

Media Contacts:

Jackie Albano, CECP

jalbano@cecp.co

646-863-1926

<http://cecp.co>

Jonathan Liu, The Conference Board

jonathan.liu@conferenceboard.org

212-339-0257

<http://conferenceboard.org>

2017 Giving in Numbers Survey Launches

Survey data used by CSR professionals to make data-driven decisions in shaping societal engagement programs

February 9, 2017 New York, NY—[CECP](#), in association with [The Conference Board](#), announced the launch of the 16th annual Giving in Numbers survey. The largest and most robust of its kind, the survey is open through March 31, 2017 to companies with revenue of US \$2 billion or more, including companies not yet affiliated with CECP or The Conference Board. CECP: The CEO Force for Good is a [coalition](#) of more than 200 of the world's largest companies that represent \$7 trillion in revenues, \$18.6 billion in societal investment, and 13 million employees.

"The world's leading companies rely on data to make better business decisions, and social strategy is no different," said Daryl Brewster, CEO, CECP. "CECP understands how essential it is for corporate citizenship professionals to track and measure their work, and ultimately translate those data insights into programs that address real community issues."

"The Conference Board is delighted to continue to join forces with CECP to identify data-driven trends in corporate societal giving," said Jonathan Spector, CEO, The Conference Board. "The Giving in Numbers data provide a clear snapshot of corporate priorities in grant-making and other corporate social responsibility initiatives, helping companies strategize how best to achieve maximum social impact with their initiatives."

Last year, [272 companies](#), including 62 of the top 100 companies in the Fortune 500, submitted data on their programs, allowing CECP to coalesce thousands of data points into the ultimate tool for corporate giving officers. Data gathered from the world's largest companies on a range of areas including **cash and non-cash contributions, cause areas of allocation, and employee and stakeholder engagement**, are used to develop the seminal yearly report [Giving in Numbers](#), published by CECP, in association with The Conference Board. Data also inform a range of [infographics](#), [blog posts](#), and [media articles](#).

Sourced from more than 11 years of proprietary survey data, as well as its work with 200+ companies, hundreds of monthly discussions, and conversations with leading experts and on-the-ground practitioners, CECP has identified several **emerging trends**:

PURPOSE DRIVEN: While “purpose” was the buzzword of the year—media mentions of “purpose-driven” increased more than eight-fold over the past year—leading companies are taking it from platitudes to robust business strategies. Purpose is the path to reaching vital stakeholders, providing the rallying cry to unite under a common theme. Employees who take part in the companies’ social programs are more “purpose oriented”, and [report higher fulfilment through work](#) and are [more likely to be in leadership positions](#), and are [less likely to leave the company](#). And purpose-oriented staff serving as advocates connect with those less engaged.

LONG-TERM THINKING: The short-term mindset remains dominant, but 86% of CECF CEOs stated that they are too short-term oriented (2016, Board of Boards live-polling results). Strategic investors and leading companies agree that the time is now to begin to shift capital to companies committed to a sustainable future. [BlackRock](#), [Vanguard](#), [Common Sense Corporate Governance Principles](#), and others are calling for companies to share long-term plans, and integrate environmental, social, and governance (ESG) issues into investment decisions, with specific ESG financial impact metrics.

ADVOCACY AS STRATEGY: According to a [Public Affairs Council](#) study, pressure to engage on social issues in the last three years has increased for 60% of companies. In areas such as workforce, environment, and diversity and inclusion, leading companies such as [AT&T](#), [Target](#), and [Patagonia](#) are taking brave steps, with CEOs playing statesman-like roles on issues ranging from race relations to living wages and supporting environmental organizations.

LEVERAGING ASSETS: CECF data show that 91% of companies are “doing good” that is not counted through current measurement methods. From impact investing, to data, to intellectual property, to brand and logistics, leading companies are solving societal challenges by leveraging their many skills and assets. For example, [Anthem](#) uses community-level health data to identify needs and target solutions; [Nielsen’s Data for Good](#) works with the World Food Programme to track hunger in hard- to-reach communities and deliver aid; and, through impact investing, Campbell Soup acquired Plum Organics to meet consumer demand ([Investing with Purpose](#); CECF, with support from Prudential).

GLOBAL CHALLENGES, GLOBAL COLLABORATION: While many governments are looking inward, leading global companies are connecting their core business strategy to solutions in the areas of poverty, health, economy, climate, and more. CECF’s [Giving Around the Globe](#) report shows that North American companies determine where to invest in support of ESG internationally based on various factors, including employee footprint, areas of need, engagement, competitive advantage, and growth opportunities. Companies understand the importance of high-impact collaborations to find solutions, such as the [We Mean Business](#) initiative, which signed on 400 companies making carbon reduction pledges; the [White House Call to Action](#) on the global refugee crisis, which signed on 51 companies including Citigroup and Google; and, the [CDC Foundation](#), which recruited companies such as 3M and Merck to help stem the spread of the Zika virus.

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT 2.0: Companies are enhancing employee engagement through efforts that are more personal, flexible, targeted, and peer-based. Alongside traditional volunteer initiatives, innovative companies are also making room for employees to live their passions through work, and leveraging human resources and demographic data to personalize engagement offerings. According to a poll conducted by CECF among its affiliated CEOs, the greatest benefit to expanding societal engagement is strengthening human capital (63%, up 9% YOY). The employee volunteer rate, as captured through [CECF data](#), has risen 10 percentage points over the last 8 years.

Since 2001, the Giving in Numbers Survey has collected data on corporate social strategy programs globally to provide professionals with the benchmarking and reporting tools necessary for making data-driven decisions about their company’s social strategy. Results of the survey will be available at [the CECF Summit](#), May 23-24, 2017, and at The Conference Board Strategic Community Investment Symposium (fall 2017).

Note to Editors: CECF can coordinate interviews with Daryl Brewster, CEO, and Carmen Perez, Director, Data Insights, CECF are available for comment on the Giving in Numbers survey and trends. Please contact Jackie Albano, jalbano@cecf.co, 646-863-1926 to arrange interviews.

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About CECF: The CEO Force for Good

CECF is a CEO led coalition that believes that a company's social strategy — how it engages with key stakeholders including employees, communities, investors, and customers — determines company success. Founded in 1999 by actor and philanthropist Paul Newman and other business leaders to create a better world through business, CECF has grown to a movement of more than 200 of the world's largest companies that represent \$7 trillion in revenues, \$18.6 billion in societal investment, 13 million employees, and \$15 trillion in assets under management. CECF helps companies transform their social strategy by providing customized connections and networking, counsel and support, benchmarking and trends, and awareness building and recognition. For more information, visit <http://cecf.co>.

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