

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Does your organization support volunteerism? Or is your organization a Corporate Sponsor? At the time of print, the province is going to provide a level of paid leave to its employees that want to volunteer with 2010. Volunteers at 2010 are offended that their volunteerism is sullied by the paid volunteers. But what is the hubbub, bub? Don't we already send employees for one year jobs at the United Way? Send CUPE representatives to serve on National functions? Does paying volunteers matter? Apparently, it sure makes a difference. The Centre for Philanthropy indicated that only 7% of Canadians are responsible for 73% of all volunteer hours. Can we attract more "volunteers" on the employer's dime?

Some volunteers (the small and vocal minority) believe that paying volunteers undermines the whole notion of volunteers. They volunteer and while some would argue, it's not work... it sure isn't paid work. People volunteer for a cause or a perceived societal betterment or skills development but not usually for thanks and especially not for a paycheck. If the challenge is making the employer more attractive then shouldn't the employee pick the volunteer causes? The inference is that the employer picks and pays and the charity benefits. I don't know about that... If Corporations want to attract me, paid leave for the causes that I think are important are more attractive than the company dictated volunteer opportunity.

So, when you entertain that new offer take a hard look at what volunteerism will be supported. Is it volunteerism company directed or can you choose who you want to support? Will the organization pay your salary and let you use company assets and resources? Or do they just support involvement in principle instead of a community investment policy? Corporate volunteers report that outside of their personal motivation volunteerism provides opportunities for skill development such as communications, management and organizational skills. Those are tangible benefits, not to mention the profile of the organization within.

One organization that can help is the Centre for Philanthropy at [www.imaginecanada.ca](http://www.imaginecanada.ca) have a "Caring Companies Commitment". Companies that participate commit to their community involvement, support staff volunteerism and contribute to a community investment program. That's pretty neat.

After all, don't we all know it's not just about the money anymore....

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