

THANK YOU



RecognizeGood[®] NEWS

Inaugural Business in Community Forum

From: *Anonymous*

... **Marty Vega**, I know you aren't in Austin anymore, but I have been looking for a place to say "thank you" and to let you know what a HUGE difference you made in my life, in a time that I desperately needed it.

From: *Anonymous*

... **Rufina Carbajal** changed my life. I have been attending her Zumba classes at Dove Springs Recreation Center. I'm diabetic, lost 40 pounds and feel much better. She does everything for us and the community. Giving her time and passion to all of us to do better in our lives. A big thank you for donating your time.

From: *Anonymous*

... **Andrew Cooper and Rich Burgess**, thanks for helping organize the re-organization of our PET area. It looks awesome!

From: *Anonymous*

... **Yolanda Menendez**, thank you for being #1 in our PET heart!

From: *Anonymous*

... Thanks to **Maria J. and M&M** for always having a positive attitude and a great work ethic!

From: *Yolanda*

... **Ariana**, you've been such a fabulous partner. Always willing to help with anything and everything ... Thanks for being so awesome.

To post a RecognizeGood Thank You, visit recognizegood.org.



RecognizeGood held its inaugural Business in Community Forum on September 29th at the Phillips Event Center in East Austin, bringing business and nonprofit leaders together for a conversation centered around shared interest in a strong, sustainable community. Panelists for the forum included Russell Bridges (3M), Laurie Loew (*Give Realty*), Matt Kouri (*Mission Capital*) and Carolyn Schwarz (*Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central Texas*). The moderator for the forum was Carrie Vanston (*Corporate Cultures That Rock*). The theme of the forum was the idea that an investment from both sectors in the formation of deeper, more meaningful connections through engaging experiences benefit both the company and the nonprofit in a huge way.

Russell Bridges was asked about the volunteer grant program at 3M, which provides funds to local nonprofits after 3M employees have donated a set amount of volunteer time. "It's a way for us to connect on a more personal level with

organizations beyond the writing of a check, and have people put our face in the community working with nonprofit organizations. It helps us, it helps the community, it helps the employees. They come back to the workplace energized and, we hope, more appreciative of the work that they're doing at 3M." His one piece of advice to both sectors was to ask questions and listen to the answers.

Carolyn Schwarz was then asked how she might explain the investment in building relationships with local companies. "What I tell board members is that building relationships with businesses, and with the community at large, is well worth the investment. We want people involved with us who care deeply about our mission, because what those volunteers are going to give is going to be so much stronger than the one-time situation. I feel like meaningful involvement leads to giving."

(continued on page two)

Laurie Loew, whose real estate brokerage gives 25% of every commission to a nonprofit of the client's choice, chimed in on how the personal community connection has helped her business attract agents. "I don't actively recruit my agents. They've all come to me because of the business model and because they've wanted to be part of something bigger. We're motivated not by our commission, but by our client and our community."

Matt Kouri then made some predictions about the future of cross-sector relationships. "If you're in business at a company who in the next 10 years doesn't find a way to completely integrate profit and purpose – completely integrate – then in 10 years, you won't be in business. When it becomes less something that's over here in HR, or over here in community relations, and it becomes the CEO's priority because he or she understands it's the key to success and longevity, I think those are the businesses that will survive and thrive. If you're a nonprofit and in 10 years you're still running the same programs and the same business models – which in most cases is a 100% reliance on philanthropy or government grants – you will not be in business. You may make it, but it will be extremely hard. Nonprofits who can find other ways to realize that they have intellectual property, they have social capital, that are delivering value in our economy – and more than just feel-good value – and then go find the investors that are willing to pay for that value creation, those are the nonprofits I think will survive and thrive."

RecognizeGood® Lighthouses



Rotary Club of East Austin

RecognizeGood is proud to announce the recipient of our 12th RecognizeGood Lighthouse Award, Rotary Club of East Austin! Founded in 1992, this inspiring club is made up primarily of leaders in the education and government sectors which makes them a truly unique bunch. In the past 24 years of continuous service, the Rotary Club of East Austin has changed thousands of lives for the better with a focus on youth, education, and the underprivileged. The Rotary Club of East Austin prides itself on being a small club which makes a large impact, with a dedication to literacy efforts in the Austin area including support of programs like the First Act Early Knight character building initiative at Pecan Springs Elementary, donations of books to local schools and volunteer hours as classroom readers. RecognizeGood is privileged to say THANK YOU on behalf of our entire community to the Rotary Club of East Austin!

Sunshine Community Gardens

RecognizeGood is proud to honor Sunshine Community Gardens with our 13th RecognizeGood Lighthouse Award! Founded in 1979, Sunshine Community Gardens is one of the largest community gardens in the nation. Almost entirely self-funded, SCG's biggest source of income is Austin's largest plant sale – last year gardeners reported at least 1,800 people in line before the sale was ready to open! As a group, the 200+ gardeners who make up Sunshine Community Gardens give up to 40 pounds of produce twice weekly during the summer to a local food bank called Micah 6, which helps feed low-income Austinites – that's just under 25,000 pounds of food last year alone. Gardeners also work with Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired to teach horticulture skills to the school's students. With the presentation of this award, RecognizeGood gives Sunshine Community Gardens and its over 200 gardeners a heartfelt THANK YOU on behalf of the entire community.



RecognizeGood Board Members

Bobby Jenkins - *Chairman*

John Bosch, Jr. - *Vice Chairman*

Andrew Cooper - *Secretary*

Earl Maxwell - *Board Member*



RecognizeGood Officers & Team

John Bosch, Jr. - *President*

Judy Rock - *Secretary*

Reina Wiatt - *Treasurer*

Keith Smith - *Asst. Treasurer*

Joel Coffman - *Executive Director*

George Mihalcik - *Legends Director*

Scholley Bubenik - *EiBC Director*

Paul Holguin - *Photographer*

Karolyn Knaack - *Legal Counsel*



RecognizeGood Partners



Recent RecognizeGood® Legends



Connie Bellows was adopted at six weeks old and placed into the foster care system at age 12 to escape a toxic home environment, then because she was ineligible for adoption spent the next six years in several different foster homes. Connie made it through the foster care system and into adulthood, but memories of having her meager belongings dumped into a box or sack as if they were trash stuck with her. By 2008, Connie and her husband Eric had fostered and adopted five children of their own in addition to raising their three biological children. Given her background in the foster system and as a foster parent, she knew that providing foster children with suitcases and personal belongings would, in effect, give them a sense of dignity and ownership. Project Care Case was born. Over the past six years, Project Care Case has put together more than 1,200 Care Cases for foster children in agencies throughout Central Texas.

WOW!
As a foster child, Connie Bellows bounced from home to home – now, she heads a nonprofit called Project Care Case that has provided ownership and dignity to over 1,200 foster kids.



\$1,000 was donated to **Project Care Case** in Connie's name.



Before health concerns finally forced her to make the tough decision to “retire” as a Meals on Wheels Central Texas volunteer, **Flo Macklin** had been delivering meals through the local nonprofit for as long as they'd been around. One of the original volunteers for the agency when it first opened its doors in 1972, Flo spent the next 42 years putting compassion into action every week as she delivered hot, nutritious meals and a friendly smile to the doorsteps of the homebound, older adults served by the organization. Over that time, Flo served over 2,700 volunteer hours and delivered over 17,000 meals. Today, Meals on Wheels Central Texas (MOWCT) is one of the largest meal-delivery organizations in Central Texas, serving more than 3,000 meals each business day and more than 800,000 meals to over 5,400 clients in Central Texas each year.

WOW!
One of the original volunteers for Meals on Wheels Central Texas, Flo Macklin spent over 40 years delivering more than 17,000 hot, nutritious meals to Austin's homebound.



Meals on Wheels Central Texas received \$1,000 in Flo's name.



When Ecology Action first began formulating a plan to rehabilitate Circle Acres, a former landfill and “brownfield” in Austin's Montopolis neighborhood, **Mike Rogan** came on board through Travis Audubon to identify the dozens of different bird and other wildlife species on the site. As Mike walked the site each day, he quickly began to drive the development of the entire project – before long he had blazed and designed every walking trail on the site, made detailed improvements to the project's infrastructure, and identified over 150 species of wildlife. Today, Circle Acres is one of Ecology Action's biggest successes, home to a three-acre wetland tract supporting a robust urban forest and bird population. It's no surprise that Mike Rogan remains a vital part of the operations, never missing a volunteer event and serving as a volunteer manager leading teams to build trails, work on litter abatement and remove invasive species.

WOW!
Pitching in more than 1,500 volunteer hours – and counting - Mike Rogan helped Ecology Action of Texas transform a closed municipal landfill into a robust nature preserve.



\$1,000 was donated to the **Ecology Action of Texas** in Mike's name.

With Appreciation



Joel Coffman, Executive Director

RecognizeGood started as a public forum for gratitude in 2007, and has spun off into many different related programs in the years since. We're proud to be the "thank-you organization" today, and as we continue to grow I personally love being able to stay solidly rooted in that foundational belief that showing gratitude publicly inspires the world around us. As you might expect, very often I'm asked, "So what does RecognizeGood DO?" The answer I always come back to is just that: we're the thank-you organization!

I've noticed over time another value of saying thanks that goes beyond altruism and inspiration - *it opens doors like you wouldn't believe!* Initial introductions in any walk of life are often challenging, in part because it often seems like everyone always wants something.

About Us

We are a local nonprofit that provides a means for individuals, businesses and other nonprofits to illuminate selfless volunteers, charitable acts and community service throughout the greater Austin area. Our mission is to elevate the spirit of community by catalyzing a movement of good deeds and unselfish charity through recognizing, rewarding and promoting good in our businesses and the communities in which they reside. RecognizeGood® has several active programs that work toward this mission from different angles, but the common theme is simple – illuminating GOOD in our community and encouraging others to contribute.

There's plenty of good happening all around us, right here in the Austin area - all you have to do is shine a light! Go out of your way to say thank you to a courteous driver, salute the volunteerism of a co-worker or give kudos to a local business for their corporate citizenship. Opportunities to show both large and small acts of gratitude are endless, but by making your thank you public at recognizegood.org you have the chance to inspire others. To learn more about us and our programs, log on to recognizegood.org, sign up for our e-mail newsletter or connect with us on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Pinterest or Instagram.

Recognizing good in your daily life is easy and only costs a few moments of your time – help us illuminate the GOOD in our community by joining our "Community Reporters" and reporting the GOOD you see at recognizegood.org.

Approaching someone with a simple, genuine thank-you can be a novel and many times welcome point of entry for a new relationship. We've noticed this over time as we've said thanks now to hundreds of individual volunteers, service clubs and community-minded businesses, and have been able to maintain most of those relationships over time.

An upcoming RecognizeGood project will test that theory when it comes to nonprofits and their relationships with the Central Texas business community. What would happen if, instead of sending a corporate sponsorship letter, your nonprofit simply expressed its gratitude to a business who contributes to the greater good of the community we all share? Stay tuned as we fine-tune this pilot project and prepare to release it into the wild!

The benefits of saying thanks are truly valuable - if you doubt that fact, do me a favor. The next time you see someone give you the "courtesy wave" on Mopac, ask yourself if you don't feel more connected, more appreciated, and generally just happier. Can one little wave of the hand, one tiny expression of gratitude really brighten your day? I know it does for me - long live the courtesy wave!



RecognizeGood.org

Legends



Speaker / Book Series



Nonprofit Partnerships



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