

Employees reach Out

Hutchison Whampoa encourages employees to become involved in their community, wherever they are around the globe

By Mark Redvers

WHETHER IT IS HELPING to rebuild an earthquake-damaged school in China, raising awareness of the plight of endangered species, or encouraging elderly people to learn to use the Internet, employees of Hutchison Whampoa Limited worldwide are actively involved in numerous community projects.

Employees around the world are not only known for their hard work and professionalism but are also active ambassadors in their communities, giving back in a huge variety of ways.

The range of HWL projects worldwide is eclectic, to say the least, but all have the common factor of putting back into society; it is particularly rewarding for employees to see, first hand, how their efforts are making a difference to the less fortunate: from taking the initiative to targeting a particular project and becoming actively involved, meeting

the beneficiaries and, wherever possible, witnessing the end result.

HWL encourages employees in their local branches to use their own initiative to provide the best services for people in need. The implication is: think globally, act locally.

Focus on children

Help given to a school in an earthquake-ravaged region of China is a typical example of how HWL staff have rallied round to aid others. Employees at Shanghai Hutchison Whampoa Pharmaceutical were keen to help children affected by the devastating earthquake in Sichuan province three years ago that killed tens of thousands of people, and destroyed homes, offices and schools.

Staff at the Shanghai company targeted a village where the elementary school had all but been destroyed by the



killer quake. Working with the Project Hope charity, employees and the company jointly funded a new, two-storey school building with eight classrooms which has already been completed. Work on a library and a teachers' dormitory is currently underway.

To show gratitude for the help, authorities decided to name the school the Shanghai Hutchison Whampoa Pharmaceutical Limited Hope Elementary School. Around 200 pupils will now be able to attend school in the isolated, dirt-poor township of 2,000 people.

"The project gave us an opportunity to understand the needs and the reality facing people in the rural areas," said one involved staffer. "The disparity left a strong impression on all of us and caused us to think more critically. It taught us that we ought to be grateful for what we have."

Disadvantaged children are the beneficiaries of many Hutchison initiatives – whether it be those effected by disaster, poverty or lack of education. Our Chairman Mr Li Ka-shing is a strong believer in aiding the young so they can reach their full potential. He has often stated that knowledge is the foundation for future innovation and invention.

This is amply demonstrated by the long-standing Dock School programme, under which Hutchison Port Holdings member ports across the globe are encouraged to adopt local schools in need of financial assistance. Contributions to these schools have included funding construction projects, scholarships, school supplies and books, computer purchases and educational activities.

While the Dock Schools are a long-term, ongoing programme, other projects to help youngsters are formulated as new needs arise. A fine example is Watsons Spring Bud Scholarship Project, which provides more than RMB200,000 (USD30,000) to give scholarships to promising, hard-working students from poor families at two

Chinese schools. Key members of the fund-raising and co-ordinating team witnessed first-hand the beneficial effects of their efforts.

"We were glad to talk and interact with the students directly, handing to them brand new stationery and books," recalled one team member. "This charity project enables the poor but hardworking students to continue their studies, which may change life for them and their family in the long run.

"Being involved in the project confirmed the adage that it is, indeed, better to give than to receive. The charity visit gave me courage to face challenges in daily work, and recharged me with optimistic energy."

Keep smiling

Children are also the focus for the efforts of employees of Watsons Malaysia, who are bringing a smile to the faces of less fortunate youngsters – literally. In the past four years, Watsons Malaysia has worked with Ronald McDonald House Charities on the "Give the Gift of Smile" programme, sponsoring the costly corrective surgery for children born with cleft lips and palates. A total of HKD80,000 (USD10,000) was raised, money which paid for eight children to have the life-changing surgery.

"By changing the lives of these children, it will change ours as well," said one of the Watsons Malaysia organisers. "By pro-actively engaging in charity programmes such as 'Give the Gift of Smile', we will also foster a closer tie with our community, build a strong team spirit within our organisation and more importantly, help those children born with cleft lips and palates.

"In the past four years, our teams have been actively supporting children's causes and 'Give the Gift of Smile' will definitely be an ongoing project for us. It is vital that corporate ethics go beyond superficial window dressing, lip



The HWL schemes are incredibly varied but they do have a **common theme** of making **life better** in the communities they live and work in.

service and cheque-book philanthropy which would prove detrimental in the long run to any good intention.”

Staff members also think of creative new ideas that captivate the public. A prime example of that is a scheme dreamed up by staff at Hutchison 3G in Austria, the CliniClowns, whereby seriously ill children are visited by clowns. So far the 65 CliniClowns have made more than 1,000 visits to 37 hospitals in the country, providing much-needed light relief for children with serious medical conditions.

Similarly inventive thinking is applied by HWL staff at the company’s home base in Hong Kong. Initiatives have included encouraging staff to give blood, hotel chefs cooking their signature dishes to raise funds for special-needs children and an invitation to more than 1,000 underprivileged families to watch a world-class volleyball event.

Aiding the unemployed

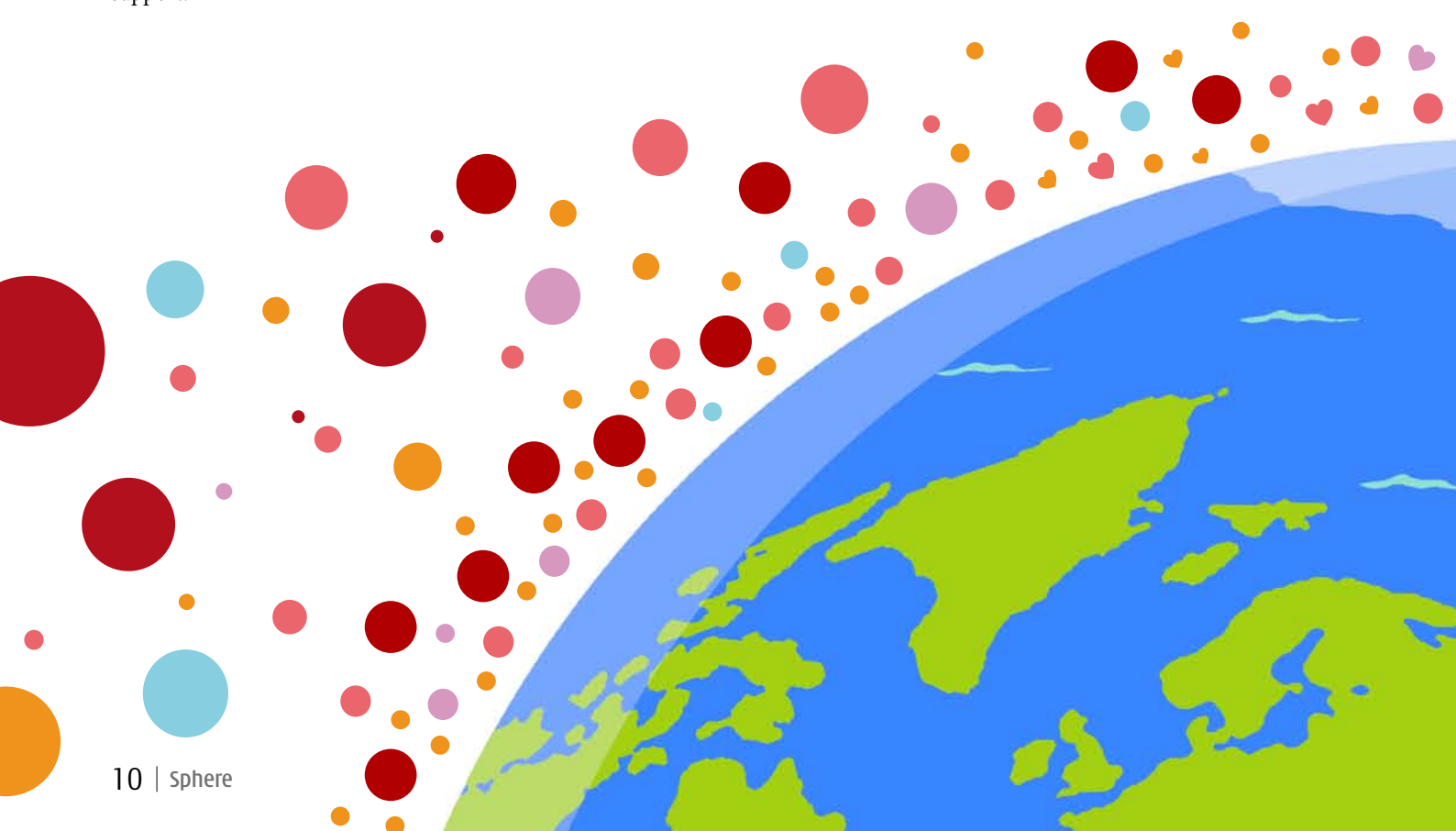
Helping the less fortunate is a recurring theme. Sweden is one of the most affluent countries in the world, yet some people still fall through the cracks in society; staff at the 3 telecom company are volunteering as mentors for unemployed youths, hoping to provide them with guidance and support.

It is a sterling example of employees’ hard work and professionalism in action, as the 3 organiser of the scheme explained: “Hopefully we help these kids in understanding the informal rules that apply to work life. By doing so we like to think that they have an increased chance of getting a job. We also try to motivate them to apply for higher studies.

“By teaching them about all the different roles we have at 3 they might discover an interest they didn’t know they had. Also, as a company, in order to strengthen our human capital, we need to find new ways to obtain and train our future talents. This is a good way to do that.”

Helping the forsaken

Staff at Marionnaud in Portugal came up with a novel way of raising money – and awareness – for the plight of local orphans and animals at risk of extinction. The scheme involved selling plush toy giraffes, with the resulting funds used to help orphans and endangered species; a whimsi-



cal touch was a competition to choose the giraffe's name, Marionilde.

"The Marionnaud Giraffe is a way to protect an animal at risk of extinction, help the Lisbon Zoo and help a charity organisation that supports orphans all at the same time," said one of the participants.

"Our customers loved the idea and our staff are proud of having helped. It is good to be able to support the community and show the bright side of being human. It helps create a better world, especially for the orphans, or children with problematic families, and helped our customers to act for the good of others and be good citizens. Customers often identify with our principles and hence develop a sense of loyalty towards Marionnaud."

Staff were so enthused by the campaign that they have continued to raise funds for orphans, most recently with a Christmas dinner auction, where pieces of art made by different Marionnaud departments were sold to raise funds.

All over the world

Older people were targeted for help by staff of 3 in Ireland when the company launched a competition to find the country's most inspirational "silver surfer", showing that age is no barrier to mastery of the Internet. In Panama, employees of the Panama Ports Company and their families joined hands with Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute to carry out a beach and coastal clean-up with the com-

pany's scuba divers carrying out underwater duties. The great outdoors was also the target of a campaign by Husky Energy in Canada, which has an ongoing partnership with Calgary Zoo to return ferrets to the wild.

In Australia, poor Aborigines in remote regions are being helped by a Vodafone Hutchison Australia initiative. The Red Dust Role Models scheme seeks to improve the health and wellbeing of disadvantaged youths in remote communities. Positive role models from the fields of sport, music, art, health and business take part in tours to these communities, encouraging healthy lifestyle decisions and promoting education. Each year 20 of Vodafone's employees get the opportunity to see the effects for themselves, by participating in a tour.

The HWL schemes are incredibly varied but fundamentally, their underlying theme focuses on making lives better in the communities they live and work in. There is no secret ingredient in giving back to society and making the everyday lives of individuals better than yesterday. The key component simply is employees' true sincerity coming from within, not out of duty, but from their hearts. Their experiences of witnessing people who are struggling, galvanises them into taking action that helps improve the lives of society's less advantaged individuals – it may be an idea that occurs on the spur of the moment, yet it can have an impact that will last a lifetime. 