Civic 50 companies will share their vision in this weekly series

Denver-based corporate social responsibility consulting firm CSR Solutions of Colorado announced The Civic 50 Colorado honorees on Nov. 20. The Civic 50 Colorado, started in 2019, is modeled after the national program of the same name organized by Points of Light. It honors community-minded companies in Colorado — and this weekly Good Works series will highlight each of the 2020 honorees, along with other philanthropic achievements in the Denver region.

Delta Dental of Colorado is the first to discuss its experience as a community-minded company. Delta Dental of Colorado is the state’s leading dental benefits company and a nonprofit whose mission is to improve oral health in Colorado. Its president and CEO, Helen Drexler, was just recognized as a 2020 Denver Business Journal Most Admired CEO for both Delta Dental’s success and her leadership of the company’s philanthropic commitment.

The following Q&A has been edited for style and clarity.

**Why does your company engage in corporate social responsibility, or CSR?** Delta Dental is deeply committed to corporate social responsibility. Our commitment to serving communities across our state has guided our nonprofit mission for more than 60 years. At Delta Dental of Colorado, we believe we have greater impact when we work together (or, as our CEO is fond of saying, “1 + 1 = 3”).

Colorado is our home, and we have a responsibility to ensure we are doing our part to make that home the best place to live. Driven by the collective strength of our corporate social responsibility culture and the philanthropic impact of our foundation, our dedication to making a difference is woven into every facet of what we do.

**What advice would you give other companies on how to get started with CSR?** Corporate social responsibility has become an essential piece of a smart business strategy. Clear evidence demonstrates that companies engaging in socially responsible practices drive better financial returns, recruit and retain better talent, and have high consumer loyalty.

Build a program by thinking about the strategic connection between what you do and how you can impact the community. Make connections with others in the field to learn about their best practices through groups such as B:CIVIC.

Finally, educate and create buy-in with your leadership and employees. CSR should be woven into every department.

**What will CSR look like in the future for your company?** Over the last year, Delta Dental of Colorado and its foundation have been assessing the future of philanthropy through a lens of equity and with a heightened responsibility to the planet. We know that there are huge disparities in the oral health care workforce for people of color, and we are engaging in long-term outcome-based goals to create pipelines and resources to ensure people have access to enter the oral health care workforce. In 2020, we added a full-scale sustainability program in our CSR work with a goal toward achieving a carbon neutral impact.

Each year, CSR Solutions of Colorado recognizes the 50 most community-minded companies, like Delta Dental. In partnership with Spark the Change Colorado and Community Shares of Colorado, CSR Solutions is committed to making Colorado a thriving place to live and work. By empowering Colorado businesses of all sizes, it aligns business purpose with employee need to make a better tomorrow. With the idea of doing well by doing good, CSR Solutions is a resource for companies across the state.

Submitted by CSR Solutions of Colorado, edited by Denver Business Journal
HOPE HOUSE RAISES $405K AT VIRTUAL ‘MASKERADE’

Arvada-based Hope House Colorado was unable to host its usual 500-attendee annual event, but it raised $405,000 nonetheless at a virtual 2020 Maskerade Gala through sponsorships, registrations, donations and a silent auction. The cash will be used toward its mission of supporting teen moms through free self-sufficiency programs with a focus on education, parenting training and residential services.

Moni Piz-Wilson, who owns Grandma’s Frozen Noodles in Arvada, was the nonprofit’s Hero of Hope recipient.

COORS DONATES $300K FOR WILDFIRE RELIEF

Nearly half-a-million acres of Colorado land have been burned so far by wildfires in 2020, according to the state’s Division of Fire Prevention & Control. Coors Banquet, which maintains a Colorado presence despite its headquarters recently moving to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, is making a big donation to help first responders and their families. The recipient of its $300,000 donation is the Wildland Firefighter Foundation, which provides aid to injured firefighters and the families of those killed in the line of duty. Coors Banquet has designed a limited-edition “Protect our West” line of T-shirts (pictured above), from which proceeds will also go to the foundation. Coors Banquet donated $1.5 million to the Wildland Firefighter Foundation over seven years.

THE GREEN SOLUTION’S BIG DONATION TO VETERANS

Twin brothers Eric and Kyle Speidell of The Green Solution

The Denver area’s biggest cannabis company donated 400 pounds of food and $4,000 to the Colorado Veterans Project. The food donation was the result of an October initiative by The Green Solution timed to the charity’s Memorial Day March, which was postponed (and done virtually) due to Covid-19. Since being purchased by Columbia Care in a $140 million deal, the dispensary chain has teamed up with actor Jim Belushi and his Blues Brothers line of cannabis products to celebrate its 10th anniversary.

MTech held a clay shoot to raise cash for suicide prevention.

Westminster-based MTech Mechanical, one of the region’s largest private companies, raised $10,000 for Suicide Prevention Coalition of Colorado. The first annual Samborski Memorial Clay Shoot at Kiowa Creek Sporting Clays in Arapahoe County was limited in capacity due to the pandemic. The event will be held again in 2021, the company says, and hopefully open to public.

— Compiled by Jonathan Rose, Associate Editor

GOOD WORKS, IN BRIEF

The Green Solution’s Big Donation to Veterans

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