

## **Retirement Consultation Firm Bolsters Employee Volunteerism**

*Creative Plan Designs, Ltd., an independent retirement consulting firm, offers its employees the opportunity to take off one business day per month to volunteer for their choice of charities.*

East Meadow, NY April 27, 2009- The president of Creative Plan Designs, Ltd., Ronald K. Stair, knows that not everyone is as fortunate as himself “I’ve been very blessed,” says Stair, of his successes in his business pursuits. “I know that not everyone is in the position I’m in, so I wanted to help ‘pay it forward.’ My argument is that as a business owner in the U.S., one is better off than 98% of the world, no matter how grim things may seem at times. It is our responsibility to lead the way in community service and to set examples for our employees.” In order to accomplish that task, Stair has provided his employees with the opportunity to take one business day a month off from work to volunteer for the charity of their choice. “They can help whomever they wish, so long as they come back and tell the rest of us about the experience.”

Some of the charities that have benefitted from the program are a women and children’s shelter, soup kitchens, food pantries, homes for youth and animal shelters. By requiring employees to do a short presentation about their volunteer work upon their return, Creative Plan Designs, Ltd. not only helps to boost volunteerism, but also helps to spread awareness. Says Christi Cook-Thompson, CFP, “We believe that our employees are becoming more and more involved in this process. As such, they discuss it with each other as well as non-employees. So, one person at a time, we’re spreading the word.”

One problem charitable organizations face is staffing shortages during business hours. “Lots of people are willing to help out on the weekend, but during the week, they’re out of luck. We’re trying to bridge the gap for these organizations by allowing our employees this time off,” says Dr. Stair.

When asked about his motivations for the program, Dr. Stair quickly responds “That’s easy. I’ve been poor. As a college student, I accepted public assistance to feed my children. I know that everyone is a “twist of fate” away from needing assistance. Now that I am in a position to do so, I believe it is my privilege as well as my responsibility to give back.”

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