

Q&A – Introducing WTO Gives: A Community Service Initiative

News

Oct 3, 2024

Wheeler Trigg O'Donnell launched a new way for employees to volunteer—WTO Gives. Associate Celyn Whitt and Administrative Manager Natalie Head share how the initiative began, the difference we're making in the community, and how our efforts help build relationships within the firm and enrich volunteers' lives. Celyn and Natalie lead WTO Gives for the WTO Foundation.

What is WTO Gives?

Celyn: Big picture for the firm, WTO Gives revitalizes our commitment to volunteerism and community service. For our people, WTO Gives inspires us to participate in community service activities. That fosters an increased sense of social responsibility, as well as collaboration and teamwork. Plus, we're positively impacting our community, which is extremely important.

We launched WTO Gives in January 2024 with the goal of creating quarterly volunteer events. Thanks to significant interest from our colleagues and amazing community organizations, we're off to a strong start. We already have volunteered time at the Denver Rescue Mission, packed weekend food bags for local students with Food For Thought Denver, built bikes with Wish for Wheels, performed

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Celyn W. Giefer
Associate & WTO
Foundation Chair

landscaping services at MaxFund's animal shelter, and, most recently, partnered with Denver Human Services to fill student backpacks with school supplies. It has been a busy nine months!

Natalie: Through the WTO Foundation, we have a long history of giving back to the community financially and through volunteer events. After the pandemic, we recognized a need to reinvigorate our program for donating our time and talents to those in need. WTO Gives creates those opportunities and makes our Foundation more well-rounded. WTO Gives also is a great way for all of us to get to know each other better outside of the office.

How did the initiative start?

Celyn: Last year's WTO retreat included a presentation on the firm's core values. "Volunteerism" is one of our core values. It made me think: WTO has so many caring people willing to give back, so we can and should do more to live out this value.

I took my idea to firm management, was encouraged to submit a proposal, and within a month, WTO Gives was born. The swift path from idea to inception shows that at WTO, everyone has the opportunity to make a difference.

How has volunteering been rewarding for WTO teams?

Celyn: Helping with resume building at the Denver Rescue Mission was particularly fulfilling. I saw first-hand how our skill sets can help make a positive difference in someone's life. Through these initiatives, you often find that you get more than you give.

What is next for WTO Gives?

Celyn: Later this year, we plan to volunteer with A Precious Child and Soles4Souls.

Natalie: One of the best parts about WTO Gives is that anyone at the firm can suggest service projects. I'm excited to see how WTO and our colleagues shape the future of WTO Gives.

Wheeler Trigg O'Donnell lawyers have taken more than 1,100 trials and arbitrations to verdict or award and 300 appeals to opinion all across the nation, with exceptional results for our clients.

Established in 1998, WTO today numbers more than 110 trial lawyers and litigators. The firm represents sophisticated clients in high-stakes civil trials, appeals, and related litigation ranging from complex commercial to class actions to catastrophic torts.