Help ORCA and Other Charities

By Mike Gildea, ORCA President

Imagine if you could double the value of your annual contributions to your favorite charities like ORCA or The First Tee and it wouldn't cost you a penny more! Suppose you could turn a \$25 donation into \$50 or \$100 into a \$200 Gift! Well, you can.... if you are a current or retired worker with one of the over 4,000 companies and foundations that have a **Corporate Matching Gift** (CMG) program.

BACKGROUND

Beginning with General Electric 60 years ago, more and more companies have set up CMGs for the sole purpose of encouraging charitable giving by their employees and retirees. They do this by matching their contributions to charities and non-profits, both big and small. Today it's estimated that 65% of Fortune 500 companies have a CMG program. Sadly, however, while millions of American workers and retirees are eligible to apply for these awards, only a small percentage actually does because most aren't aware that these CMGs even exist.

Of the \$17.8 billion business donations to charities in 2014 (the last year for which complete statistics are available) over \$5 billion came by way of CMG contributions. However, the lion's share of these monies ends up going to the big national charities and non-profits as well as colleges and universities because they have the resources to actively pursue these funds. On the other hand, smaller, local charities--which provide hundreds of millions of dollars worth of services for needy Americans at the grass roots level--aren't consistently in the hunt for these resources. While \$5 billion is a lot of money, billions more are available simply for the asking.

IMPACT

While ORCA has just begun to focus on the CMG possibilities and educate the Ocean Ridge community about them, over \$2,000 is already in the pipeline because a number of our donors have already applied for the match. For example:

- We just received our first ever corporate match from the Ericsson Corporation, courtesy of Joe Arancio whose wife Kathy is a former ORCA Board member;
- Larry Spitznagle's application to Merck for his Trivia Nite donation has already been approved;
- ORCA board member Maggy Schlink has submitted for both a CMG and a **Volunteer Matching Grant (VMG)** from her former employer, the Shell corporation;
- Tom Best's request for a match from IBM has also been approved, and;
- Wayne Hodges's submission to match his 2015 contribution to ORCA's *Memorial Giving Fund* for Matthew's Ministry has also been accepted by the Energizer Corporation.

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Doubling Down!! *continued...*

Helping ORCA and Other Charities

Through most CMGs you can often double the value of your annual charitable donations by just applying for the corporate match. For our donors, ORCA has made the process to do so as simple as 1, 2, 3.

Step 1: To determine if your current or former employer has a corporate matching fund, go to ORCA's website at www.orcharities.org. In the box entitled Corporate Matching Gifts, keystroke *Click Here*.

Step 2: Then, in the space provided, enter the corporate name to see if there is a match. If the company is listed, a pop-up will then appear providing a snap shot of the CMG;

Step 3: Through the hotlinks provided in the pop-up, carefully fill out the application form and submit it on-line in a timely fashion.

That's it.....it's that easy. The whole application process shouldn't take longer than 20 to 30 minutes.

Completing the Process

In all likelihood, if you're trying to match your contribution(s) to ORCA, we will have to provide some additional information to the CMG fund such as donation verification or perhaps our IRS identification number. So you will need to advise ORCA's Treasurer, Claudia Piccarelli (claudia.john@atmc.net) in order to ensure timely completion of the process. Keep in mind that the most common individual minimum donation that companies will match is \$25.

As referenced earlier, some companies also offer a **Volunteer Matching Grant (VMG)** for the amount of time a donor may have also volunteered for a charity. So, check that out on the fund's website.

Also, be aware of the fact that CMGs establish their own gift cycles. Depending upon when you submitted the application, the gift may be awarded within weeks or it may take several months before the charity receives it. Once the gift is approved, you or the charity may be advised about when to expect receipt of the gift. If unexpected delays have occurred, you should follow-up to seek clarification

Something else to keep in mind: If a donor is married and a spouse worked for another private sector company then he or she may also be eligible to apply for a matching gift of their own since charitable donations from married couples are considered joint contributions. So donors will also want to explore that possibility as well.

And finally, don't forget to save the CMG website information for future reference.

I hope this article will encourage Ocean Ridge residents to take the time to look into the possibilities of accessing a Corporate Matching Gift. That's why we've made it easy for you to do so via the ORCA website. Already several Corporate Matching Gifts have been approved or are in the pipeline for ORCA. Together they will significantly expand our charitable income and enable us to assist even more of the thousands of Brunswick County citizens that need our help. Together, you and ORCA can continue to make a significant difference in their lives for the better and in so doing enhance Ocean Ridge's reputation as a community that cares.

For more information about Corporate Matching Gifts, contact Mike Gildea at gildeamw@yahoo.com.