

Memo

Winner, Business

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SUBJECT: Options for CSR Partnership in the HRM and Recommendations

As you requested, here is an analysis of three options for partnerships in The Uncommon Group's expanded CSR program in the Halifax Regional Municipality, with a recommendation of the best option.

By donating to the right organizations, The Uncommon Group will position itself as a reliable supporter of the HRM. Three organizations suitable to receive The Uncommon Group's support are the Nova Scotia - Gambia Association, the Progress Centre for Early Intervention, and Junior Achievement Nova Scotia. All three non-profit organizations are located in the HRM, the target area of The Uncommon Group's CSR expansion. This report outlines the three options, their connections to The Uncommon Group's values, the benefit they provide to the HRM, and possible creative or non-monetary support options. Information on the three organizations was obtained from official organization websites. After comparing the three options, Junior Achievement Nova Scotia stands out as the organization most in-line with The Uncommon Group's values. The reasons for this choice are found in the "Conclusions and Recommendation" section of this report.

Supporting the NS - Gambia Association Promotes Sustainability and Youth Leadership

The Nova Scotia - Gambia Association (NSGA) is a non-profit group that provides "interactive education" to Gambians on topics such as malaria prevention, gender equity, environmental sustainability and youth leadership (Nova Scotia - Gambia Association, 2011a). Sustainability is a focus of The Uncommon Group, and NSGA works with Halifax organizations to promote environmental sustainability in Gambian communities (Nova Scotia - Gambia Association, 2011b). To do this, the NSGA requires volunteers to perform functions in Nova Scotia, and volunteers who travel to Gambia to work with communities (Nova Scotia - Gambia Association, 2011c). The NSGA also helps to eliminate stereotypes that Gambians hold about Canadians and stereotypes that Nova Scotians hold about Gambians by increasing awareness and facilitating cultural exchanges.

Support that The Uncommon Group can provide to NSGA could include sponsoring a volunteer by covering travel expenses.

Supporting the Progress Centre for Early Intervention Helps Parents and Children in HRM

The Progress Centre for Early Intervention (PCEI) offers workshops, play groups, a toy library, literature and support groups for parents and their developmentally-delayed children (The Progress Centre for Early Intervention, n.d.). The values of The Uncommon Group, specifically those of its retail store Uncommon Kids, have clear connections with the work performed by the PCEI. Uncommon Kids supports a creative, nurturing environment for children in which parents play an active role (The Uncommon Group, n.d.). The Progress Centre for Early Intervention provides resources for parents to help their children reach their potential despite difficulties, which is a great benefit for the HRM.

The Progress Centre for Early Intervention also represents an interesting non-financial donation option. Uncommon Kids can donate toys and learning tools to the Progress Centre for Early Intervention's toy library. The high-quality toys supplied by Uncommon Kids can support creativity and learning in Halifax's next generation.

Supporting Junior Achievement Nova Scotia Fosters Innovation and Entrepreneurship in Youth

Across Canada, Junior Achievement (JA) offers programs for elementary to high-school students that help the students develop skills in money management, entrepreneurship, and other basic business functions (Junior Achievement Canada, 2011). The largest JA program in Nova Scotia is the Company Program, in which groups of high-school students are given the tools to develop and market a product in a start-up business situation (Junior Achievement Nova Scotia, 2011). The activities of JA are clearly aligned with The Uncommon Group's values of uniqueness, creativity and innovation. JA Nova Scotia helps youth develop entrepreneurial skills, creative thinking skills, and leadership skills, which helps develop a new generation of innovators.

Outside of direct financial donations, The Uncommon Group could provide employee volunteers as JA advisors to teach the students specific skills that The Uncommon Group values (innovation and sustainability).

Conclusions and Recommendation

The three options detailed above are all appropriate for The Uncommon Group's CSR program. The Nova Scotia – Gambia Association promotes sustainability, the Progress Centre for Early Intervention promotes creativity and learning, and Junior Achievement Nova Scotia helps students gain entrepreneurial skills. However, NSGA relates more closely to the retail store Carbonstok and its focus on sustainability, while the PCEI relates more closely to Uncommon Kids. The activities of JA reflect The

Uncommon Group as a whole. When considering how each of the options fits with the goals and values of The Uncommon Group, Junior Achievement is the best option.

The Uncommon Group should provide JA with volunteer advisors for the Halifax Company Program. This will allow The Uncommon Group to improve its reputation in the HRM, and provides JA with the volunteers it needs to help foster innovation and entrepreneurship in students. If you have questions regarding these conclusions, or would like more information about the organizations examined, please call or email me.

References

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