

## Volunteering: Different Ways to Make a Difference

Cisco employees have always been generous with their time and money, both as individuals and as members of task forces and councils. In difficult economic times, that sort of community spirit is more important than ever. In response to President Obama's call for greater service in America, Cisco Community Relations in April 2009 launched the Cisco Volunteer Movement. This initiative asks our employees worldwide to make a yearly pledge of community service hours. The campaign bolsters and revitalizes our volunteer programs, and each year it acknowledges the top 50 Cisco Citizen volunteers.

In February 2009, Cisco announced that Cisco employees, the Cisco Foundation, and Cisco Chairman Emeritus John Morgridge contributed more than \$4.6 million to support hunger relief organizations around the world during the 2008 Global Hunger Relief Campaign. Cisco worldwide employee donations exceeded the initial pledge goal. More than \$1.3 million was raised from employees during the annual campaign (October 1 to December 31, 2008) to aid hunger relief in local communities. [The Cisco Foundation](#) and the TOSA Foundation, a private charity founded by the Morgridge Family, together contributed approximately \$3.3 million. Between November 1 and December 19, 2008, the Cisco Foundation provided two-for-one matching funds for any qualifying employee donation of \$50 (\$12 in emerging market regions), up to \$10,000. The Cisco global campaign provided relief to 108 local and international food support agencies, representing employees from more than 30 countries.

In June 2009, Cisco was a corporate host and sponsor of the [National Conference on Volunteering and Service](#), the world's largest gathering of volunteer and service leaders from the nonprofit, government, and corporate sectors, which attracted more than 3500 attendees. The Cisco Energy Exchange exhibit hall at the event provided visibility for organizations seeking recognition and momentum for their programs.

## Cisco Civic Councils

Cisco Civic Councils put corporate social responsibility and the personal ethic of “giving back” into action by striving to make a positive impact in the communities where employees live and work. Councils are teams of employee champions who are passionate about their volunteer commitments. They plan projects, develop nonprofit partnerships, initiate product donation programs, and work toward cash grant-making, while fitting their efforts to the specific needs of the local community.

### Highlights from Around the World

In more than 30 Civic Councils worldwide, Cisco employees play a critical role in the company’s efforts to create meaningful change at the local level. Cisco employees are personally involved in a range of efforts that contribute to the well-being of their communities and fellow citizens.

#### **Australia/New Zealand Civic Council**

The Cisco Civic Council in the Australia–New Zealand (ANZ) region is demonstrating the human network effect at [Djarragun College](#) in Cape York, Queensland, where most of the students are of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent. The employees are helping to build an indigenous educational model that they hope will be replicated in similar education settings across Australia. They are supporting the school by using technology to transform teaching and learning through building a network, helping teachers to use the technology, and mentoring and supporting students in their transition to work or further studies.

The ANZ Civic Council is also supporting community development through the Cape York Partnerships by providing communications technology for welfare reform programs in four Cape York communities. Financial investment is nearly AU\$1 million (about US\$814,000) in cash, products, and volunteer hours. It is still early in the engagement, but the following accomplishments have been recorded by the council:

- An AU\$800,000 (about US\$651,700) education-grade network has been installed and is operational at the school.
- Attendance rates are up, truancy is down, and more students are involved in using the Internet and technology in learning.
- Nine volunteer projects have been established.
- Volunteers raised AU\$64,000 (about US \$53,000) for the [Sonali McCarthy Fund for Girls](#), which gives girls at Djarragun College an opportunity to participate in events and programs that will enhance their personal and educational development, and develop their leadership skills. The fund

**Happy Mother's Day**

On May 9, 2009, the first Mother's Day after the Sichuan earthquake, 23 children in Guangzhou got the chance to visit with their mothers in Chengdu via Cisco TelePresence technology. The children were formerly students at Sangping Middle School, one of the schools destroyed in hard-hit Wenchuan County. They are currently attending school in Guangdong Province, hundreds of miles away. This moving occasion was the first time mothers and children had seen each other in many months.

was established in honor of the late Sonali McCarthy, a founding member of the Civic Council and significant contributor.

- Twelve students attended Cisco Networkers for work experience in 2007 and 2008. Cisco Networkers is a yearly ICT trade show that attracts thousands of professionals and exhibitors.
- Forty-five Cisco WebEx web conferencing accounts were set up for Djarragun College and Cape York Partnerships to facilitate communications between indigenous communities across Cape York.
- Cisco partner Telstra has upgraded broadband access to Djarragun and neighboring Wangetti College campuses and has pledged a 100 percent discount on costs for two years.
- Cisco partner Promethian has agreed to contribute two interactive whiteboards to Djarragun and to support training in their use.
- Taleka, a Cisco training partner, has provided onsite training in IP telephony to Djarragun staff.
- Cisco partner IBM has provided e-mentoring software to the school.
- The Australian Government Department of Employment, Education, and Work Place Relations has funded a digital learning expert to work with the teachers on professional development.

**Asia Civic Council**

In its first year, the Asia Civic Council partnered with the Cisco Consumer Business Group and Cisco IT to bring cheer and technology to Sunbeam Children's Place in Singapore, which offers protection to abused and neglected children. A product grant upgraded the wireless network so children can connect to the Internet. The children also received refurbished laptops.

**Canada Civic Council**

Together with family, friends, and coworkers, employees in the Canada Civic Council donated more than C\$110,000 (about US\$100,000) to various charities, which was matched by C\$115,000 (about US\$105,000) from the Cisco Foundation. Canadian employees sorted more than 80,000 pounds of food for local food banks and also raised more than C\$120,000 (about US\$110,000) in support of Children's Alliance, an advocacy organization dedicated to improving the health, safety, and economic well-being of children.

**China Civic Council**

Cisco employees in China provide assistance to several schools as part of their Hope Schools project. The assistance can take many forms, from supplying classrooms with computers and printers to providing students with books and stationery, or even arranging for the excavation of a new well. The fifth Cisco Employee Hope School opened in Guangdong Province in April 2009, and the sixth Hope School will be completed in Anhui Province in September 2009. All Hope Schools are made possible with Cisco employee donations and Cisco Foundation matching funds. To date, the five schools serve approximately 700 children in grades 1–6 (ages 6–12).

Other activities this year:

- At a career day coordinated with Junior Achievement on March 28, 2009, in Beijing, Guangzhou, and Shanghai, 57 Cisco volunteers participated in six workshops and two seminars along with more than 483 students from seven universities in those cities.
- During a "job shadow day" on May 2, 2009, 20 employee volunteers and 33 students visited the state-of-the-art Cisco Briefing Center in Beijing to experience Cisco TelePresence collaboration technology.
- As part of the earthquake relief effort in Sichuan Province, Cisco China and Cisco WebEx employees contributed more than 1400 items to victims, including padded clothes, quilts, shoes,

and children's garments. In addition, Cisco South China created a fund that was used to purchase 100 new quilts that were distributed to villagers in the Yunfeng area.

- Employees donated teaching supplies to kindergartens in Yingxiu (RMB 84,382; about US\$12,350) and Wenchuan (RMB 60,000; about US\$8780).

In June 2009, Council members held a sales event for paintings created by children in China's earthquake-affected areas. They sold all 77 paintings and raised RMB 38,500 (about US\$5600).

### India Civic Council

During the 2008 Global Hunger Relief Campaign, Cisco India employees pledged more than \$200,000 to [Akshaya Patra Foundation](#), a nonprofit organization that works with the government to provide midday meals to underprivileged school children. With double matching funds from the Cisco Foundation, plus a match from Cisco Chairman Emeritus John Morgridge, Akshaya Patra received over \$800,000. This sum is enough to provide a midday meal to more than 20,000 school children for a year, and is more than twice the donation that was made to Akshaya Patra in 2007.

Another significant initiative was the launching of the School Adoption Program in partnership with [Children's Lovecastles Trust](#). The team started the program in 2008 by adopting one primary school near the Cisco Bangalore campus. In 2009, the team was successful in adopting three more schools. Cisco volunteers have started several initiatives at these schools, including:

- Providing midday meals in partnership with the Akshaya Patra Foundation
- Providing school kits for students containing uniforms, bags, shoes, and stationery
- Cleaning and painting the schools
- Offering daily English language coaching
- Celebrating Independence Day and National Sports Day with the students

Other Cisco employee volunteer activities include:

- Building a state-of-the-art website for the [Bangalore Hospice Trust](#), enabling them to take advantage of ICT technology
- Organizing summer camps at government schools (in partnership with Children's Lovecastles Trust) and at two schools run by the [Parikrma Foundation](#); Cisco volunteers conducted arts and crafts, sports, music/dance, civics, and computer classes in these schools
- Participating in various building programs with the [Habitat for Humanity India Chapter](#)
- Engaging with other charities in India, including the [Shristi Special Academy](#), the [National Association for the Blind](#), and [SOS Children's Villages of India](#)

### New York/New Jersey Civic Council

The New York/New Jersey Civic Council worked with [Companions in Courage](#) and the National Hockey League to open the eighth Lion's Den, in St. Justine's hospital in Montreal. Companions in Courage raises funds to build interactive playrooms, called Lion's Dens, that connect young patients with family, friends, and celebrities during their hospital stay. The rooms incorporate Cisco WebEx and Unified Communications collaboration, as well as Microsoft Xbox video game technology. The Council was also active in bringing out more than 100 volunteers for each of two service days with [City Year New York](#), helping to renovate community centers in the Bronx.

### **Silicon Valley Civic Council**

Family Giving Tree donations, along with a Cisco Foundation match, purchased a total of 3600 gifts for San Francisco Bay Area children in December 2008 as part of the Holiday Wish Drive. Cisco employees exceeded their internal goal by over 10 percent and received the Golden Sleigh Award for the fourth consecutive year, recognizing the largest contribution among companies Cisco's size. Additionally, hundreds of Cisco volunteers supported the local Back to School Backpack Drive. Cisco has won the Golden Backpack Award for five consecutive years.

Cisco volunteers continued to deepen their relationship with Habitat for Humanity Silicon Valley in FY09 with a pilot program that involved 80 volunteers who built, painted, and adorned children's playhouses. The playhouses will be sold online to raise funds, or donated to Bay Area families. Project Playhouse develops the volunteers' construction skills and also offers them opportunities to help Habitat for Humanity with marketing, operations, and website maintenance.

While celebrating its 15th anniversary in April 2009, [Resource Area for Teaching](#) (RAFT) in San Jose honored Cisco with its Top Corporate Volunteer Award for employee service totaling approximately 10,000 hours. RAFT is a San Jose nonprofit that assists teachers by providing materials and ideas for day-to-day instruction. Cisco employees help RAFT repurpose materials collected from local businesses so they can be used for interactive learning in a variety of subjects. Besides supporting K-12 education, RAFT promotes environmental sustainability by diverting more than 15,000 cubic feet of material from city landfills each month.

### **Spain Civic Council**

Cisco employees supported the [Apsuria Foundation's](#) Project Illusion with cash contributions and product donations for the foundation's new residence for disabled children of deceased parents. They donated funds for a hydrotherapy pool, voice and data services, equipment, and furniture. An employee band also played in three concerts and donated all the gate receipts.

### **U.K./Ireland Civic Council**

The United Kingdom and Ireland have a long-established commitment to giving back to the community in many ways: from working in homeless shelters in Glasgow to helping a failing school in Southeast England, from building homes for the disadvantaged in Ireland to working with young people with learning difficulties in remote corners of Britain. The U.K./Ireland Civic Council has logged 3000 hours of service in 2009, a record.

Among the activities that the council participates in is [Red Nose Day](#), the most effective way by which the British charity organization Comic Relief raises money for worthy causes around the world, particularly in Africa. Held every other year in the United Kingdom, the nationwide event culminates in a live telethon on BBC One television. A wide range of money-raising activities occur on that day and during the run-up to the main event.

On this year's Red Nose Day (March 13, 2009), Comic Relief used cloud computing and virtualization technology, including Cisco networking equipment, to handle the deluge of donations they received. One highlight was \$1.6 million raised in 13 seconds following the airing of a documentary on the plight of Africa. The team also worked with the art auctioneer Christie's to host the first-ever virtual auction using Cisco TelePresence technology. This employee fundraising campaign raised approximately \$250,000, which is the highest figure recorded since the team began running the fundraising drive 12 years ago, and represents a 15 percent increase over the previous year's total. The U.K./Ireland Civic Council combines a midyear internal virtual meeting with the fundraising climax for Red Nose Day to maximize the effectiveness of the effort.

**Cisco Atlanta (Scientific Atlanta)**

Cisco Atlanta (formerly Scientific Atlanta) continues its rich history of community engagement in the Atlanta region. Atlanta-based employees participated in a walkathon that raised \$140,000 for the American Cancer Society and \$87,000 for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, with over 350 volunteers participating in both walks. Habitat for Humanity and the Atlanta Community Food Bank also provide employees with meaningful volunteer opportunities.

Supporting education is a top priority, especially science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) related initiatives. In March 2009, Cisco Atlanta served as lead sponsor for the FIRST Robotics Peachtree Regional competition, a “varsity sport for the mind” that offers high school students an exciting way to learn about engineering, collaboration, and project management. In addition to mentoring individual students and teams, Cisco employees served as competition judges.

Cisco Atlanta’s new education partner is the Gwinnett School of Math, Science & Technology (GSMST), a charter school that provides a challenging curriculum focused on advanced mathematical, scientific, and technological applications. Using Thomas Friedman’s books *Hot, Flat, and Crowded* as a basis for discussion, students from GSMST, Monterrey High School in Mexico, and India participated in multiple Cisco TelePresence meetings that featured discussions, skits, songs, and debates focusing on topics from Friedman’s book. The students learned about each others’ cultures, languages, and belief systems, and explored possible solutions to pressing global issues. Cisco Atlanta is also offering fellowships to select GSMST students.

“Every single time I share information with people about the Cisco Leadership Fellows program, they say, ‘Wow, Cisco cares. I wish I had a program like that in my organization.’”

— Cisco Leadership Fellow  
Ayelet Baron, from her  
blog

## Cisco Leadership Fellows

Since 2003, the Cisco Leadership Fellows program has exemplified how Cisco people and technology come together to make a difference and help create prosperity in the community. The Leadership Fellows program supports Cisco employees in local and global community organizations, where they work to provide strategic guidance, promote best practices, and build capacities that help these organizations have a greater impact.

For their part, Leadership Fellows learn to adapt, negotiate, collaborate, and consult in new ways, which serves them well in advancing social goals and their careers at Cisco. Fellows generally work on community projects that complement Cisco’s social and business plans for the particular region or country.

Two current Cisco Leadership Fellows are profiled below.

### Ayelet Baron

[NetHope](#) is a nonprofit IT consortium of leading international NGOs serving disadvantaged communities in more than 150 countries. Members have well-established ICT departments that use technology to support their programs. With the assistance of a Cisco Fellow, NetHope was established in 2001 to enable member NGOs to deliver information and accelerate response to communities in remote developing areas by sharing ICT knowledge, collaborating to develop best practices for public-benefit technology deployment, and facilitating innovative and cost-effective use of ICT.

Ayelet Baron, director of business development for Cisco’s Emerging Markets group, is a Cisco Leadership Fellow who is helping to put NetHope’s latest strategy into operation by:

- Providing a social networking strategy that can be scaled across NetHope and its members, and developing a [handbook for nonprofits](#) on how to use social media for social good. Her work is published [here](#) and she can be followed on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/ayeletb>.
- Helping to create a strategy and roadmap for replicable ICT solutions, capabilities, and resources aimed at developing NetHope’s newest program, Innovation for Development.
- Leading the Healthcare Innovation for Development Working Group and running a working group of healthcare and IT professionals that identifies and oversees sponsored healthcare ICT projects.

**Kevin MacRitchie**

Kevin MacRitchie is a vice president and chief technology officer in Cisco's Global Defense, Space, and Security group. His Fellowship assignment began with a focus on assisting the [Pinckney Community Schools](#) district in Livingston County, Michigan, by investigating sources of technology investment and identifying ways to get computers and Internet access to students, allowing for better access to online-based education. He quickly saw an opportunity to scale his work beyond the school district by creating a true multiagency network in Michigan that connects more than 30,000 locations and reduces operational expenditures for the state, local governments, public safety agencies, libraries, and schools.

MacRitchie's plan has the potential to save a combined \$1 billion a year in operational expenses by implementing an infrastructure that can deliver shared services such as IP telephony and data center functions to organizations across the state. The effort also has the advantages of leveraging networking expertise and creating new jobs. Michigan is now a leader in shared ICT infrastructure, and can serve as a model for similar programs in other states and at the federal level.

See a video about the [Cisco Leadership Fellows Program](#).