



BENDIX TRANSFORMING APPROACH TO SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES NEAR AND FAR

A new focus on encouraging employee involvement, ideation, and participation

The leadership, commitment, and innovation that Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems LLC and Bendix Spicer Foundation Brake LLC (Bendix) exhibit in the advancement of highway safety are not limited to the roads of North America. Every day, Bendix – as a company, as teams, and as individuals – is making a difference in and around the communities it calls home, and even beyond, driven by a philosophy of corporate responsibility extending from the support of its parent company to the efforts of each employee striving to make their world a better place.

Ideas, stemming from Bendix employees across North America, have made positive impacts in their own neighborhoods and around the globe through fundraising, volunteering, and major project management. As part of the Munich, Germany-based Knorr-Bremse Group, Bendix is fortunate to develop community outreach and improvement programs in part through Knorr-Bremse Global Care (KBGC), a nonprofit founded in 2005 to give those in need (through no fault of their own) a chance to lead more independent lives.

Bendix employees have long donated their resources, time, and talents to a wide range of organizations and community service programs, including hunger relief efforts, the United Way, the American Cancer Society's Relay For Life, the ALS Association, the Salvation Army, and more. Since 2014, hundreds of Bendix employees have rolled up their sleeves and helped build frames for homes constructed through Habitat for Humanity in both Florida – as a part of its annual North American Sales Meeting – and Northeast Ohio, where Bendix is headquartered. And in support of local Junior Achievement chapters, Bendix employees have raised funds and spent time teaching in elementary schools.

Employee Involvement, from Ideation to Execution

While financial support is crucial, Bendix aims for those deeper levels of commitment that reflect true investment in people and communities, and encourages engagement that brings people's needs and collective futures into sharp focus. We believe there is more to outreach than signing a check that makes someone's day better – we want to spark a movement that brightens everyone's tomorrow.

Seeing an opportunity to rethink and reshape an approach to corporate responsibility, Bendix and Knorr-Bremse leadership have, in recent years, formalized their planning and oversight with a new focus on encouraging employee involvement, ideation, and participation. Bendix locations have hosted "nonprofit fairs" that connect employees with local volunteer opportunities, and every North American Bendix operation hosts at least one corporate-sponsored volunteer event annually. The company has also established a policy allowing employees 16 hours per year to participate in volunteer activities.

Additionally, larger donations and project-based grants are focused on three key areas the company believes can have the largest impact on the communities in which we operate. Projects are undertaken through each location's Local Care team, and focus on education, health protection, and social cohesion. These project ideas frequently originate with, and are organized by, employees. This means Local Care has the dual benefits of supporting communities and increasing social involvement of Bendix employees through leadership and project management experience.

Knorr-Bremse Global Care has also sparked Bendix employee-driven outreach across North America and around the world.

In 2016, Knorr-Bremse instituted the Get Involved! Program, as a key instrument of Global Care. Get Involved! supports projects submitted by employees of Knorr-Bremse companies worldwide, who must already be personally involved in the project to gain approval. Get Involved! – originally launched as a one-year initiative in 2015 to celebrate the tenth anniversary of Global Care – maintains the goal of encouraging employees to develop and submit their own project ideas. Employees at Bendix's North America locations completed 16 projects through Get Involved! in 2016. These included support of: bullying awareness and prevention in elementary and middle schools in Elyria, Ohio, where Bendix is headquartered; the Huntington County, Indiana, Fire Department; and the Center for Courageous Kids in Scottsville, Kentucky, which offers programs for families with children who have life-threatening diseases.

Since its inception, Global Care has implemented more than 200 projects in 52 countries with a total funding of over EUR 15 million. Bendix North American employees have taken the lead on several of these sizable projects at home and abroad.

Bendix and its employees in Acuña, Mexico, have regularly sponsored and volunteered support of the local Casa de Esperanza (House of Hope), an orphanage serving local children. From 2014-2015, through Global Care support and volunteer efforts, a new 8,073-square-foot House of Hope was built to improve living conditions for more than 50 children. And in collaboration with Casas por Cristo, Bendix volunteers recently completed building four safe and secure homes in Acuña as part of a project involving complete construction of houses for local families who lost their homes during a devastating tornado in 2015.

Across the Atlantic, in the landlocked southeastern African nation of Malawi, Kawale Primary School once held more than half of its 33 classes outdoors without desks. In 2013, a Bendix manager who had attended the school as a child returned, witnessed the conditions, and undertook the task of leading an improvement effort through Global Care. He developed blueprints, a budget, and justification for the project. As a result, several modern indoor classrooms were added to the school in 2014.

Other Bendix employee initiatives carried out through Global Care have resulted in the construction of an Osman Hope children's center in San Pedro Sula, Honduras, which aims to alleviate poverty and offer a safe growing and learning environment; and a hygiene-related project at St. Yves Primary School in Limonade, Haiti.

Employees say the completion of these projects provides a life-changing sense of accomplishment, and describe the opportunities as a "seed fund" that provides a defined structure that they can build on for years to come.

Education and STEM

As Bendix's approach to outreach has evolved, the company has also increased its focus on STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) education initiatives, believing in the importance of engaging young people and encouraging them to enter technical fields.

In Elyria, for instance, the company sponsors a High School Coding Camp, at which professionals work with students on industry-standard programming languages and introduce them to challenges that software designers regularly encounter. Such programs help the students and the region by building a base of technical talent and helping to sow the seeds for a vibrant future. Northeast Ohio Bendix volunteers also mentor and participate in STEM-related school events, helping students navigate problem-solving and design processes.

Similarly, employees in Bowling Green, Kentucky, have partnered with local schools to develop STEM programs that provide students with hands-on experience in logical reasoning, construction, robotics, and engineering. Bendix has also supported robotics programs in Del Rio, Texas, schools since 2012, providing robotics kits for younger students participating in elementary school projects, and financial and mentorship support for the high school competitive robotics team. Almost all locations designate part of their yearly budget to support a STEM-related project in their community. Outreach also expanded in 2016 to sponsoring a FIRST robotics team in the University of Nuevo León in Mexico.

Bendix launched a pilot program in 2016 to help young people at risk in Ciudad Acuña, a city of 181,000 people in northern Mexico where the company has operated a manufacturing facility since 1988. Through funding provided by Knorr-Bremse Global Care, Bendix is providing 12 180-hour technical courses to 240 men and women ages 18-25 who are not currently employed or enrolled in school. The goal of the one-year pilot, taking place at the Bendix campus, is to assist in the personal development of each student, and help them become job-ready for the manufacturing workforce. To operate the vocational program, Bendix is partnering with the Instituto de Capacitación para el Trabajo del Estado de Coahuila (ICATEC), a local training institute with deep community connections that is helping to design the course and recruit students.

In 2017, Global Care and Bendix are supporting the development of an industrial lab and an apprenticeship program for students of a local technical vocational school in Acuña, Colegio de Estudios Científicos y Tecnológicos del Estado de Coahuila (CECyTEC).

Looking Forward, Thinking Bigger

Although Bendix has a long tradition of community support, today's Corporate Responsibility philosophy reflects a maturing of its approach, from one that formerly focused mainly on raising money for organizations selected by committees, to one that aims to have a targeted impact on the communities we operate by helping address their biggest needs. It is also striving to drive the engagement of as many Bendix employees as possible. Eventually, the success stories and growth of participation may lead to the establishment of a U.S.-based foundation to help fuel even more activity.

Volunteering efforts at Bendix saw significant growth in 2016 as the Get Involved! program was deployed across all its North American locations, and the company held two dozen corporate-sponsored volunteer events during work time. From 2015 to 2016, the number of Bendix volunteers participating nearly doubled, and their time contributions reached 4,390 hours in 2016.

In addition to the good this work brings to their communities, Bendix believes that providing employee engagement and outreach opportunities locally can boost intangibles such as morale, productivity, and loyalty, plus help develop closer bonds among Bendix team members.

"Bendix truly believes that the more success a company achieves, the greater its responsibility to give back to its community and the world becomes," explained Maria Gutierrez, Bendix director of corporate responsibility and sustainability. "Our employees are, without question, Bendix's most valuable assets, so we strive to enrich their lives beyond the workplace, in the belief that these efforts come back to us in the form of stronger neighborhoods, schools, and communities."

For more information, contact:

Barbara Gould
Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems LLC
(440) 329-9609 / (440) 225-6869
barbara.gould@bendix.com

or

Ken Kesegich
Marcus Thomas LLC
(888) 482-4455
kkesegich@marcusthomasllc.com