



# Time Warner

## Developing the Next Generation of Leaders

Time Warner is committed to developing the next generation of leaders from among diverse and underserved youth. A major emphasis of Time Warner's funding is on afterschool programs that prepare teens for college and help them build skills in media and the arts. In 2005, Time Warner funded 23 community-based organizations in New York City and a few select national organizations. The company also is working to raise awareness among the public and within the company about the importance of preparing youth for college.

Although these focused efforts are relatively new for the company, the internal communications efforts are yielding positive results in three ways.

First, key executives at the corporate office and divisions have a better understanding of the contributions made by afterschool programs.

Second, the Office of Corporate Responsibility (which has primary responsibility for the corporate philanthropy work) has formed partnerships with other divisions of the company to jointly fund local programs in which those divisions are located (e.g., HBO in Los Angeles). These partnerships have generated a great deal of goodwill and encourage the divisions to see the Corporate Responsibility team as a resource for advice on corporate giving.

Third, the company is developing new ways to involve employees in afterschool programs, including nonprofit board training and mentoring.

### ■ Background

Time Warner has a long history of support for programs that provide youth with educational opportunities, especially around literacy, media, the arts and technology. In 2003,

the company reorganized its philanthropy efforts and created the Office of Corporate Responsibility with a new vice president to oversee the work. The vice president for corporate responsibility and the company's CEO and executive vice president are the primary decisionmakers for the philanthropic agenda, which is funded as a line item in the corporate budget.

The company also decided to reorganize its giving strategy to focus on college preparation and access and the creative and media arts for middle and high school youth. The already-crowded school day makes it difficult for youth to be involved in these activities during the day, so the company decided it could have a greater impact by focusing on the excellent programs offered during the afterschool hours.

### ■ Afterschool Activities

Time Warner has two primary strategies for implementing its afterschool work. Internally, it is getting employees more informed about and involved in afterschool programs. To that end, it has placed a feature on corporate philanthropy in an in-house publication that goes to all employees, and there are regular bulletins on the company's intranet system.

Office of Corporate Responsibility Vice President Lisa Quiroz and her staff routinely make special presentations to company staff, especially among top executives, to keep them informed and ensure companywide support for their efforts.

The company also includes questions on employee surveys about what people know about the company's philanthropic efforts to both emphasize the work's importance and measure its effects. And, as mentioned above, the company is creating new volunteer opportunities for employees.

Externally, the company is moving forward with its support of local and national programs:

1. Expand youth arts funding beyond media, such as filmmaking, to include performing arts.
2. Implement the efforts around college preparation and access. The company had no prior experience in this arena, so staff have devoted time to researching existing programs, meeting with outside experts, and consulting other companies and foundations with experience in this area.
3. Launch the national work around college preparation and access to include support for research and advocacy organizations who are tackling the difficult issue of the achievement gap.
4. Assess college preparation and arts grantees. Time Warner contracted with a nationally recognized research firm to assess the grantees' progress toward their goals.

## ■ Before You Begin

Persuading people in your company that afterschool programs are a worthwhile investment is vital to the success of your efforts, even to people who don't directly make decisions that affect that work. Consider some of these lessons from Time Warner as you formulate your own internal communications strategies.

- **How you say it is as important as what you say.** The phrase "afterschool programs" often means different things to different people. As they began their internal outreach, the Corporate Responsibility staff

began to realize that "afterschool" wasn't a concept people readily grasped because afterschool activities and programs can vary greatly and don't have a unifying or generic symbol to represent them, as "education" is represented by a school, for example. Therefore, the Corporate Responsibility staff had to reframe the way they presented their information to focus on people's experiences with community programs during the time after school. Staff found that employees understood the idea of afterschool better when it was related to what their own children did (or what the employee did as a young person).

- **Offer opportunities for hands-on involvement.** Time Warner staff also learned that executives and other employees want to be personally involved in the process for selecting grantees. For example, staff asked an editor from *Time* magazine to review two or three grant proposals; he agreed and asked to read all 15. For each of the large grant programs, staff asked a number of executives to be part of the proposal review meeting to share their input about the strengths and challenges of potential nonprofit partners. Visits to programs your company sponsors also can provide firsthand proof of what afterschool programs do, how effective they are, and how much they matter to the young people and communities they serve. Time Warner also has developed a speaker series to bring nonprofit leaders into the company to address employees about current social issues such as education equity and child advocacy.

## About Time Warner

For more information on Time Warner's investments in supporting afterschool programs, go to [www.timewarner.com](http://www.timewarner.com).

## About Corporate Voices for Working Families

Corporate Voices for Working Families is the leading national business membership organization representing the private sector on public and corporate policy issues involving working families. A nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, we improve the lives of working families by developing and advancing innovative policies that reflect collaboration among the private sector, government and other stakeholders.

## Find Out More

Publications, research studies and toolkits on a host of workforce readiness, flexibility, family economic stability, and work and family balance issues are available on the Corporate Voices Web site at [www.corporatevoices.org](http://www.corporatevoices.org).

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