

# *Celebrating Excellence*



*2009-2011 Pioneers Award Winners*

*2011 Annual Meeting - Boston, MA*

## *Chapter of Excellence & Chairman's Award*



The Chapter of Excellence Award is given to chapters most closely aligned with the strategic direction of the International Pioneers Organization and its sponsor/self-sponsored groups in 5 main strategic areas (planning/structure, engagement, communications/branding, community collaboration/partnerships, and Pioneers initiatives).

The Chairman's Award is given to the highest scoring Chapter of Excellence application.

### *Bell Aliant Pioneers - Newfoundland and Labrador Chapter*

Given the vision of the Newfoundland and Labrador Chapter to build its business plan on a solid foundation, it's no wonder this Bell Aliant powerhouse has earned Pioneers Chapter of Excellence recognition, along with the coveted Chairman's Award for having the highest-scoring Chapter of Excellence application.

By the time the chapter met for its initial planning meeting in early January of 2010, its leadership had already attended the Canadian Pioneers planning session the previous fall, and the team had also met as a chapter to gather member input for project ideas.

To ensure the goals and objectives remained on target, the chapter executive committee took the initiative to review status reports and discuss adjustments at monthly council/club meetings. This communication helped keep everyone informed and engaged in how best to achieve the objectives.

Teamwork, planning, setting goals and communicating proved a winning formula that resulted in the chapter meeting or exceeding the goals it set in five out of nine national projects. Upon closer inspection, however, the actual achievements are even more impressive.

For one project the chapter achieved 191% of its target and in another it scored 121%. Of the four projects that fell shy of target, one scored at 99% of goal. The three remaining projects met production goals, but show a result below 100% only because the chapter's production rate outpaced demand.

## *Community Impact*



The Community Impact Award is designed to recognize a Pioneer entity's overall cumulative impact on its community throughout the year and over time; either in a geographic area or within a community of people.

### *Bell Aliant Pioneers - Newfoundland and Labrador Chapter*

When victims of Hurricane Igor needed assistance, Pioneers in Newfoundland and Labrador Chapter responded not for one project, but for a total of 10...with more than 70 Pioneers pitching in to make a difference.

When a cancer care center asked Pioneers to help with the "Sparkle of Hope" fundraiser, Pioneers, partners and their friends responded with 107 hours of volunteer time.

When survivors of a natural disaster in Haiti put out the call for help, the chapter worked with sponsor company Bell Aliant in a matching funds program to raise \$20,000.

There are just three examples, but they speak volumes to the impact of the Bell Aliant Newfoundland and Labrador Chapter.

The impact is also evidenced by the supportive partnerships the chapter has with the Canadian Red Cross and Salvation Army, various police and ambulance services, and with community groups and education organizations across the province.

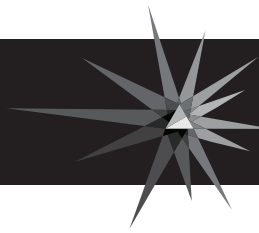
When all is said and done, the chapter's 1,200 members are never more than a phone call away from providing their world-class level of volunteerism to the half-million citizens of the province.

### *SaskTel Pioneers - Saskatchewan Chapter*

Their list of official partnerships with community organizations totals 50 or more – and each of those benefits from multiple Pioneer projects. But big numbers are nothing new to the high achievers of Saskatchewan Chapter, who spread Pioneering over the vastness of a province that measures more than a quarter million square miles.

It has come to be expected that the chapter will record 60,000 volunteer hours and raise approximately \$200,000 annually. It's been that way for more than 60 years, and with the support of sponsoring company SaskTel, the prospects are good for another 60.

That's good news for the people of a culturally diverse province who depend on the chapter to provide the support they need in life. The chapter takes a fairly basic yet comprehensive approach to community service: No request is too small . . . or too large. So whether they are comforting a child with a Hug-a-Bear or helping to manage a golf tourney that generates a half million dollars for the local economy, SaskTel Pioneers are doing what it takes to make an impact.



The Excellence in Fundraising Award is given to units who excel in planning productive fundraising activities that help the unit achieve its financial goals and support the Pioneers mission.

*Charity Fashion Show*

AT&T Pioneers - DeAnza Chapter, San Diego Council

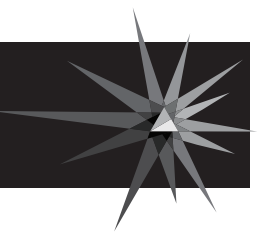
When the members of AT&T DeAnza Chapter volunteer, they volunteer with style – which made their fashion show fundraiser for Stand Up for Kids a perfect fit.

Stand Up for Kids is an organization designed to support homeless street kids. It also matches up nicely with the chapter's "Just in Time" project, an effort to assist youth in transition.

The chapter pulled out all the stops to make its runway project a runaway success. The primary goal, of course, was to raise enough funds to make a difference. They hit the mark and then some by clearing enough to write a check to Stand Up for Kids for \$6,000.

The chapter also wanted to involve the sponsoring company and scored big when it recruited Ignacio De La Torre, Director for External Affairs. Ignacio went above and beyond by agreeing to serve as the fashion commentator for the show and also arranging for a \$1,000 Gold Level sponsorship for the event.

While fundraising was the primary goal, DeAnza also ended up signing two volunteers who had participated and subsequently joined Pioneers as a result of their engagement in the project.



*Spirit of Service Ride*

CenturyLink Pioneers - Minnesota Chapter, Arrowhead Council

Arrowhead Council members took their show on the road, hitting the highway for a 100-mile motorcycle ride to raise funds in support of returning veterans.

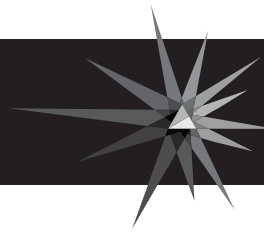
The "Spirit of Service Ride" toured country roads with a purpose: to raise the funding required to complete construction of buildings designated for housing and for providing career training for in-crisis veterans.

Riders paid an entry fee, and additional funds were raised through the sale of raffle tickets for a 2003 Harley-Davidson Sportster motorcycle. CenturyLink employees and Pioneers further supported the effort with donations of personal hygiene items and by selling and purchasing "Beds for Vets" buttons.

The community also got in the spirit as dentists, hotels and motels donated toothpaste and soap bars for distribution to veterans in need.

The "Spirit of Service Ride" raised more than \$8,000 – enough to help complete construction. Now three years in the riding, the project has raised \$15,500 for veterans.

A project that comes from the heart of Arrowhead Council Pioneers is now etched in stone in the form of a granite plaque outside the veterans' facility that pays tribute to Pioneers and the "Spirit of Service Ride."



The Individual Excellence Award is designed to recognize individual Pioneers and Partners who go above and beyond to answer the call of those in need. There are categories for Regular Member, Life Member and Partner/Associate.

## *Rita Adams Daggett - Life Member*

CenturyLink Pioneers - Oregon Chapter, Pacific View Combined Club

As Oregon Pioneers will tell you, when Rita Adams-Daggett is involved, success is sure to follow.

A former chapter and council president, Adams-Daggett is a career volunteer credited with revitalizing Oregon Chapter some 15 years ago. Her volunteer engagement actually goes back another decade to her membership in the Telephone Employees Activity Association and the Future Pioneers. But Rita is also an every day Pioneer. Her tireless spirit continues to reach all corners of chapter life, and her current role as Oregon's treasurer and liaison to the Pacific View club is only the beginning.

Over the past year, Adams-Daggett introduced the "Tools for Schools" program in Portland and secured funds for backpacks filled with school essentials for 300 students. She volunteered at the Schoolhouse Supplies Warehouse, another aspect of the Tools program, where participation hours are turned into purchasing power for local teachers. And she also put her fundraising skills to work for the "Readers for Life" project, which brought 1,200 much-needed books and magazines to over 750 students in schools in every city where Oregon Pioneers operate.

In addition, Adams-Daggett spearheaded an environmental collaboration with Solve Oregon Litter & Vandalism (SOLV) for beach and riverside cleanups statewide. SOLV would later play a role in the chapter's centennial project to restore parts of the Wapato Greenway. And somewhere along the line she found time to start Beeping Easter Egg hunts to Portland, manage membership drives at garage locations across the state, champion CenturyLink's "Go Green" cell phone recycling program, still put in one day month at Kaboodle, the Pioneer store, and more.

Rita's leadership has gone far in making Pioneers a recognized CenturyLink resource and a responsive force in member communities.



## *Diane Rodger - Life Member*

Verizon Pioneers - William J. Denver Chapter

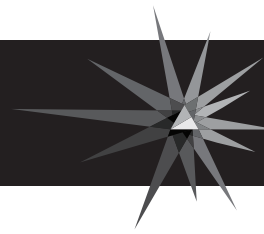
Effective communication is integral to smooth running Pioneers operations, service programs and administrative systems alike. And Diane Rodger of Denver Chapter is an effective communicator like few others.

Rodger has put her talent for recognizing needs, developing solutions and engaging members to make good things happen for Pioneers communities in dozens of ways over the years. Under her leadership, for example, Hug-a-Bears became a household name among members, state police and first responders across Massachusetts. She personally crafted thousands of teddies, inspiring other Denver units to do the same. Rodger then turned her attention to Playground Maps, working with school administrators, teachers and parent groups to paint the state with maps – another 20 in the past year alone. Today, it's hard to find a playground there without one.

Most recently, the past council and chapter president took up the group and chapter challenge of bringing Verizon Pioneering fully into the cyber age. Responding to the need for a heightened Internet presence, Diane immersed herself in website development, researched technologies, sought the advice of experienced webmasters, and partnered with other chapters' leaders to apply what she learned. As a result, 16 Verizon chapters now have websites – and better communications across the group and into the community.

In short order, Rodger was asked to expand Denver's web capabilities in support of chapter projects like "Where's the Pioneers Van?" These make use of Verizon's Thinkfinity® programming to help students learn about geography and their world, and would not have been possible at Denver without the interactive mechanism Diane devised.

Along the way, Rodger has made sure that all of Denver Chapter's good news is promoted and reported via local news outlets, Pioneers publications, social media and, of course, their new web page. After all, that's what effective communicators do.



## *Dennis Budden - Regular Member*

Bell Aliant Pioneers - Newfoundland and Labrador Chapter

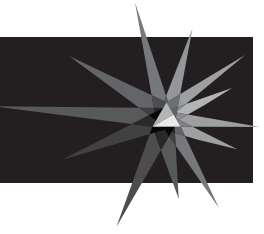
A young, vibrant individual and an ideal example for the younger generation of Pioneers, Dennis Budden's commitment to service and to Pioneers is known throughout Bell Aliant.

Budden started Pioneering 5 years ago when he signed up to represent Bell Aliant's Y-Team, in which individuals aged 19-25 worked with their peers across the country to create new Pioneers projects and develop their leadership skills. Budden helped create Backpacks for Kids, one of those new products that is now one of the most successful among Canadian Pioneers. It has won International and National Pioneers awards, generated extensive media attention and engaged thousands of volunteers.

Under his leadership as president, the chapter received two awards from the Community Service Council, as well as four International Pioneers and ten Canadian Pioneers service awards. Budden's ability to recruit and engage new members and leaders is also well documented, as 27 of those new members are currently participating in multiple projects. And to his credit, Bell Aliant Pioneers have had chapter executive leaders under the age of 40 for the past five consecutive years!

In 2009 Budden generated extensive media coverage for Chapter 105 in supporting a four day weekend of Aliant Cup Pee Wee AAA Provincial Championship hockey tournaments and the St. John's Aliant Pioneers host team. Pee Wee hockey in Atlantic Canada represents nearly 8,000 Pee Wee hockey players, volunteers, coaches and parents.

As a past chapter president Budden has maintained his high level of engagement and participated in a host of projects and activities in 2010. These include "Bell Aliant Family Fun Day," "Walk to Cure Juvenile Diabetes," "PGI Family Literacy Day," "Food Drive for Victims of Hurricane Igor," and "the Christmas Stocking Campaign."



## *Christine Casino - Regular Member*

Verizon Pioneers - William J. Denver Chapter

Despite a very busy work and home life, Chapter President Chris Casino stepped up to the challenge when William J. Denver Pioneers were having an extremely hard time finding someone willing to take on the leadership role. Casino not only jumped in and took charge but continues to lead the membership in a direction that increases volunteer interest. More people are talking about and volunteering on Denver Chapter projects than ever.

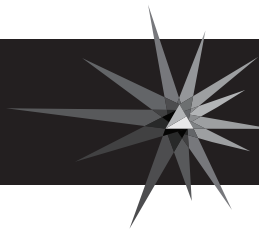
Known as an out-of-the-box thinker, Casino has created several new projects, including "Operation Cookie Drop" and most recently the "Day of Caring." Her leadership of "Day of Caring" - a multi-state, multi-location project - required detailed planning, acquiring funding through a grant request and coordination of four simultaneously held events. Chris understood the importance of showcasing Denver Chapter during Pioneering's 100th year with a large project.

Collaboration is another core element of Chris's style. She seeks opportunities to partner the chapter with organizations and form relationships that continue to engage the members. When promoting "Tools for Schools", Verizon's school supply drive, for example, she advertises Pioneers' involvement with Homework House, providing support for after-school tutoring.

When promoting Hopeline®, Verizon's service source for domestic violence shelters, she takes the opportunity to let employees know of other domestic violence partnerships at Denver that need help.

With "Operation Cookie Drop," she partners Pioneers, local unions and the Girl Scouts to provide boxes of cookies to our troops overseas.

Chris understands that in order for Pioneers to continue to grow and thrive, partnerships need to be nurtured and programs must remain relevant to the Pioneers of today and those who have provided support for many years.



*Stephen Whitley - Partner*

AT&T Pioneers - Alabama Chapter

As a volunteer, you might never guess that Stephen Whitley is a Pioneer Partner.

Whitley is as involved and as dedicated as anyone, even with a full-time job. On his off days and vacation days, he's there, doing what needs to be done . . . and then some.

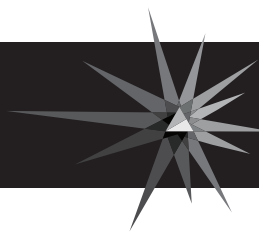
Whitley has, in fact, provided support in virtually every area of Pioneers activity.

He played a major role in Alabama's "Three Hots and a Cot" homeless veterans project by resurfacing the fireplace to resemble what it would have been when the house was built in 1895. He also secured a grant from Home Depot for all the needed material. And without his truck and strength, picking up the donations of couches, dressers, desks, etc., may have been next to impossible.

Stephen has also volunteered in several educational projects, including "Reading Across America," where he spent time reading in the classroom of special needs students. He also helped deliver donations to teachers for the "Classroom Wishes" project and volunteered at the "Hearing Screening" project.

In the Life Enrichment category, he chaired the "Odenville Playground Project for Special Needs Students." The existing playground was run down and needed new equipment. He obtained a grant from Lowe's to help provide the materials.

As a Pioneer Partner, of course, he's there for his wife, too. When she was involved with a major endeavor to clean up PALS, Stephen was on hand to assist her in reading spreadsheets and checking websites for possible leads to employees!



*Nicole Zigler - Partner*

AT&T Pioneers - DeAnza Chapter, San Diego Council

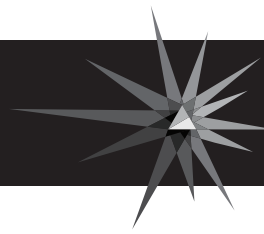
It would be hard, perhaps impossible, to find a Pioneer Partner as unique as Nicole Zigler.

Nicole turned 21 years of age this year and has been involved in AT&T Pioneer volunteer activities since she was 5 years old. She enjoys helping others and feels strongly about giving assistance to those in need. Currently a Junior Partner with the AT&T Pioneers, Nicole was awarded the "Pioneer Junior Partner of the Year" in 2005 for her many hours of volunteering within the community. In 2006, Nicole was awarded the "Pioneer Presidents Award" for her volunteerism and administrative assistance to AT&T Pioneers.

While Nicole is now attending college and working, she still finds time to attend and assist at AT&T Pioneers programs and events. And Pioneers have enjoyed watching as she's matured over the years, and grown in her skills and abilities to become an important part of DeAnza projects and events.

Nicole recently played a major role, for example, as a committee member for the AT&T Pioneers De Anza and Pacific Chapters 2010 Combined Conference held in Big Bear, CA. She created large hanging decorations prior to the event, developed a strategy for their display and instructed the committee on how to best to assemble and hang them. She also designed and set up the centerpieces for the event dinner and awards ceremony, assisted with packing the delegate materials and distributing programs. She took pictures, too, and assisted with the community service project.

So, who says young people aren't joiners? They need to have a chat with Nicole!



The Project Excellence award is designed to recognize the top level of Pioneers community service projects completed throughout the awards period in 5 categories (Education, Life Enrichment, Health and Human Services, Military and Environment.)

## *KIDS PARK*

AT&T Pioneers - Alabama Chapter

The numbers painted a disturbing picture: The high school drop-out rate across Alabama was at nearly 35 percent. In the Birmingham area alone, eight high schools were considered to be among the lowest performers in the nation. Something had to be done – and AT&T Alabama Pioneers were determined to do it.

Drawing upon existing AT&T and community relationships, the chapter united students, parents and educators in a project that came to be known as KIDS PARK. The comprehensive program helps students make the connection to how their school work applies to the working world, their communities – and their future.

Central to KIDS PARK is “World Works,” a component that helps students categorize their career options in terms of People Jobs, Idea Jobs, Data Jobs and Thing Jobs. With career representatives on hand to answer questions and offer guidance, students participated in a two-hour career planning session that enabled them, perhaps for the first time, to visualize how they might fit in the working world and in society.

## *Setting the Pace*

AT&T Pioneers - Florida Chapter, Jacksonville Life Member Club

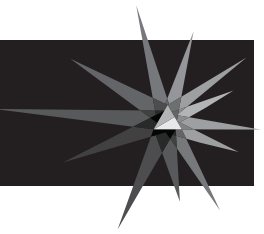
Florida Chapter Pioneers are “Setting the Pace” to help girls and young women between the ages of 12 and 18 who have been identified as truant, runaway, delinquent, or in need of academic skills.

Pioneers volunteer at the PACE (Practical Academic Cultural Education) Center for Girls, a non-residential delinquency prevention program. While PACE officials provide the professional teaching and counseling, Pioneers take a quality-of-life approach to assisting the young ladies.

The club’s ongoing goal is to help the girls at PACE enjoy positive social experiences while engaging with adults who are interested in their success, now and in the future. For girls who have received little adult encouragement in their lives, building such relationships can go a long way toward increasing their self-esteem, helping them make good life decisions, and motivating them to improve their academic skills.

The club initially got involved by donating dresses, shoes and accessories so the girls could attend their prom. Since that first donation, Pioneers have gone on to present the girls with books, Christmas presents, food baskets and Easter baskets.

The program has grown to include a \$1,000 college or vocational scholarship for one graduating senior each year.



## *Family Reading Nights*

AT&T Pioneers - Golden Gate Chapter

Statistics tell the story of children living at or below the federal poverty line who struggle with their reading. Pioneers decided to tell a different story: the one about how they helped create and manage the successful “Family Reading Nights” program in Oakland, CA.

Working with the Oakland Parents Literacy Project (OPLP), Pioneers were instrumental in driving an effort that focused on the 32 lowest performing elementary schools within the Oakland Unified School District. To make it all work, Pioneers saw the need to make it a family affair, so they invited siblings, parents and grandparents to participate in the program.

All participants are invited to the child’s school for an evening of reading and fun. Since many of the families are low income, the family nights also include a nutritious dinner for all attendees. The children and their teachers, meanwhile, are encouraged to wear their pajamas to make the event all the more cozy.

The statistics now tell the story of 6,000 participants in the program, 4,000 children receiving new books — and reading scores on the rise.

## *Happy Birthday Book Fair*

AT&T Pioneers - Missouri Chapter

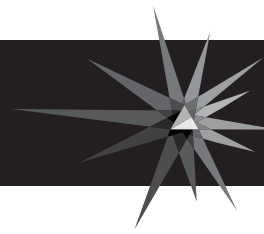
When the work of a St. Louis literacy program for preschoolers was severely impacted by budget cuts, Pioneers stepped in to write a happy ending.

The “Pioneer Happy Birthday Book Fair” was developed to ensure that the children received new or gently used books and that their parents were given valuable information to help them promote literacy with their children.

A book drive was held by Pioneers in the three downtown St. Louis AT&T offices, and in no time approximately 1,500 new and used books were collected to be given away at the fair.

More than 135 children and their families attended the fair, with each child getting the opportunity to take home two free books. The children also received an informational bag and packet at registration with literature for parents about the importance of early literacy.

Where once families that counted on the city program were in danger of being cast aside, they can now count on Pioneers to host the book fairs while continuing to drive home the critical message around the value of early literacy.



## *Westward Expansion Literacy Program*

AT&T Pioneers - Silver State Chapter

With district budgets stretched paper thin, schools have few discretionary dollars for new reading and writing materials needed to keep pace with stiffened Department of Education standards. A new, history-based literacy curriculum from Silver State Pioneers has provided a valuable new resource for 4th grade teachers and students in Nevada.

Pioneers wanted to focus their Centennial project on 4th grade literacy, as it is during this period that youngsters begin reading to learn. Those who fall behind during this critical school year risk slipping further and further behind in their studies.

The materials, consisting of a set of textbooks and a workbook, were developed with guidance from educators at the University of Nevada, Reno, Literacy Foundation and the Washoe County School District. The subject matter, Nevada's history and America's westward expansion, is tailored to 4th grade lesson plans. Pioneers also developed a Western-themed event to introduce the program to students.

Funded primarily by a Centennial grant of more than \$15,000, "Westward Expansion" materials were provided to 700 Nevada schools. All told, nearly 20,000 4th graders are the program's ultimate beneficiaries.

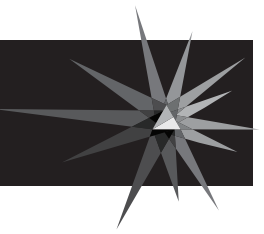
## *I Feel the U.S.A!*

AT&T Pioneers - Tennessee Chapter, Nashville Life Member Club

Tens of thousands of children benefit annually from the lessons, geographic and social, that Pioneers Playground Maps bring to life. Unfortunately, as Nashville Life Members have come to realize, a key population of youngsters has long missed out on the experience. Thanks to their "I See the USA!" project with the Tennessee School for the Blind (TSB), that's now a lesson learned and corrected.

The innovative project began with what looks to be a regular Playground Map, except the states are outlined using a mix of white paint and sand. The gritty texture allows blind and visually impaired TSB students, many of whom face other ability challenges as well, to see the map by feel. Pioneers then developed an idea for a second, companion map to reinforce the first. This 12-foot by 8-foot, wall-mounted, indoor map uses sheets of Velcro and upholstery beads to define the states. Both maps have now been incorporated into teachers' lesson plans.

Taking the project one significant further step, the Nashville club created an instructional video detailing the creation of both maps and posted it to PioneerTube.com. Chapters across the Association can now bring the latest in Playground Maps to their own communities.



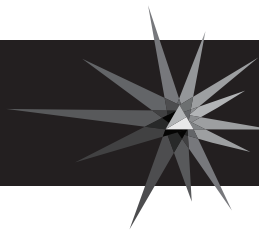
## *Teachers on Wheels*

Verizon Pioneers - Paumanok Chapter

When fire devastated the Riverhead Charter School (RCS), 235 kindergarten through 6th grade students and 17 teachers became orphans. Moving the entire school to temporary locations in various buildings seemed easy enough, but students had to adjust to new environments, and teachers, their classroom tools lost in the flames, faced the additional burden of having to travel from classroom to classroom.

"Teachers on Wheels" was Paumanock Chapter's quick response. Pioneers jumped in to replace the damaged and outdated equipment, providing new, mobile, 21st century technology chosen by RCS educators. The equipment – including digital whiteboards with matching USB audio systems and rolling floor stands, LCD projectors, smart slates, interactive response systems, and smart document cameras – also provided the platform for 21st century teaching strategies, impacting both current students and those who will follow.

Unable to secure grant funding for the project, Paumanok Pioneers contributed and raised more than \$11,000 for the purchases. Well over 300 Pioneers were active participants. The entire Suffolk Council board visited the school, for example, and members provided additional learning tools, including a Verizon Thinkfinity® representative, dictionaries, and a U.S. map rug. Oh, and Mother Goose, for the kindergarten kids!



## *Stewardship of Tampa's Cypress Point Park*

AT&T Pioneers - Florida Chapter, Tampa Mixed Club

Once a neglected stretch of beach rightfully categorized as an eyesore, Cypress Point Park is now a jewel in the Tampa park system and a source of community pride, thanks to the efforts of Pioneers in the AT&T Florida Chapter.

Its shoreline littered with debris and its foliage strangled by overgrown weeds, the park had become unsafe and unusable for area residents. When the city of Tampa issued a cry for help, Pioneers answered the call – and they brought some friends with them.

Sparked by the initiative taken by Pioneers and alerted to the park program by an effective media campaign, community members came out in droves. Volunteers from other community service organizations, families and local businesses arrived to offer their expertise, and in some cases materials and supplies, to reclaim their beach.

The ugly duckling turned beautiful swan, Cypress Park now offers gorgeous beach walks, dunes, wildflowers and fishing, in addition to other user friendly amenities such as a bus stop, ADA accessibility, bicycle racks, a boardwalk, picnic pavilions and restroom facilities.

Now the ongoing custodians of the beach, Pioneers have earned the city of Tampa's Steward Award two years running.

## *Centennial Spark in the Park*

AT&T Pioneers - Florida Chapter

With budget cuts becoming the norm, parks across Florida were among the first public facilities to be affected. Shrubbery was overgrown and dying, playground equipment was rusting and dangerous.

The parks needed help . . . some elbow grease . . . some TLC. They needed AT&T Florida Chapter Pioneers, who created the "Centennial Spark in the Park" program to renovate 12 parks around the state.

Each of the chapter's 12 councils adopted a park and joined in a one-day blitz to refurbish and upgrade them. Pioneers in Ormand Beach built two horseshoe pits and installed eight grills, while their counterparts in Delray Beach planted trees and flowers and installed four benches.

This scene played out all day across the state as Pioneers painted and planted their way through the parks, removing trash and refurbishing playground equipment along the way.

To commemorate the 100th anniversary of Pioneering, the chapter planted one hundred trees, with one specially cultivated Centennial Spirit Crape Myrtle for each park. Plaques with the logos of the Pioneers and AT&T were also placed at each location.



## *Environmental Initiatives*

Bell Aliant Pioneers - Newfoundland and Labrador Chapter

Everyone likes to think they are sensitive to the physical world around them. There's no doubt about it at Newfoundland and Labrador Chapter, where being environmentally friendly has become a way of life.

The chapter's ever-expanding effort to recycle, reduce, and re-use reflects both community need and member response. Their projects are helping improve highway safety, eliminate the discharge of potentially dangerous pollutants, keep valuable computers in operation and cell phones and other electronic waste out of local landfills. Last year, Pioneers filled 300 trash bags along 14 kilometers of adopted highway; refurbished 300 computers; reclaimed 200 coats and over 500 pairs of eyeglasses for the needy; turned thousands of fabric, leather and wood remnants into the bibs, lap robes, scarves, finger puppets, wheelchair bags and memory boxes made by other chapter projects. In the process, Pioneers impacted thousands of lives and engaged 279 volunteers and several local businesses.

These good works continue to generate positive press, as you might expect, which increases the chapter's desire to do more and the count of volunteers – like the elderly blind woman who now knits those finger puppets – who want to take part. You could say it's turned into a wonderfully vicious recycle!

## *Washington Arboretum Holly Collection Restoration*

CenturyLink Pioneers - Washington Chapter

Washington Chapter wanted a centennial project that embodied a clean, green, and sustainable environmental. They found it in a year-long, \$26,000 effort to restore and maintain a 3 acre habitat containing one of the nation's premier collections of holly plants and trees.

Owned by the University of Washington and situated in Seattle's 230-acre Washington Park Arboretum, the holly collection of 130 entirely native species had become threatened by invasive, non-native holly, weeds, and trash. Funded by a Centennial grant, the Pioneers pledged a full year of volunteering, 100 hours per quarter, to complete the work.

Coordinating with the city and university, Pioneers launched the project on Arbor Day supported by 65 volunteers and dignitaries, including CenturyLink's vice president and general manager. In the months ahead, over 100 Pioneers and community volunteers cleared away unwanted vegetation and debris, planted bulbs and new native plants, rebuilt older Eurasian berms and created others. They installed interpretive signage to explain the collection's ecology and added two commemorative benches from which to enjoy it.

On the second Saturday of each month they returned, pitched their co-branded tent and got back to sustaining a unique environment they had helped preserve. They would pass the 600 volunteer hours mark well ahead of schedule.



### *Home Away from Home*

AT&T Pioneers - South Carolina Chapter, Fort Sumter Club

Ronald McDonald House (RMH) provides a convenient and supportive living arrangement for families of seriously ill children. In South Carolina, AT&T Pioneers have spent the past 27 years volunteering to make the RMH of Charleston a “home away from home” for the 25 or so families living there at any given time.

The instances are many when families spend an entire day at the hospital, waiting for results, hoping for the best. Often emotionally and physically drained by the time they return to RMH, twice a month they arrive to a home-cooked meal prepared and served by South Carolina Chapter Pioneers. The meals help the families save money they might otherwise have spent at a restaurant, but also enable them to relax, even if only briefly.

The chapter’s ongoing support of RMH goes beyond the meals to include fundraising, stocking the pantry, and the donation of a freezer for the kitchen. Pioneers also support the RMH library through the collection or purchase of books. The library, by the way, was initially funded through the generosity of Walter Duane, an AT&T Pioneer who made the gesture in memory of his sisters, Genevieve and Martha Duane.

### *Nashville Flood Relief*

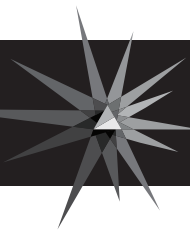
AT&T Pioneers - Tennessee Chapter, Greater Nashville Council

When disaster struck Nashville in the form of deadly flooding in May of 2010, there was little time to prepare. Fortunately, there were plenty of AT&T Pioneers in the area who began providing relief even before the rising waters crested.

Among the first to respond, Tennessee Pioneers quickly began pitching in to provide emergency shelters with water, food items, blankets, toiletry items, diapers, baby food and other staples.

The Greater Nashville Council also lent critical support to its sponsoring company, working with AT&T Mobility to create and execute a plan to provide mobile phone access and calling cards to shelters. Pioneers also staffed the satellite mobile phone banks that were deployed to provide victims a means to contact their families and continued this work for weeks until the assistance was no longer needed.

Pioneers, Life Members and Partners reported a total of 1,251 hours for disaster relief. These hours do not capture the assistance also provided to active employees who worked long and difficult hours to restore the network and assist customers during very tough conditions.



### *Spark of Hope*

Bell Aliant Newfoundland and Labrador Chapter

The devastation wrought by Hurricane Igor left little reason for optimism throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. Turns out, the ferocity of Igor was no match for the mettle of Bell Aliant Pioneers, who acted quickly to instill a “Spark of Hope” across the land.

The hurricane’s deadly winds and torrential rains shredded the province, stranding and isolating thousands, including 50,000 residents who were left without power for a week or more.

Newfoundland and Labrador Chapter quickly determined that funding would be the most effective route to relief and partnered with Steele Communications and the Salvation Army to support a radio-thon. By providing 29 volunteers to take pledges during the 12-hour event, Pioneers helped raise more than \$1.5 million.

With still more hope to spread, the chapter did just that by collecting three truckloads of food for donation to the Canadian Red Cross.

The “Spark of Hope” was even evident in the chapter’s application for this award. Asked if the project had been previously presented for award consideration, the response said it all: “No, this was a one-time project.”

### *Northern Home for Children*

Verizon Pioneers - Liberty Bell Chapter, Germantown Council

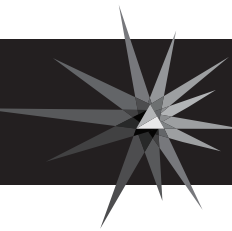
For kids caught up in the court system, a school disciplinary action, or one of many Philadelphia city agencies, the Northern Home for Children offers a critical safety net. Northern’s philosophy is to shepherd at-risk children to self-sufficient adulthood, fostering responsible family behavior, effective school conflict resolution and community resources providing positive life experiences.

Northern’s needs are many as it supports a multi-building campus housing as many as 100 young girls and boys. It is the only facility of its kind in the area.

To address as many needs as possible, Germantown worked with Northern administrators to prioritize a wish list. They then engaged Pioneers across Liberty Bell to make things happen.

The continuing project has provided donations of cash and materials for Northern’s “Generations Program,” a supervised housing facility for young mothers (16-18) who have aged out of foster care placements; curriculum improvements at the Early Learning Center, which focuses those young women on academic advancement and employment opportunities; and student backpacks, school supplies, books, a U.S floor map, games and clothing for Northern’s residential and emergency shelter for young boys who have been abused.

The total value of Germantown’s overall program now exceeds \$23,000.



*Laurel House*

Verizon Pioneers - Liberty Bell Chapter, Northeast Council

Northeast Council's "Laurel House" project grew out of Verizon Pioneers' partnership with the National Network to End Domestic Violence. On their initial visit to the shelter to bring Verizon backpacks for the residents, Pioneers realized a much greater level of support for Laurel House clients and staff was required.

The council's subsequent efforts have certainly made significant inroads in assisting Laurel House achieve its goals. In recent years, with \$15,000 in Verizon Foundation grants, \$20,000 from Verizon Pennsylvania, and goods and services from community businesses totaling another \$15,000, Pioneers were able to satisfy an incredible Laurel House wish list.

These funds kept Laurel House's 24/7 hotline in operation; provided a new security system; enhanced the community intervention/outreach program; upgraded hardware, software and network technology for internal administrators and field agents; and improved residents' accommodations with a new heating system.

Members also initiated a "Shower for the Shelter" program and made contributions of food, clothing and bedding, household and personal care items, cell phones and school supplies, including Verizon Student Dictionaries and the introduction to Thinkfinity®. More than 30 Pioneers were engaged, partnering with family, friends, employees and the community at large to guarantee success.

*Ronald McDonald House*

Verizon Pioneers - Liberty Bell Chapter, West Council

Philadelphia Ronald McDonald House (PRMH) – "the First House that Love Built" - is home away from home for some 800 families of critically ill children receiving treatment at local hospitals annually. Ninety percent of the support for PRMH comes from individuals or volunteer groups, as West Council members are well aware. They have volunteered there for over 20 years and in that time seen the home grow from 18 family rooms to 44, with full occupancy.

Beyond its commitment to prepare monthly evening meals for residents, Pioneers have worked to insure members understand what residents are going through, built awareness of other needs at PRMH, and engaged volunteers in meeting them.

Over the years, Pioneers have prepared 240 meals and hosted 20 holiday parties; donated 3,725 gift bags; provided toys, games, books, and sports equipment; and adopted PRMH's soda tab recycling fundraiser. They have also obtained \$15,500 in Verizon grants to purchase kitchen equipment, appliances and bedding. In total, Pioneers estimate the 20-year value of their contributions at \$58,000.

The council's engagement continues to evolve, with members serving as entertainers, big brothers/sisters, and nutritionists, developing menus that are delicious, diet-sensitive and culturally diverse.



*CAST Reunion*

AT&T Pioneers - Alabama Chapter, Anniston Council

Shortly after sending out invitations to its CAST Reunion, AT&T Alabama Chapter was reeling in the acceptances.

Catch a Special Thrill (CAST) had for years treated special needs youngsters to a day of fishing and fun. Recalling how the children enjoyed the day, Alabama Pioneers decided a reunion was in order and the invitations went in the mail.

The day promised a reunion with fellow fishermen, along with a barbecue lunch, fishing gear, gifts and, of course, worms. It wasn't long before the chapter had acceptances from 18 CAST alums.

Since the invitation was extended to family members, the chapter was soon preparing to host an event for 125 on the grounds of the Gadsden State Community College. Guests enjoyed a day of fishing in stocked ponds at the school's Aquaculture Center and with the assistance of Pioneers, the children hauled in catfish, bass, and brim.

When the fishing was done, it was time to enjoy live entertainment, take tours of the Aquaculture Center, and eat the tasty lunch sponsored by APSO, the Alabama Power Service Organization.

*Kids on the Move*

AT&T Pioneers - Florida Chapter, Palm Beach North Life Member Club

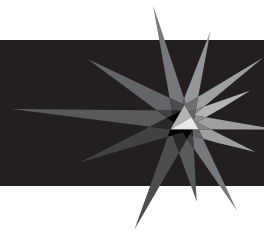
The spark of an idea generated by AT&T Florida Chapter Pioneers has solved a community need while identifying an easy way for Life Members to make a difference.

"Kids on the Move" is the chapter's effort to provide children in the foster care system with a piece of luggage with which to transport their possessions. In many cases, these children are removed from their homes and families very quickly. With little time and no luggage, they typically end up putting everything their own into a trash bag.

In brainstorming options for collecting luggage, Pioneers realized that many Life Members who no longer travel might be willing to donate their "gently used" luggage. The chapter put out the call and not only did they soon have 90 pieces of luggage, but a reinvigorated group of Life Members as well.

Life Members are now actively soliciting luggage from friends and neighbors and bringing the luggage to meetings for the chapter to store for the next luggage drive.

## *Project Excellence - Life Enrichment*



### *Helping Renew a Homeless Community*

AT&T Pioneers - Florida Chapter

The teamwork of Family Renew Community (FRC) and AT&T Florida Chapter is giving homeless families a fighting chance to cycle back into the mainstream.

FRC provides the housing for 32 families, and Pioneers make sure each of those homes has the basic necessities – and then some. With families already struggling, Pioneers eliminate start-up costs by stocking the homes with food, new linens, coffee makers, toasters, irons, toiletries, diapers, baby wipes, silverware and much more.

Pioneers also support the FRC's thrift store by donating new and used household items and distribute food baskets and toys for the children during the holidays.

FRC families must meet some basic requirements to become eligible for housing, which is offered for only six months. One adult from each family must be employed. Adult residents are required to be drug and alcohol free and must take classes geared toward improving their life skills.

With the goal of assisting families to become independent and self-sufficient, Pioneers have played a major role in a project that has helped 83 percent of past residents move into affordable housing.

### *Christmas Stockings for the Homeless and Low Income*

AT&T Pioneers - Golden Bear Chapter, Delta Gold Council

When times are tough and money is tight, those in need are forced to prioritize. The decisions become all the more painful during the holidays, when enjoying the season is a luxury they simply cannot afford.

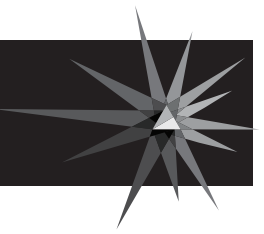
In greater Sacramento, CA, AT&T Golden Bear Pioneers made a decision of their own a few years back: to stuff as much joy as they could into as many Christmas stockings as they could get their hands on.

The council's "Christmas Stockings for the Homeless and Low Income" project results in the distribution of more than 3,500 stockings annually to the homeless, to the struggling, and to senior citizens living alone.

The stockings are cut and sewn with the help of local Girl Scouts, and stuffed with the help of AT&T employees, who last year pitched in to fill more than 500 stockings. The project also receives the gift of working space from AT&T, which provides a spacious area for the volunteer team to work their holiday magic.

Once filled with the basic necessities – including a toy or three thrown in for families with children – the stockings are ready to provide that priceless brand of joy available only from Pioneers.

## *Project Excellence - Life Enrichment*



### *Celebrate the Holidays with California Vets - Yountville Veterans Home*

AT&T Pioneers - Golden Bear Chapter, Redwood Life Member Club

It's been said that with some people you spend time, with others you invest it. Pioneers in AT&T Golden Bear Chapter have been investing their time with residents of the Yountville Veterans Home and the returns have been phenomenal – for the veterans and for the Pioneers.

Once the Pioneers got involved in this ongoing project, they couldn't stop. It started with a visit during the winter holidays a few years back. The veterans were thrilled to have new friends to chat with, and Pioneers were touched by the difference they were making.

It didn't take long for Pioneers to decide that they would return to the facility for every holiday. From October 2009 through February 2011, they have given of themselves and to the veterans.

To date, Pioneers have distributed enough gifts to fill a department store. Among the donations are 1,260 stuffed animals, 1,000 signed valentines, 1,500 tooth paste kits, 725 heart pillows, 560 Kleenex holders, 326 lap quilts, 476 penholders, 500 quilted Velcro bags, 291 shawls, 283 soap holders, 300 dictionaries, 2,000 pads of paper and pens, 325 sun screens, 500 lip balms, 600 stuffed Christmas stockings, 750 game books and over 1,800 handmade gift bags.

### *Sparkling Sweet Dreams*

AT&T Pioneers - Golden Gate Chapter

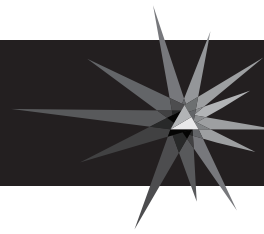
Golden Gate Pioneers are drawn to children in difficult situations, and their new project focuses that passion on foster care kids, especially those just entering the system.

For "Sparkling Sweet Dreams," Pioneers crafted a special fleece blanket with a built-in pillow/pocket holding a small stuffed animal and a book. The blankets roll up into themselves and fit into a 2-gallon plastic bag, keeping them clean and easy to store.

The chapter's initial goal was to create and quickly deliver 50 blankets to foster care service agencies. When a Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) office ordered 20, the excitement spread quickly, generating orders from four other CASA locations. The chapter then secured arrangements to provide blankets for the Seneca Center, the first stop for area children being removed from their homes.

As the chapter's award application was being filed, Pioneers had already delivered 50 blankets for kids at the Seneca center and 95 altogether, and received donations of 120 beanie babies and free shipping on all fleece material purchased online. The chapter board had also earmarked \$1,500 to help take the project to the next level.

## *Project Excellence - Life Enrichment*



### *All Children Shall Have Shoes*

AT&T Pioneers - Illinois Chapter

Untold numbers of children head to school each day in shoes that don't fit properly or are too worn out to protect their feet. Thanks to the Pioneers "All Children Shall Have Shoes" (ACSHS), there are fewer and fewer of them in Illinois every year.

ACSHS actually dates back to the 1960s, and while it has been a standing project for various Life Member clubs for a few years, it was only recently made a chapter-wide project.

Logic suggests more member involvement (360 Pioneers in this case) spells more buzz in company corridors. More interest equals more funds raised (all via traditional methods like bingo and 50/50 raffles, chili lunches at company locations, funnel cake sales at ballgames, and corporate and individual donations). And more funding means more shoes for more children.

Happy to say, that thinking was right on the money, and 1,883 students wore new kicks to their first day of school in 2010.

The most unique aspect of the project may be that each child gets to visit the shoe store on a group field trip, pick out shoes from the store's entire inventory, and take them home. That's an experience these youngsters don't get very often.

### *Special Kids Rodeo*

CenturyLink Pioneers - Washington Chapter, Combined Columbia Club

The thrill of participating in a rodeo, once just a dream for special needs children in the Vancouver, WA, area, has become a dream come true due to the effort of Pioneers in CenturyLink Washington Chapter.

For the past 26 years, the Pioneers have managed the "Special Kids Rodeo" as part of the Clark County Fair. Where once the challenged youngsters could only watch from the audience, this project puts them in the heart of the action, participating in events while being cheered on by fans in the packed arena.

Adding to the full rodeo experience, the children get the opportunity to ride into the arena in a horse-drawn wagon to the cheers of the crowd. With five events of their very own, the children take center stage to put their skills on display for spectators who have come to embrace the special rodeo as a favorite event.

The children also get to experience what it is like to touch a horse or feel a goat and realize how soft their skin is. When the horses put their heads down for the children to touch them, the children feel the excitement of making that connection with a new friend.

## *Project Excellence - Life Enrichment*



### *Happy Feet and Minds*

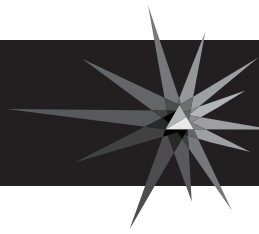
Verizon Pioneers - William J. Denver Chapter

More than 90% of the children served by "Happy Feet and Minds" are on subsidized school lunch plans, meaning their families are living at or below the poverty level. Denver Chapter wanted to make sure these disadvantaged youngsters had the educational tools needed to be successful – and new footwear to put a skip in their step for the 2010 school year.

Financed by a \$5,000 Verizon grant, individual donations from members, employees and the community (made via the chapter website) and additional chapter funds, Denver Pioneers reached eight area schools and one childcare center. Supported by 75 Pioneers and the engagement of all nine Denver clubs, the chapter was able to provide sneakers or shoes, socks and a set of educational supplies for some 240 children. Students received their footwear and supplies in specially purchased Pioneers-branded bags.

The chapter-provided supplies included hundreds of Scholastic books, Verizon Dictionaries, atlases and thesauruses, and 25 gift cards impacting over 300 children. As part of the bag presentation, a one hour slot of time was set aside for Pioneers to present an introduction to the Verizon's Thinkfinity® website to the school administrators and teachers.

## *Project Excellence - Military*



### *Three Hots and a Cot*

AT&T Pioneers - Alabama Chapter, Birmingham South Council

AT&T Alabama Chapter is helping to build a better life for homeless veterans – one room at a time.

In support of the “Three Hots and a Cot” project, Pioneers sponsored the living room of a community home that serves as a shelter. In true Pioneer fashion, they worked several days to clean and paint the room, refurbish the fireplace, clean windows, hang window treatments, and finally bring in furnishings.

Pioneers also engaged friends and family members to donate a sectional sofa, chair, large-screen TV, lamps, and pictures for the living room. One Pioneer made afghans for the veterans and another donated clock radios for all of the bedrooms.

The living room is the main gathering place for the veterans, as well as a meeting space for those housed at the shelter. It is now a warm and inviting place for some deserving veterans – and the Pioneers aren’t done yet.

Still ahead is a fundraising component, through which Pioneers will generate funds to purchase paint, electrical supplies and roofing materials for the shelter.

### *Wreaths Across America*

AT&T Pioneers - South Carolina Chapter

Determined to provide an enduring tribute to those who served in the military, AT&T South Carolina Chapter took on the responsibility of placing holiday wreaths at more than 600 grave sites in M. J. “Dolly” Cooper Veterans Cemetery.

This project was taken up to raise awareness of the continuing sacrifice of the United States military, to honor the service of all deceased veterans and to show appreciation to their families.

The chapter worked with Wreaths Across America, an organization that places wreaths in more than 500 cemeteries nationwide. The project was open to all in the community and the community enthusiastically responded, with numerous organizations signing on to support the effort.

These groups not only participated this year, but pledged their ongoing commitment to the program.

Beyond achieving the primary goal of honoring every veteran buried in the cemetery, the project also hit the mark by generating awareness for veterans. Additionally, there was an educational aspect for youngsters who learned to appreciate the sacrifices of the veterans.

## *Project Excellence - Military*



### *Personal Care Bags for Vets*

CenturyLink Pioneers - Minnesota Chapter

Hidden among the homeless population in cities across America there is a growing sub-group: men and women who are veterans of having served in the U.S. Military.

Where once they proudly served to protect freedom, these veterans now struggle in the streets, the battle they fight now one of survival.

An estimated 624 veterans will be homeless tonight in Minnesota. Searching for some way to help, CenturyLink Minnesota Chapter formed an army of its own and went to work.

The idea was to assemble personal care kits for the veterans and the goal was set at 2,000 by the end of 2011. Unfortunately, the homeless veteran population is such that the Pioneers will most likely hit this target.

The care kits, which contain basic hygiene items, are presented to the veterans at “Stand Downs” coordinated by the Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans.

In the military, “Stand Down” is the term used when battle-weary troops are at rest. Having the bags distributed at a Stand Down works well, as the vets also receive a variety of other services such as haircuts, dental care, clothing and meals at the same time.

### *Life's Lesson One . . . "Just Say Thanks"*

Verizon Pioneers - Maryland Chapter

Wounded servicemen and women are too often forgotten once they return to the states, Maryland Pioneers believe, spending months or years in rehabilitation or living out their days in lonely veterans' facilities.

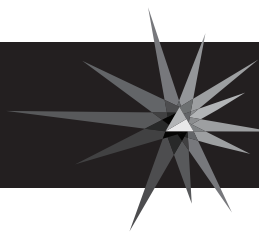
A tribute to all veterans, “Life’s Lesson One . . .” engages middle school students to brighten the everyday lives of these soldiers while learning to “Just Say Thanks” for the sacrifices veterans have made to protect the freedoms we enjoy.

The project centers on the creation and presentation of no-sew Blankets of Honor. Four schools have taken part, with 250 students in grades 4-6 preparing 350 blankets. These were presented by a smaller group of 24 students as thank you gifts to veterans at a VA hospital residence and an injured soldiers’ retreat. Parents were invited to accompany the students, who then reported back to their schoolmates on the experience.

Students came away with a heightened awareness and a feeling of accomplishment upon seeing the appreciation their efforts had generated. The soldiers found the warm blankets quite useful, of course, although VA officials reported that seeing youngsters in the facility, hearing them express their thanks, was the best medicine the veterans could receive.

And that was all the thanks Maryland Pioneers needed.

## *Project Excellence - Military*



### *Operation Homefront Bedtime Stories*

Verizon Pioneers - Old Dominion Chapter

Research shows that children learn more in the first five years of life than at any other time. Unfortunately, it is during this same period that military parents most likely face deployment. It can be a confusing, frightening time for young children, and just being able to hear a parent's voice can make all the difference.

"Bedtime Stories" is making that comforting connection possible by bringing home the recorded voice of the deployed parent reading a bedtime story. The project is a follow-up to earlier work with Operation HomeFront, a nonprofit providing emergency and other assistance to families of service members and wounded warriors.

It works like this: The deploying parent receives two copies of a bedtime storybook, one to take with and one for the child. The parent accesses a dedicated [talkingmemories.com](http://talkingmemories.com) website and records as much of the book as desired. The child receives an email with the parent's recording (and can record a reading as well).

Funding for the project came from a \$5,000 Verizon grant to purchase two computers, 200 books, advertising and brochures to educate families on using the program.

## *Vice President's Award*



The Vice Presidents Award is chosen by the Group's Vice President and is given to one project for its outstanding contributions to the respective sponsor company/self-sponsored group's corporate social responsibility objectives and for increasing awareness of Pioneering.

### *A.T.&T./Junior Achievement Worldwide Job Shadow Initiative*

AT&T Pioneers - All Chapters

Over a million high school students, or 1 in 4, fail to graduate with their class each year. Many of those drop out with passing grades, failing only to connect the relevance of their schoolwork to their future life success. And, over 80% say more opportunities for real-world learning would have improved their chances of graduating.

The Worldwide Job Shadow Initiative, launched in 2008 to connect classroom learning to real world opportunities, gives teens an up-close look at the world of work and answers the commonly asked question, "Why do I have to learn this?"

All 31 AT&T chapters and their local JA counterparts have engaged to create an innovative workplace visit for 100,000 students over 5 years. According to JA, the project is the largest corporate Job Shadow initiative to date and the only one to focus specifically on impacting the high school dropout rate.

Thanks to AT&T Pioneers exemplary leadership, the initiative is scheduled to reach the 100,000 student mark almost a full year ahead of schedule. Over 4,000 active members have taken part, working with 98 JA offices and 650 schools.

And, feedback to date shows that 89% of students said participation in Job Shadow made them realize the importance of staying in school.

### *Hearts of Pioneering*

Canadian Pioneers - All Chapters

The Heart of Pioneering projects encompass the many needs of many communities. Canadian Pioneers call them "comfort" projects, many of which are international and have been around for decades. They include Backpacks for Kids, Books for Literacy, Computers for Success, Heart Pillows, Hug-a-Bears and more. Together they unite communities, provinces and the different categories of Pioneers membership in a common thread of service.

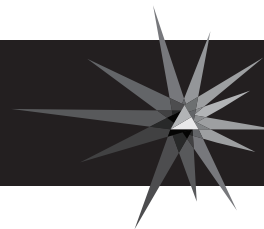
Each chapter and club sets annual goals for the projects they select, and Canadian Pioneers at the group level recognize the units that meet those goals with a Heart of Pioneering Award. Those goals, in fact, are achieved or surpassed every year.

For example, in the past the collective Team Canada has donated tens of thousands of Hug-a-Bears and Heart Pillows; raised well over \$1 million for charities across Canada; donated computer No. 1 million; and provided tens of thousands books to children. Also, over the past decade Canadian Pioneers have contributed well over \$2 million in cash and in-kind donations and tens of thousands of volunteer hours to their communities.

Impressive accomplishments, to be sure, for a group with a membership of just 20,000 or so.

Better make that 20,000 strong.

## *Vice President's Award*



### *Wapato Greenway Access Centennial Park Project*

CenturyLink Pioneers - Oregon Chapter

When it comes down to conservation and protecting the Pacific Northwest beauty of their home state, CenturyLink's Oregon Pioneers are quick to stand up. Such was the case when parks officials needed assistance in restoring the diverse habitats of the Wapato Greenway Access about 15 miles outside Portland.

The park, a popular destination for walkers and wildlife observers, especially birders, consists of lowland river forest, varied shrub layers, perennial wetlands and upland oak savannas. Clearing an oak savanna overtaken by Himalayan Blackberry thickets that had also begun to threaten a stand of white oak seedlings would be the centerpiece of what would become the Pioneers' year-long Centennial project.

During volunteer work days scheduled every other month, Pioneers replaced the blackberry thickets with additional oaks and other appropriate trees and shrubs. They refurbished a viewing platform and wildlife observation blind, as well; repaired a boat dock and three miles of hiking trails, installed interpretive signage and upgraded a parking lot.

The project was one of the longest, most extensive, and satisfying efforts the chapter had taken on in years. Funded primarily by a Pioneers grant of over \$15,000, the project was also one its most expensive. Over 70 members to part, including the Oregon state president, contributing 640 service hours in total.

### *Hug-a-Bears*

New Outlook Pioneers - New Frontier Chapter, Heartland Council

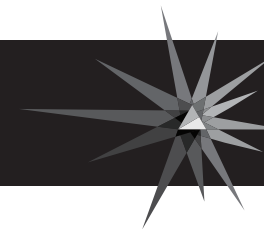
The self-sponsored Pioneers of Heartland Council may be few in number, but they are having a sizeable impact in their community with one of Pioneering's most quintessential products.

From January 2000 through December 2010, the Omaha-based unit currently consisting of fewer than 200 members has produced 22,700 high-quality Hug-a-Bears for distribution to police, fire and other emergency personnel who deal with children in stressful situations.

Featured on television and in print media, and saluted by first-responder groups across their tri-state area, council members have put a lot of time and effort into the project over the years – 157,815 hours to be exact. They gather weekly, between 8 and 16 Pioneers at a time, in a donated space to produce their bears assembly line style.

And they do make a nice bear. Partnering with 3M for donations of an ultra-sanitary stuffing material (remnants and trimmings from the protective facemasks 3M produces), the council uses quality fabrics and nose and eye pieces that kids cannot easily remove. The final touch is the addition of a durable label that proudly brands each bear as “a product of Heartland Council, Pioneers, Volunteers, Omaha, NE.”

## *Vice President's Award*



### *Students' Pledge Against Domestic Abuse - S.P.A.D.A*

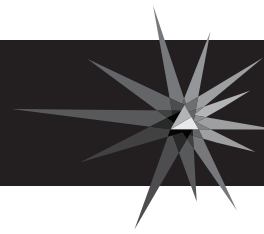
Verizon Pioneers - Nova 5 Chapter

Nova 5's dramatic new project, “Students' Pledge Against Domestic Abuse,” is raising awareness of domestic violence across the different community age groups, most specifically among teenagers.

Domestic abuse is a significant issue that's long been of concern to sponsor company Verizon. The chapter's effort to align with that focus began with a survey of 250 people ages 9-60 to assess their perspectives on domestic violence. Based on the survey results and participant comments, Pioneers developed a storyline for a short film to serve as a discussion starter at a subsequent series of community dialogs.

The film doesn't sugarcoat. It includes, for example, the death of a character involved in an abusive relationship. The shock of that event, however, opens the eyes of another victim, who comes to recognize her own abuse as something that cannot be tolerated. The film also makes use of the Verizon Wireless HopeLine®, an emergency service that immediately connects the caller to the National Domestic Violence Hotline.

The film was shown in a number of forums, and in the following discussions, participants indicated they had gained a new perspective on domestic violence and a heightened sensitivity to abusive situations they may have witnessed and ignored because they were not affected directly.



## *Sparking a Clean, Green Environment*

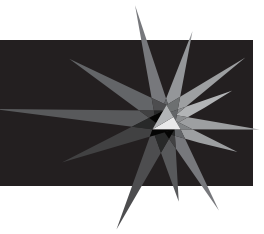
SaskTel Pioneers - Saskatchewan Chapter

An international Pioneers pilot project plan resulted in a clean sweep for Saskatchewan Pioneers, who took to the streets of North Central Regina to pick up trash while promoting Pioneers and its sponsoring company SaskTel.

The multi-faceted project set forth a number of goals, beginning with the task of removing debris from city streets. As long as they were in the neighborhood, Pioneers decided, it would be a good idea to knock on some doors.

In between the filling of trash bags, Pioneers went door-to-door, introducing Pioneers and SaskTel and sharing messages around the importance of being environmentally conscious. While chatting with residents, Pioneers also gave them recyclable tote bags containing recycling information.

Another phase of the project was to establish a relationship with North Central Family Centre, an organization that completes a variety of projects in the area. The Family Centre quickly agreed to participate and offered its facility as the staging area. After a day of cleaning and then sharing a Pioneer-sponsored lunch, the new partnership was off to a flying start.



## *Increasing Regular Members*

Canadian Pioneers – Ontario Chapter  
171% increase in net new regular members

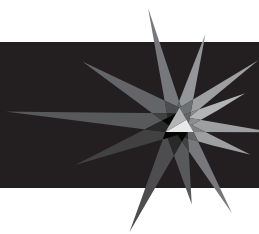
CenturyLink Pioneers – Nebraska Chapter  
61% increase in net new regular members

CenturyLink Pioneers – Wyoming Chapter  
42% increase in net new regular members

CenturyLink Pioneers – North Dakota Chapter  
39% increase in net new regular members

CenturyLink Pioneers – Minnesota Chapter  
32% increase in net new regular members

## *Excellence in Volunteer Engagement*



### *Reporting Individual Hours in VolunteerNow!*

Verizon Pioneers – Verizon West Chapter  
2,300% increase in individuals reporting individual hours in VolunteerNow!

AT&T Pioneers – Golden Bear Chapter  
1,771% increase in individuals reporting individual hours in VolunteerNow!

Verizon Pioneers – Fort Pitt Chapter  
1,260% increase in individuals reporting individual hours in VolunteerNow!

AT&T Pioneers – Alaska Chapter  
950% increase in individuals reporting individual hours in VolunteerNow!

CenturyLink Pioneers – New Mexico Chapter  
750% increase in individuals reporting individual hours in VolunteerNow!

## *Special Thanks*



*Special thanks to the following 2009-2011 Awards Committee Members:*

**Michelle Turner, AT&T**

**Gloria Pazel, AT&T**

**Bev Cyca, Canada**

**Jan Webster, New Outlook**

**Jackie Gunn, Verizon, Frontier, FairPoint, Telcordia**

## *Congratulations*



*Congratulations to all of our nominees,  
finalists and winners for exemplifying the  
Pioneering spirit!*



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