

Cutting costs

Here are some tips on how to save on corporate volunteer projects from the experts featured in the story:

► **Work with an agency such as the Metro Atlanta Corporate Volunteer Council, Hands On Atlanta or Corporate Community Outsourcing.** They can steer your company toward projects that are needed in our community, so your efforts will go where they are best-suited. Such agencies will gladly walk you through your budget, big or small, line by line, to help you save money, manage volunteers, and conduct annual and strategic planning. These organizations also have connections to outlets such as the Atlanta Community ToolBank, where your company can rent tools at a low cost.

► **Team up with another company or volunteer for their budgeted**

efforts. Again, a liaison organization can pair you. Projects range from stuffing backpacks for back-to-schoolers or making bookmarks for the elderly, to building an entire playground or repainting a school in an underserved part of town. The Coca-Cola Co. and Delta Air Lines Inc. are well-known for pairing their volunteers, said Elizabeth Feichter of Corporate Community Outsourcing. "They get double the money and double the work done."

► **Consider options that cost no money, such as a "Hands-on Day" spent picking up trash.** The only cost is the time off work. If every-one volunteers to pitch in on a week-end, there is no cost whatsoever.

- **Save money on T-shirts** by printing one logo and wearing it to each event.
- **Go bargain-hunting** for giveaway prizes at dollar stores and warehouse marts.
- **Ask local businesses** to donate giveaway prizes.
- **Ask employees to bring** their own gloves, shovels, etc., to events.
- **Have fun.** Volunteering is a way to meet new people, particularly if you are new to Atlanta. Tracy Hoover of Hands On Atlanta said that volunteerism is a way of life here. "Service is a part of being an Atlantan."

— Deborah Held Maslia