Each of us can change the world

Discover how we are making a difference
At Pearson, the world’s learning company, we’re dedicated to empowering human progress through learning. What’s more, with 40,000 employees and offices around the globe, we’re uniquely positioned to be able to create real social impact, and not just through the products and services we provide learners.

In fact, making a positive impact on society is at the very heart of everything we do. Just ask our employees. They’re a formidable asset—a brave, inspiring, and principled group of creative thinkers and doers who are dedicated to making a difference. At Pearson, they find plenty of opportunities to do exactly that.

From hands-on volunteering to sponsoring and funding, our employees are involved in an astonishing range of insightful ideas and vital programs that make real change happen around the world.

Here you can read about some of their stories. We hope they’ll inspire you to get involved too.
Finding some precious time away from their busy meeting agenda, Pearson Executive Board members went back to school in California, USA. Reading to students in a volunteering initiative organized in collaboration with Project Literacy and Reading Partners, they also learned quite a bit themselves.

Kate James explains why learning about sauropods was so much fun: “I had the opportunity to volunteer alongside the Pearson board at Belle Haven Elementary in Menlo Park. Thanks to Reading Partners CEO Michael Lombardo and his great team, we worked through a structured reading lesson with students to help accelerate their reading and comprehension skills. Eighty percent of the students at Belle Haven have English as a second language and almost one in four are homeless.

“The one-to-one support of the Reading Partners volunteering program provides teachers and students with invaluable support, helping to boost confidence and increase reading proficiency in some of the most deprived kids in California.

“My hour with Daniel was not only worthwhile, but a lot of fun! To be honest, I’m not sure who learned more, him or me. ... Who knew it takes sauropods’ food 30 seconds to reach their stomachs? As Daniel pointed out, ‘What do you expect when you have a neck that’s twenty feet long?’”

Kate James is Pearson’s chief corporate affairs officer.

“My hour with Daniel was not only worthwhile, but a lot of fun! To be honest, I’m not sure who learned more, him or me.”
Wondrous words

Jessica Silapaswang and our Hoboken and Hudson teams tutor with Reading Partners NYC

“High fives, waving, and well wishes ensued as our time together wrapped up.”

Jessica Silapaswang
is a social media manager based in New Jersey, USA. Also participating were her colleagues Megan Herman, Anisa Alhilali, Stacey Terry, Anne Loizeaux, Dasle Kim, Felipe Gonzalez-Palacio, and Vincent Plantamura.

Pearson employees from our Hoboken and Hudson offices, in New York, USA, visited an elementary school in Brooklyn through Reading Partners.

“After a quick orientation about the mission and pedagogy of the organization, we were assigned a student and jumped in to tutor them!” says Jessica.

“Students started by selecting a book for us to read to them. As we read, we would ask the students various questions to assess their comprehension of the material and new vocabulary words.

“We read a range of stories, from the 1938 “war of the worlds” radio broadcast to a retelling of the “Three Little Pigs” from the wolf’s perspective. The room was filled with lots of noise as pairs laughed at, discussed, and analyzed the books together!

“By the end of our one-to-one time, students were proudly adding new vocabulary to their “Wondrous Words” journals and drawing pictures of the new terms.

“High fives, waving, and well wishes ensued as our time together wrapped up.

“As much as we hoped students learned from and had fun with us, we probably had an even better time with them! Tutoring was a wonderful reminder that we’re in the business of students, and it’s incredibly inspiring to see them glowing with pride as they learn!”

Literacy is the first building block that enables people to learn and understand the world around them. Our flagship social impact campaign, Project Literacy, has been convened by Pearson to make significant and sustainable advances in the fight against illiteracy so that all people—regardless of geography, language, race, class, or gender—have the opportunity to fulfill their potential through the power of words.

Learn more at projectliteracy.com and by following #ProjectLiteracy.

Reading Partners is a Project Literacy partner and is dedicated to unlocking the skills of students who struggle with reading. It provides one-to-one reading support to elementary school students reading below grade level to help them succeed in school and in life by focusing on under-resourced schools.
Giving in memory
Kelly Bennett gives hope through our Kiva Loans Program

“Education has always been very personal for me, which resulted in my passion to work in the industry after my own schooling. Growing up, my dad always told me that education is the one thing that can’t be taken away from you: ‘They can take your house, your car, your job, but they can’t take away your knowledge.’ He always encouraged me to keep learning to better myself and improve my future.

“When I was just 11 years old, my dad was taken away from me too soon. Everyone grieves differently, but losing my father at a very young age was very difficult for me. My own education became a tribute to my dad. Writing became my therapy.

“There are millions of people around the world who face far worse difficulties on a daily basis. Some of these individuals seek our support on Kiva. Basem was seeking a loan from Kiva to help fund his daughter’s tuition fees in Lebanon. His daughter is his priority. His desire to help build a better future for his daughter through her education struck a very personal chord within me.

“My loan to Basem was dedicated in loving memory of my father, just a few weeks ahead of the eleventh anniversary of his death. To honor my dad this year, I plan to ask my family and friends to support Basem and other fathers like him by funding their children’s education initiatives.

“Thank you, from the bottom of my heart, to Pearson for introducing me to Kiva. It’s a wonderful opportunity for me and my colleagues to help improve others’ lives.”

Kelly Bennett
is a sales consultant based in Melbourne, Australia.

Pearson has teamed up with Kiva, the world’s first and largest “micro lending” platform, to provide loans to people around the world who are locked out of traditional banking systems. Over the next two years, Pearson will commit $1 million to supporting the initiative, with all 40,000 Pearson employees receiving $25 to lend to a Kiva project of their choice.

You can read more about our Kiva partnership here: neo.pearson.com/docs/DOC-367953
John Fallon
CEO, UK
“I chose to loan $25 to the Yana School in rural Uganda, where the principal is looking to install a water filtration system. I have a special fondness for Uganda, as it was one of the first African countries I visited when I started working with Europe, Middle East, and Africa for Pearson in 2003. I visited schools, met with local educators, and very much enjoyed my time there. I saw firsthand how important schools are to their local communities.

“At first glance, this Kiva project seems only tangentially related to education, but students who have access to clean drinking water in school are more likely to turn up, will be better focused, at lower risk from waterborne diseases and dehydration, and won’t have to spend hours of their day finding and chopping wood for fires to boil water, as so many currently do. They can spend their time in class and learning, which every child deserves the chance to do.”

“Last week, a group of colleagues presented a plan to the Pearson board in which they talked about the importance of the ‘whole child’ in thinking about learning. For schools like Yana, clean water—something we take for granted, but something that is fundamental to life—very much fits with that philosophy.”

Emmanuel Opanuga
Corporate Affairs Executive, UK
“In one of the hardest decisions I’ve had to make in such a long time, I chose to sponsor Abu from Sierra Leone. He is a happily married man 38 years old, with three children, two of whom are already in education.

“What really drew me to sponsoring Abu was his ambition. He works 66 hours a week to finance his dream of building a house and providing quality education for his children.

“Abu reminds me very much of my father, a man that came from nothing in the most horrendous conditions and was able to put his life into everything for the sake of his children. It’s this same drive that makes me want to get the best out of life and provide for future generations.”

Amanda Murray
Marketing Specialist, Canada
“Through Kiva, it was easy to help someone on the other side of the globe. Of course, the hardest part was choosing whom to help. First I picked a girl in Paraguay who needed money to go to nursing school. When I got part of that loan repaid, I next picked a school in Uganda that needed clean drinking water.

“I also used the Pearson-funded Kiva code to help a group of women in Mali who have a food cooperative. This year, all those people who usually get hampers or wine or something not too personal for Christmas will be getting Kiva gift cards for sure.”

Other Kiva stories
More inspiring stories from the Kiva Loans Program

“Last week, a group of colleagues presented a plan to the Pearson board in which they talked about the importance of the ‘whole child’ in thinking about learning. For schools like Yana, clean water—something we take for granted, but something that is fundamental to life—very much fits with that philosophy.”

“What really drew me to sponsoring Abu was his ambition. He works 66 hours a week to finance his dream.”
A year later, my mother made the same journey. Hers was a quest of a different kind: a single-minded mission to secure for her 18-month-old-son the education that she had been denied. She was only 19. She left alone—her baby was to follow weeks later. It took them 17 years of battling the system before they were reunited.

“The education she had risked her life to get him, gone. But she had succeeded. My sister and I are her proof of that. I am a lawyer, and Patricia will soon graduate with her master of arts.

“My parents’ stories seem so far removed from the life I’ve enjoyed as a first-generation American that to describe myself as a child of refugees feels odd. Yet that is exactly what I am. I am those children risking their lives, right at this moment, attempting the perilous crossing from North Africa to Europe. I am those Syrian children, torn from their homes and their classrooms by war. And I am the proof that education is both the means and the motivation that can make the difference.”

Together with Save the Children, we’ve launched a three-year “Every Child Learning” partnership to help out-of-school children caught in the Syrian refugee crisis access quality education. Pearson has committed $2.25 million to increase educational opportunities for Syrian refugees and host communities and to develop new innovative education solutions.

“Daily life in Haiti can feel like a momentary interruption in a journey toward devastation. The 2010 earthquake brought Haiti to its feet. Remnants of communities long beyond the breaking point cling to existence—smells of fermented garbage line the outer banks of streets. In a country that can’t even keep itself clean, what hope does education have?” asks Elizabeth.

“This is the Haiti that my father remembers. My father completed high school at the very top of his class, but graduated into the merciless dictatorship of Jean-Claude Duvalier. His education had taught him how to read, and that had given him the freedom to think. But Duvalier’s Haiti was not a place for free-thinkers.

“So in October 1980, my father, along with 132 other Haitian men and women, boarded a boat, heading somewhere in the loose direction of America.”

Elizabeth Goueti understands the refugees’ need for education. She works as a compliance specialist in Orlando, Florida, USA. She is a diversity and inclusion advocate in North America and has participated in a live Twitter chat about her experiences.

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*exchange rate 1 GBP = 1.52043 USD Nov 2015*
Did you know?

250 million

children worldwide are in school but not learning*

Pearson is making a difference by partnering with 15+ organizations through our flagship global campaign, Project Literacy. In collaboration with our partners, we aim to help all people fulfill their potential through the power of words. Visit projectliteracy.com

*Source: UNESCO Education for All Monitoring Report 2013/14
A team effort
Anthony Fernando and our Sri Lanka team make a difference in their local community

Having already developed a number of local volunteering efforts, in 2014 our colleagues from Pearson Sri Lanka created the Sri Lanka Pearson Annual Charity Event (SPACE) team made up entirely of Pearson volunteers.

“For the first SPACE project, we decided to do something special for underprivileged children in the district of Anuradapura. We wanted to help those who were affected by the deadly chronic kidney disease that was and is still spreading across the rural parts of Sri Lanka due to polluted water.

“We researched and selected two local schools in which to install water systems. Meeminnawala Dewaniththa Vidyalaya School and Pahala Kuda Pattiya Maha Vidyalaya School were chosen because the wells would also provide water to nearby villages. As a result of our project, more than 600 pupils now have access to fresh water, as do their local communities.”

“Another of our projects involved renovating a library in Pahala Kuda Pattiya Maha Vidyalaya School in Galenbindunuwewa. It was in very bad condition with limited books and no suitable furniture for children. Seventy-five per cent of our employees donated at least a day’s pay to raise the project cost of $12,000. Many employees also helped organize, plan, and carry out the renovations, despite the challenging location, which is a six-hour drive from our office in Colombo.

“In addition to the renovations, we donated more than 1,500 books and bought books worth $1,000 that mapped with the curriculum. We also donated library furniture and computer equipment and created a book management system for the library.”

These are just two of the many examples of how community service has become a part of Pearson Sri Lanka’s culture. While lending a hand to the underprivileged, employees also had a chance to fine-tune their leadership skills.

Anthony Fernando is an accessibility specialist based in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

“As a result of our project, more than 600 pupils now have access to fresh water.”

VOLUNTEERING
Every Pearson employee can take up to three days of paid leave each year to volunteer in social impact programs.
Searching for Bigfoot

Karen Zhou and her Boston colleagues run a storytelling workshop with third graders.

In response to Pearson’s global volunteering policy as part of its social impact efforts, seven Pearson Boston colleagues arrived at 826 Boston in Roxbury, Massachusetts, to help a group of third grade students from Tynan Elementary School in South Boston during their storytelling and book-making field trip.

Karen takes up the story: “You may be wondering what Bigfoot has to do with literacy. Each 826 center has a fantasy-themed storefront, ranging from spies to superheroes. 826 Boston, as you may have guessed, is all about Bigfoot.

“Walking into the store and seeing a life-size Bigfoot model was a perfect way to set the stage for a day of imaginative thinking and storytelling with students. During these field trips, students create a story from scratch, reach consensus as a group on a cliff-hanger, and then write their own individual endings to the story.

“During our volunteering, we discovered that we could learn a thing or two from these young authors. They were brave, willing to share their ideas with the group, and contribute wholeheartedly to their class’s story. They were imaginative; they created authentic characters while developing their stories. They were decent; they respected their fellow students’ ideas and focused on positivity. And they were accountable; they had to meet publishing deadlines.

“We returned from 826 Boston feeling renewed, refreshed, and motivated. Volunteering allows us not only to give back to the community, but also to grow. Like the third graders from Tynan Elementary, let’s pledge to always nurture our sense of curiosity, to always be excited by Bigfoot, and to always imagine what could be possible.”

Karen Zhou works as a technology delivery associate in Boston, Massachusetts, USA. Also participating were her colleagues Elizabeth Bercovitz, Alex Diskin, Maddy Kadish, Sara Owen, Sarah Goodman, and Karen Lurie.

“Volunteering allows us not only to give back to the community, but also to grow.”
Telling stories

Arvind Nagarajan and the NYC office team help a young girl defeat her robot fish nemesis

Six Pearson New York colleagues took part in a morning volunteering activity at 826 New York City. The session focused on storytelling, supporting first grade children to develop and write their own books.

“It was inspiring to see the children’s creativity,” says Arvind. “They came up with a story about a superhero named Spiral, a young girl living underwater with the power to talk to animals. Along with her sidekick, the benevolent tiger Clarisse, they battled their arch nemesis, the robot fish Babyface.

“Not only did the children come up with exciting ideas, they demonstrated a positive attitude throughout and were quick to support each other."

“Overall, the experience was not just amazingly fun, but also reinforced why we’re in this business. Courtney, the lead storyteller with 826, was a fantastic teacher. She did a great job activating discussion among the students, providing them with clear objectives and providing constant personalized feedback to them."

“The power of a great teacher can’t be overstated—the kids were on task, highly interested, and working hard.”

Arvind Nagarajan works in New York as investment director for the Pearson Affordable Learning Fund.

826 National is a Project Literacy partner and offers a variety of inventive programs that provide under-resourced students, ages 6–18, with opportunities to explore their creativity and improve their writing skills. 826 also aims to help teachers get their classes excited about writing.

“The power of a great teacher can’t be overstated—the kids were on task, highly interested, and working hard.”
Earlier this year Pearson and Unicef UK hosted an event in London, bringing together education specialists, innovators, NGOs, and businesses. The theme was the future of learning, looking primarily at the role technology can and will play.

“To be honest, it sometimes feels that we have exhausted the topic of technology in education. Probably because, as Tom Hall, VP-Learning Platforms at Pearson, reminded us, people trying to answer these questions are not digital natives,” suggests Heloise.

“To me, it is by listening to children, respecting their opinions, and letting them take the driver seat that we will truly ensure they realize their potential. Let them be creators of technology and content, not just the consumers. Yes, it’s hard to let go, but I don’t see how we’ll truly put the learner at the center otherwise.

“Attendees also got a chance to watch Clouds Over Sidra—a virtual reality film produced for the United Nations. It follows a 12-year-old in the Zaatari refugee camp in Jordan. You are totally immersed in her daily life, from the classroom to the football pitch. It is deeply moving and all I wanted to do was to hold those children who seemed to surround me as I made my way through the camp.

“We heard from Juan Santander from Unicef Lebanon, who shared some staggering numbers about just how many refugees had entered Lebanon. This has a huge impact on the education system, that is struggling to meet the demand for more teachers and resources. So they’re piloting Raspberry Pi, powered by solar panels, to engage displaced children in computer coding, basic numeracy and science.

“I thought Stefania Druga from HackIDemia summed up the evening very well. We had started by acknowledging that the best innovation comes from the developing world, mostly because it is a necessary means to an end. She concluded by saying that we (the West) shouldn’t go to developing countries to help, but to learn, as this is how people will feel empowered to innovate. The future of learning is in their hands. So maybe next time, we’ll invite kids to tell us about the future of their learning. ...”

Watch a recording of the Activate talk: youtube.com/playlist?list=PLLNeYeCQ-Q0DkafqEA_nWy15jluN5105G
Did you know?

In 2014, 62% of Pearson’s total sales were from digital and services. Source: 2014 Pearson Preliminary Results, Feb 2015

92% of US educators rely on Internet content in the classroom

*Source: Tomorrow Project—Speak Up Survey 2013
Everybody’s space
Jim Nosler helps support green open spaces in Austin, Texas

Jim volunteers for Pearson Austin’s Green Team and took part in Austin’s “It’s My Park Day” at Walnut Creek Park, Austin, Texas, USA. This consisted of 3,000 volunteers working 10,000 hours to complete 100 park and greenbelt projects throughout the city.

“My day of volunteering started with me following a trail through the park,” recalls Jim. “The trail led me to an area where a team was working to improve a stream crossing on a hike and bike trail. These efforts were led by a local mountain biking club and I helped them make the trail safer and more accessible.

“It was really hard work. We excavated the banks of the stream and placed large limestone pavers to reduce erosion, enabling us to widen the stream crossing for the walkers, joggers, and mountain bikers that regularly use the trail.

“Open spaces like the Walnut Creek Park Trail serve large urban populations and often attract hundreds or thousands of daily visitors. This is different from the other trail work I’ve done, which involved large-scale natural landscapes.

“I learned that protecting and enhancing urban green space is just as vital as preserving large-scale natural landscapes. Both have benefits in common, but this project kindled a profound recognition of the importance of urban open space and community engagement of the type that the Green Team seeks to accomplish.”

Jim Nosler works as a packaging operations representative in Texas, USA, and is part of the Austin Green team working in the local community to protect the environment.

“This project kindled a profound recognition of the importance of urban open space and community engagement.”

Pearson has been climate neutral since 2009, and every year we review, renew, and refresh that commitment, including measuring our footprint, reducing the CO₂ we release from buildings and business travel, as well as offsetting any emissions we haven’t been able to reduce.

• Pearson has been climate neutral since 2009
• Pearson was awarded SAM Bronze Class in the Dow Jones Sustainability Indices 2014
• We were the second organization ever to be certified globally against the Carbon Trust Standard
• Our Pearson Green Fund has invested $10 million in green projects to ensure we continue to reduce our carbon footprint

Learn more about sustainability at Pearson: neo.pearson.com/community/enabling-functions/ges-corporate-affairs/sustainability-and-social-innovation
The team of volunteers from Pearson Austin on-site at Walnut Creek Park.

The team invested their time to build a hike and bike trail through the park.
Karen Michaeli’s Iowa Tech Chicks pick up an award for supporting local communities

Karen was one of seven 2014 Pearson Community Award winners for her volunteering work with Iowa Tech Chicks. Karen, along with six other winners from around the globe, won $7,600* of funding for her charity as well as ongoing support from Pearson.

“I am a founding member of the Iowa Tech Chicks,” reveals Karen. “It’s a community organization that strives to connect and educate women working in and interested in learning technology. As part of this, I also help organize an annual Girls’ Tech Career Day. This is a free day filled with role models to inspire area girls in grades 5–8.

“I am passionate about the need to not only promote digital literacy in elementary school-age girls, but also to provide opportunities for learning about career choices that comparatively few women consider.

“I believe that the way to increase the numbers of women working in technology is to expose girls to role models at an early age. As a lifelong learner myself, I also believe that it’s never too late to learn new skills and transition to a new career. For this reason, I am also enthusiastic about creating mentoring and networking opportunities for women in technology, as well as educational opportunities for women interested in developing new skills.”

Karen Michaeli
works as a business analyst in Iowa, USA.

*exchange rate 1 GBP = 1.52043 USD Nov 2015

Pearson Community Awards encourage and reward employees who give their own time and energy to volunteer to help their local community organizations. The skills and experience gained from community work are beneficial for everyone—the individual, Pearson, and, of course, the community itself.

The awards are given annually to exceptional individuals and teams from across Pearson. In 2014, seven outstanding employees/projects were each awarded $7,600 (or local equivalent) as funding for their charity projects. Pearson also works closely with the winners to support them.

*exchange rate 1 GBP = 1.52043 USD Nov 2015
Other Pearson Community Award winners:

Roberto Caropreso
Senior Project Consultant, Brazil
Through volunteering with SAI—Associação Amigos de Tamambuca in Ubatuba, Brazil, Roberto is involved with a range of environmental and social impact projects, including opening a community library with 3,000 books and computers with Internet access.

Sam Prince
Qualification Development Leader, UK
Sam puts her skills and experience as an English teacher to use volunteering for Hackney Pirates to boost the confidence and literacy skills of young people in Hackney, UK.

Ighsaan Robinson
Head of Product Development, South Africa
Through his volunteer work with Bridging Hearts Foundation in Cape Town, South Africa, Ighsaan supports orphans by raising funds and organizing special days for them.

Victor Velivis
Product and Marketing Manager, US
Victor created and runs the Utah Diaper Bank, which provides diapers to disadvantaged families in the state of Utah, USA. In the charity’s first year alone, they provided more than 11,000 diapers to families.

Fabiana Marcon
Designer, Brazil
Fabiana volunteers with Instituto Padre Haroldo, supporting orphanages and families in need in Campinas, Brazil.

Okoli Onyekachi
Librarian, South Africa
Okoli volunteers with The Thakaneng Project, a shelter for young boys in Potchefstroom, South Africa. He’s helped the boys improve their digital literacy by giving them computer lessons as well as teaching them gardening to help them grow vegetables to eat.

Pearson also offers small awards of up to $760 (or local equivalent) to recognize the commitment of up to 100 employees globally.

*exchange rate 1 GBP = 1.52043 USD Nov 2015
A day for change
Zodwa Pakade celebrates the power of learning on Mandela Day

“Mandela Day has become more than a celebration of Tata Madiba’s [Nelson Mandela is sometimes referred to by different names] life and legacy. It is a global movement to honor his life’s work and act to change the world for the better. Having given 67 years of his life to improve the lives of all South Africans, this movement challenges us all to give through acts of service and volunteerism,” explains Zodwa.

“We at Pearson will once again join people across the world to devote at least 67 minutes of our time on 17 and 18 July—Madiba’s birthday—to community service activity. Educators worldwide are committed to this movement, as it’s the one they serve 365 days each year. As Madiba said: ‘The power of education extends beyond the development of skills we need for economic success.’

“At Pearson, we recognize and have made our own commitment to helping improve education with two key approaches. Firstly, by placing people who are learning at the center of everything that we do to make a measurable difference in children’s lives in over 80 countries around the globe. Secondly, by recognizing the critical role that literacy plays in opening the door to a world of potential and committing through our Project Literacy initiative to raise literacy rates in all communities. I’m proud to be part of the Pearson community that strives to enable people to flourish in their lives through learning.”

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“The power of education extends beyond the development of skills we need for economic success.”

Zodwa Pakade works as executive director of Corporate Affairs in South Africa.

MANDELA DAY

Nelson Mandela International Day (or Mandela Day) is an annual international day in honor of Nelson Mandela, celebrated each year on 18 July, his birthday. The day of honor was officially declared by the United Nations in November 2009, with the first UN Mandela Day held on 18 July 2010.

At Pearson, we celebrate the day by encouraging employees to take part in charitable work to support local communities in recognizing and celebrating a great humanitarian who was a powerful advocate for education.

Other celebrations:
At Pearson, we also organize and participate in a variety of activities to celebrate various heritage days and months throughout the year. For example, in the US this includes Black History Month in February, Women’s History Month in March, World Book Day in March and April, LGBT Pride Month in June, International Literacy Day in September, Disability Employment Awareness Month in October, and Veteran’s Awareness Month in November, among others.

Read the full article: blog.pearson.com/mandela-day-more-than-a-celebration-of-a-life/
Kate Bishop is a senior vice president in Core Markets Human Resources. She was joined on the Moonwalk by Alison Young, Caroline Smith, Helen Godley, Catie Sheret, and Sally Johnson.

“It was fantastic to get the matching funds from Pearson and know that the company we work for is so supportive.”

A group of six colleagues from different teams across Pearson took up the challenge of the Moonwalk, a London-based event where participants walk 26 miles through the night raising money for charity. And they made the most of Pearson’s match-giving offering to give even more to their charity of choice.

“Our first training walk to prepare us for our 26-mile challenge was a jet-lagged 5:30 am with most of the team at a company event in Miami—not a bad way to kick off training in February,” recalls Kate.

“We all had different experiences of the Moonwalk—it was hard work but inspiring, with plenty of fun along the way. The volunteers are amazing and make all the difference.

“We raised $17,710* in total, which includes the Pearson match of $4,560*, for a wonderful breast cancer charity called Walk the Walk. It was fantastic to get the matching funds from Pearson and know that the company we work for is so supportive.”

At regular intervals, Pearson offers match-giving contributions to support employee donations for charity or as part of an appeal to support communities in need of disaster relief.

MATCH GIVING

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Moonwalking

Kate Bishop and her global colleagues use our match-giving scheme to make their fundraising go further

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MATCH GIVING

Kate Bishop
is a senior vice president
in Core Markets Human Resources.
She was joined on the Moonwalk
by Alison Young, Caroline Smith, Helen
Godley, Catie Sheret, and Sally Johnson.

Moonwalking

Kate Bishop and her global colleagues use our match-giving scheme to make their fundraising go further

“A group of six colleagues from different teams across Pearson took up the challenge of the Moonwalk, a London-based event where participants walk 26 miles through the night raising money for charity. And they made the most of Pearson’s match-giving offering to give even more to their charity of choice.

“Our first training walk to prepare us for our 26-mile challenge was a jet-lagged 5:30 am with most of the team at a company event in Miami—not a bad way to kick off training in February,” recalls Kate.

“We all had different experiences of the Moonwalk—it was hard work but inspiring, with plenty of fun along the way. The volunteers are amazing and make all the difference.

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Clothes for charity

Kelly McMunn encourages colleagues to clear out their closets for a good cause

To celebrate Women’s History Month in March, the Illinois Women in Learning and Leadership (WILL) team joined with the Illinois Diversity and Inclusion Group to take part in a clothing drive for a local charity, Bridge to Success.

“Bridge to Success is a non-profit organization with a mission to provide clothing and accessories for interviews and employment to people in need,” says Kelly.

“Three Illinois offices took part in the clothing drive, asking employees to bring in clothing that could be donated to the charity. The offices collected more than nine boxes of clothing, shoes, and accessories, as well as hangers and a clothing rack to store them.

“Bridge to Success really appreciated all our volunteer efforts and were amazed at the large amount of clothing and accessories the three offices were able to collect in such a short period of time. They were delighted that Pearson’s efforts would make a significant impact in their continuing efforts to help those in need.”

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Kelly McMunn

Kelly McMunn is a content developer at Pearson VUE and lives in Indiana, USA.
Did you know?

63 million

Girls around the world are still out of school.

A partnership between Camfed and Pearson has enabled 60,744 girls in Zimbabwe and Tanzania to enroll in secondary school.

Turning points

Kathy Spaltro comes to terms with her deafness

“My lifelong severe-to-profound deafness might have resulted in my being educated in schools for the deaf and in my learning American Sign Language. Instead, my late diagnosis in third grade [age eight to nine] left me in the Catholic school system to survive on my own—with a single hearing aid but no special educational measures,” reveals Kathy.

“As a child with a disability, I suffered greatly from extreme ostracism and isolation. Until I accepted my deaf identity, I thought of myself as a hearing person who somehow could not hear yet. I found deafness so stigmatized, so poorly understood, so resisted, that I stigmatized, misunderstood, and resisted it myself. For about 10 years after my diagnosis, I reacted to the unremitting denial of my deafness by withdrawing.

“A crucial turning point came at age 25, when I had to publicize a book on mental health and deafness. Ready to confront the bogeyman to deal with the terror of my disability, I deliberately participated and endured the acute upset that this involved. I also noticed the dissolution of a fantasy that I had not known I harbored: that if I only worked hard enough and persisted long enough, I would indeed become a hearing person.

“Ever since that transformation, I have thought of myself as a deaf woman. This initial resolution, of course, did not end the matter, but it did propel me forward into a more authentic experience of my true self.

“I have learned how people’s reactions to disability reveal very little about disability but much about their own issues, especially their degree of self-acceptance. Much of what I value in myself and of what others value in me has come out of my struggle.”

“Much of what I value in myself and of what others value in me has come out of my struggle.”

Kathy Spaltro

works as a test and report editor.
She is also a North America diversity and inclusion advocate.

We value difference. It drives innovation and creates a culture of opportunity. Through our programs, network of advocates, and employee resource groups spread across the globe, we ensure that the core principles of diversity and inclusion are embedded across our entire business, creating an environment where people are able to be themselves and contribute to our mission of improving lives through learning.
Page turners

Chris Boor helps six- and seven-year-olds develop a love of reading

BookTime is a Pearson initiative in the UK and involves employees spending 30 minutes each week volunteering in a local school, supporting children’s literacy by reading books together. Through the program, employees have given more than 3,000 volunteer hours and supported more than 400 children.

“Ever since I started working at Pearson, I’d planned to sign up to BookTime because I knew that I’d enjoy it,” remembers Chris. “One of my colleagues told me it was a great scheme, so when the next training session came up, I went along. She was right and I’ve not looked back since.

“The best thing about being a reading volunteer is the enjoyment that the children clearly get out of it. The vast majority of them really love it, and you know you’ve made it when you come in and they say hello and ask after you if you’re not there.

“For my first reading session, I was nervous, having not been in a primary school for some years! I think the kids were too, but it was really natural, and while some of them are shy, they mostly quickly overcame it. I read with year-two children aged six and seven and I was really impressed with their standard of reading.

“The children are usually engaged and enthusiastic. You can’t quite account for them acting it out by pretending to be a variety of dinosaurs, complete with sound effects, but that’s part of the joy. Another highlight was having my beard checked for food while reading The Twits (Roald Dahl’s famous children’s book includes a scene where Mr. Twit’s beard is full of leftover food).

“What would I say to anyone considering becoming a volunteer? Quite simply: do it!”

Chris Boor works in Pearson’s Oxford office as a senior project editor.

Pearson has been running BookTime since 2006. One hundred percent of teachers and literacy coordinators agree that the scheme improves both children’s comprehension and enjoyment of reading. Ninety percent of children said their reading volunteer has helped them enjoy books more. BookTime advances the goals of Project Literacy by encouraging the joy of reading with early readers.

Learn more at booktime.org.uk
The power of mentoring

Davinia Powell recommends the fresh perspectives of the 30% Club

The support, guidance, and perspective of a seasoned mentor can often be just what people need to help them fulfill their career potential and achieve their goals.

Davinia explains: “Having been mentored in a previous role, I understand the value of being mentored and how it can help you to realize your aspirations. So when I heard about the 30% Club mentoring scheme, I was keen to get involved.

“The scheme has been fantastic. It’s been immensely valuable having the opportunity to share with someone outside Pearson and being able to benchmark my experiences with someone in another industry. It’s fascinating to hear about my mentee’s experiences and find out how she’s grown and been able to achieve her aspirations.

“The 30% Club offers a number of possibilities, including networking breakfasts and other opportunities, all of which have helped to boost my confidence and influence my professional development. I’d definitely recommend being part of this program. It forces you out of your comfort zone, gives you a mirror to reflect on where you are—and where you want to be—and provides a completely different perspective.”

Since the pilot scheme began in 2012, Pearson has participated in the 30% Club, an organization set up with the aim of ensuring that at least 30% of the board seats in FTSE100 companies are occupied by women.

Learn more about the 30% Club: neo.pearson.com/groups/diversity-inclusion-emea-apac/blog/2014/02/03/gender-diversity-the-30-club

Davinia Powell works in our London office as director of Programs for UK Operations.

“It’s fascinating to hear about my mentee’s experiences and find out how she’s grown and been able to achieve her aspirations.”
Everyone’s welcome
Darren Rhodes advocates for an inclusive and diverse workforce

Pearson Spectrum is a global employee resource group for Pearson’s LGBTQI (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, Intersex) employees and its allies. Pearson recently launched Spectrum UK to champion and further develop this network.

“Over our lifetime, it’s estimated we spend 90,000 hours at work. Imagine if you had to spend those 90,000 hours hiding who you are,” states Darren.

“As an out gay man, and someone who has worked in previous organizations where I felt being myself at work wasn’t possible (and the subsequent stress this caused), I firmly believe that Pearson is a great place to work for LGBTQI employees. I also believe that even though Pearson's culture is implicitly an open and supportive one toward LGBTQI employees, there is more we can do to acknowledge this and make it a more explicit one.

“There are some very unique workplace issues faced by many LGBTQI employees. Should I come out to colleagues? Will I be treated differently? Will it impact my career?

“Imagine a young LGBT student who’s about to leave university, looking for that all-important first job and worried that coming out will hold them back. Equally, perhaps it’s someone who is already within the company and who has questions about their sexual orientation and would like to talk to someone. Having a dedicated (and visible) network will help send a strong positive message of support that it’s OK to be yourself within the Pearson workplace.

“This was the reason for launching Pearson Spectrum UK: to champion this message and to help increase the visibility of Pearson as an inclusive company both internally and externally. By doing this, we hope in turn it will help brand Pearson as a premier employer of LGBTQI talent whose 90,000 hours are spent enjoying going to work, being more loyal, being more creative, and making greater contributions to the organization.”

Pearson’s culture is implicitly an open and supportive one toward LGBTQI employees.”

Darren Rhodes
works as a senior global training specialist in London, UK.
Get involved

Your ideas, support, and involvement can and will make a difference.

Now that you’ve seen the social impact our colleagues have achieved, why not see what you can do to change the world?

We’d love to hear your ideas and get your support to continually expand Pearson’s social impact. Visit: neo.pearson.com/socialimpact
ALWAYS LEARNING