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Strong Employee Volunteer Programs Benefit Corporations and Communities More than just 'Chequebook Philanthropy'

Research by Volunteer Canada and Manulife Financial about the changing landscape of volunteerism in Canada identifies comprehensive Employee Volunteer Programs as critical to effective community building. The two partners also developed a new tool called [Skills Plus](#) that helps employees give back while building essential skills to advance their careers.

"Corporations that have a robust community investment strategy which goes beyond simply donating dollars but actively supports their employees' desire to have a meaningful impact on the community are setting the tone for more innovative volunteer engagement in Canada where all parties can benefit," said Ruth MacKenzie, President & CEO, Volunteer Canada.

Results of the pan-Canadian research study, [Bridging the Gap](#), commissioned by Manulife Financial in partnership with Volunteer Canada, provides the most current national data about the changing culture of volunteering in Canada, including information specific to employer-supported volunteers. The study notes, among many of its key findings, the benefits of a common trend among some of Canada's most successful companies to establish Employee Volunteer Programs. These programs are rooted in the philosophy that community volunteer work is also a matter of corporate concern and should be another measure of a company's social responsibility.

[Click here](#) to read the full media release.

Info on the Skills Plus tool is detailed below.

Bridging Volunteer Experience to Skills Development

Free Volunteer Canada YouTube Video Seminar available Today

[Volunteer Canada](#) today launched a free pre-recorded video seminar. [Click here](#) to view it now. The video session outlines the key components of a new tool, titled *Skills Plus*. The tool matches the experience gained from a variety of volunteer opportunities to key competencies required in a range of

occupations. This is one of many learning sessions led by Volunteer Canada to celebrate the 10th anniversary of International Year of Volunteers. The session is led by Paula Speevak-Sladowski, Director of Applied Research and Public Policy, Volunteer Canada. You can view Volunteer Canada's YouTube channel now by [clicking here](#).

[Click here](#) to access the tool.

More information about Skills Plus:

To capitalize on skills-building potential, Volunteer Canada and Manulife developed a new tool, titled *Skills Plus*. The tool identifies hard skills required for certain occupations (e.g. creating financial statements or managing meetings), as well as the core competencies that enable people to be highly effective employees.

Skills Plus matches the experience gained from a variety of volunteer opportunities with key competencies required in a range of occupations. Employees and managers can use the tool to assess the career-development benefits of volunteering. Voluntary organizations can use it to design their volunteer opportunities with real skill development lens.



New episodes of Volunteer Canada's eVOLution podcast series

Volunteer Canada launches three new episodes of the *eVOLution* audio podcast series today featuring live-to-tape discussions with presenters from the 2011 [Canadian Business & Community Partnership Forum](#), which was hosted by [Volunteer Canada](#) and [Imagine Canada](#).

All eVOLution podcasts are available as free downloads from the iTunes store. [Click here](#) to download podcast episodes from iTunes.

[Click here](#) to listen to the audio podcast series.

If you missed the first episode in the podcast series, titled "Global Companies Executing Locally", [click here](#) to listen now.

What's a podcast? [Click here](#) to find out.

Episode 2: Corporate Responsibility – New Technology and Measurement

Join Anil Patel, founder and executive director of Framework; Michael Edwards, a writer and activist affiliated with New York-based think tank Demos; and host Graham Machacek, Manager of Marketing and Communications at Volunteer Canada, as they discuss the role of emerging technologies and

measurement tools within the non-profit sector, and the difference between performance measurement for non-profits and for businesses.

[Click here](#) to listen to this episode.

[Click here](#) to subscribe to eVOLution on iTunes.

Episode 3: Return on Integrity

This episode features conversations about the growing importance of a new form of ROI – Return on Integrity. Join Paul Klein, founder of Impakt Corporation; Ian Bird, President & CEO of Community Foundations of Canada; Maggie Leithead, President & CEO of Charity Village; and host Graham Machacek, Manager of Marketing and Communications at Volunteer Canada, as they discuss the role of intangible assets, such integrity and trust, in cross-sector partnerships.

[Click here](#) to listen to this episode.

[Click here](#) to subscribe to eVOLution on iTunes.

Episode 4: Social Media for Social Change

Listen in as Keenan Weller, co-founder and CEO of LiveWorkPlay; Dorothy Engleman, founder of q media solutions and Getinvolved.ca; and host Graham Machacek, Manager of Marketing and Communications at Volunteer Canada discuss the power and potential pitfalls of social media for non-profits wishing to attract and interact with an online community.

[Click here](#) to listen to this episode.

[Click here](#) to subscribe to eVOLution on iTunes.

IAVE announces World Summit for Youth Volunteering

The [International Association for Volunteer Effort](#) (IAVE) will host the second [World Youth Summit](#) from November 3 to 5, 2011 in Barranquilla, Colombia. The Summit brings together youth from across the globe. It promotes youth volunteerism worldwide and celebrates the global accomplishments of young volunteers. The World Youth Summit features keynotes by international speakers, workshops, and presentations led by NGOs, government agencies, and the corporate sector. The first World Youth Summit took place in Tokyo in 2001 to mark the United Nations International Year of the Volunteer (IYV). The second Summit in 2011 will celebrate [IYV+10](#).