Community service takes us beyond our success in courtrooms and boardrooms around the world, helping Latham & Watkins personnel unite to give the gifts of time, talent and passion to our communities.

Latham & Watkins attorneys, paralegals and staff devote significant time to a diverse array of worthy causes. From firmwide projects that comprise multiple offices to the individual contributions of members of the Latham family, these deeds impact our communities in enduring ways. We are privileged to highlight some of 2007’s many community service activities made possible by our generous and civic-minded personnel.

Building and Beautifying Our Neighborhoods

Dedication and a little “elbow grease” go a long way toward building communities, in both the figurative and literal sense. From picking up a hammer to build homes for the poor to picking up trash to beautify the city, we work hard to build and strengthen our communities.

Putting both their time and talent to work, Latham & Watkins volunteers in Los Angeles participate in Big Sunday, an annual weekend event consisting of more than 300 different nonprofit service projects aimed at beautifying and improving the city and its surrounding communities. Latham participants helped with a variety of projects, which ranged from planting trees downtown and washing graffiti off buildings to picking up trash and renovating playgrounds, homes and community centers.

Since its inception in 2002, the award-winning Buildable Hours initiative has made it possible for deserving, low-income families to fulfill their lifelong dreams of owning a home. Co-founded by a Latham partner, Buildable Hours, Inc. is a nonprofit organization of law firms committing fiscal resources and manpower to build homes with local Habitat for Humanity groups. This community service project has expanded to include 24 law firms in Washington, D.C., as well as nationally, with Latham Buildable Hours teams building homes in cities across the United States. The miracle of bringing a new home to a family is unforgettable. As one member of Latham’s past build teams has said, “You’re on the site working, you have little kids from the family that will live in the house, they’re all excited and running around and pointing out where their rooms are going to be. You can imagine the family sitting down to dinner in the kitchen you helped build.”

Supporting Our Communities

Summer associates Natasha Rieger in Los Angeles and Stacey Van Belleghem and Nabeel Yousef in Washington, D.C. help build homes for deserving families through Buildable Hours.
From charity runs up the stairs of skyscrapers to bowling tournaments and 100-mile endurance runs, we use our athletic abilities to aid important causes.

More than 60 Latham & Watkins athletes in Los Angeles raced up the 75 floors to the top of L.A.’s US Bank Building in the Ketchum-Downtown YMCA Stair Climb to the Top to raise money for community programs such as after-school tutoring, teen leadership development and senior fitness. This event, in which three Latham teams ranked among the top 16 in the 2007 women’s competition, originated more than a dozen years ago by a retired Latham partner whose exercise regime regularly included jogging the stairs of this office building. In another charity climb, Latham personnel in Chicago left the elevators behind and ran up the 2,109 steps of the 103-story Sears Tower to benefit the Damon Runyon Cancer Research Foundation in the Go Vertical Chicago race, the longest indoor vertical stair climb in the world.

Rolling strikes on the bowling lanes, Latham personnel in Washington, D.C. participated in a tournament to benefit the Appleseed Foundation, a nonprofit organization bringing together volunteers from the legal, business, and academic professions to devise structural solutions to problems in such areas as education, financial access and healthcare. Community-minded bowlers also “spared” no effort for the Bowling for Justice Tournament, where Latham participants bowled to benefit the Asian Pacific American Legal Resource Center. Our D.C. personnel also participated in the innovative softball tournament fundraiser Lawyers Pitch In (an event originally founded by a Latham associate) to benefit the Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless.

Channeling the endurance of the San Francisco Giants baseball team, Latham athletes ran around AT&T Park overlooking the San Francisco Bay in the Plate to Plate 5K Run/Walk to raise money for Project Open Hand, which provides food to people facing life-threatening illnesses. One of our ultramarathoner staff members is training for the Kettle Moraine 100 Mile Endurance Run in Wisconsin and raising donations for the Keep A Child Alive organization that provides necessary medicine and support services to children and families in Africa living with HIV. In support of his efforts, our D.C. office held a fundraiser to raise donations for the organization. The office also fielded a 60-person Latham team for the Fannie Mae Walk for the Homeless, where participants walked a 5K walkathon on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. to raise awareness and money for homeless organizations.

We are also proud to have Latham athletes compete in the Attorneys Have Heart Walk for the American Heart Association in D.C., the AIDS Walk Los Angeles and the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation’s Walk to Cure Diabetes, in which more than 70 participants and guests from our New York and New Jersey offices marked their 12th year of participation in 2007 by breaking team records for attendance and fundraising. In addition, our yearly Run for Justice team, which participates in a 10K run/walk in support of Public Counsel in Los Angeles, received a 1st place trophy in 2007 for “outstanding team participation” and the Karen Paull Cup for the amount of money raised overall by a team.

Some of the more than 70 attorneys, staff and family members from our New York and New Jersey offices who participated in the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation’s Walk to Cure Diabetes.

60-person Latham team for the Fannie Mae Walk for the Homeless, where participants walked a 5K walkathon on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. to raise awareness and money for homeless organizations.

Zeynep Gieseke, John Ganz, Josh Lopatin, Karen Morris and Nathan Nally from our Chicago office celebrate their charity climb to the top of the 103-story Sears Tower.
Empowering Young People

Creating learning opportunities for young people in under-served communities is an important but challenging goal. To further this effort we work with school programs dedicated to preparing students for success.

As experienced lawyers and mentors, Latham & Watkins attorneys help teach students basic concepts of law and civil rights through several programs. For instance, lawyers in our Chicago office team up with the Constitutional Rights Foundation Chicago to help elementary school children understand the US Constitution and legal system through the Lawyers in the Classroom project. Using their real life legal experiences as examples, Latham volunteers help develop the children's critical thinking skills and serve as positive adult role models.

Our Chicago office also partnered with the National Teacher's Academy to host seventh and eighth grade students in a day-long Immersive Learning Program called Exchange City. The students created and operated a simulated city, while the Latham team served as “business consultants” to help the students make laws, run financial institutions, and manage newspapers, retail shops, a post office, broadcast company, radio station, snack shop and even City Hall. In this way, Latham personnel helped to reinforce the economic, democratic and entrepreneurial ideas of real-life business and governmental roles and responsibilities.

To teach under-served children in New York City more about the legal process, Latham has worked with the Roberto Clemente Middle School for several years. Our volunteer attorneys and summer associates helped create a three-year curriculum for the school's law program, coached its annual mock trial program and hosted students at our office for workshops and critical thinking exercises. Out of gratitude for our years of ongoing support and the direct role we have played in designing their curriculum, the school has renamed their three-year law course the “Latham & Watkins Legal Studies Academy.”

Recognizing that education does not stop at the classroom door, we also help students from disadvantaged backgrounds take positive steps to enter the business world. For example, our Los Angeles offices hosts yearly interns to help our library staff in a corporate work study program offered by Verbum Dei High School, an all boy's school located in South Central Los Angeles. Our New York office hosted a luncheon and resume preparation workshop for tenth grade girls from the Urban Assembly’s School of Business for Young Women, which is dedicated to preparing students from under-resourced neighborhoods for success in four-year colleges.

Through a multi-office initiative for youth development, Latham personnel from our San Francisco, New Jersey, New York and Chicago offices support the All Stars Project, an educational and performing arts program for minority young people that sponsors community and experimental theater, develops leadership training and pursues volunteer initiatives that build and strengthen communities. Latham personnel actively participate in the program by leading workshops, conducting mock job interviews, employing students through summer job programs, holding trial advocacy workshops and helping students hone their public speaking and presentation skills.
During the holiday season, we celebrate in many ways, including by giving back to our communities and sharing the warmth of the season.

Our Hong Kong office celebrated the 2007 winter holidays with a visit to the Tai Tung Pui home for the mentally disabled, delivering holiday presents from Latham & Watkins personnel. The residents were ecstatic about the visit and the personally delivered gifts, including much appreciated sweaters and chocolates. Meanwhile, Latham personnel in Chicago collected gloves, hats, coats and books for the Chicago Bar Foundation’s Yearly Seasonal Drive, as well as toys and monetary donations (which were used to purchase bicycles, sleds and ice skates) for Catholic Charities Christmas Toy Drive.

Our London attorneys, paralegals and staff collected more than 20 boxes filled with food, clothes, toiletries, stationery, games and other goodies to fulfill a “wish list” for the Crisis organization in the UK. With its Crisis Open Christmas project, the organization opens centers across London offering homeless and vulnerably housed people companionship, access to essential services, learning opportunities and entertainment programs. In Washington, D.C., members of the Latham community held a holiday lunch raffle to benefit Miriam’s Kitchen, a local organization that provides food, clothing, shelter and training to the homeless community. In New York, Latham personnel ran an office food drive with the goal of donating more than 100 pounds of food to City Harvest, the world’s first, and New York City’s only, food rescue program, and provided in excess of 200 gifts to under-privileged children through the charity New York Cares.

The holidays were made a little brighter for 80 under-privileged pre-school children enrolled in daycare and learning centers through the “Head Start” Holiday Gift Program affiliated with the San Francisco Bar Association. Our San Francisco office annually adopts four classrooms of children and works with the teachers to determine the needs of each child. Latham personnel bought educational toys, clothing, bicycles, helmets and kneepads for the children, as well as classroom supplies for the teachers. Additionally, our Orange County personnel helped one very needy group during the holiday season through the SOS Adopt-A-Family Program, partnering with a client through our Women Enriching Business (WEB) initiative to provide more than 75 presents for an under-privileged family of 14. We also “adopted” another family in Silicon Valley, raising several thousand dollars in cash for their expenses as well as gifts of toys, clothing, food baskets, towels and beautiful homemade quilts for each of the children.

In San Diego, Latham personnel supported the local organization Operation Interdependence, which sends civilian rations to the service men and women engaged in military activities abroad. Latham joined forces with other local businesses in creating “Operation Thanksgiving” and raised thousands of dollars to provide more than 3,000 US soldiers with holiday care packages and personally signed “thank you” cards.

Simon Shek, Beau Lefler, Rony Lam, Iris Yim and Sonia Chan from our Hong Kong office receive a thank-you card from a representative of the Tai Tung Pui home for the disabled after bringing gifts for its residents.

In Orange County, Kristina Bauer and Jen Ward (first and third from left) partner with clients from Deloitte to prepare donations for the SOS-Adopt-A-Family Program.
Helping Those in Need

Throughout the year and across our offices, we participate in a wide range of activities to help those in need, including food and clothing drives, fundraisers and assisting the disabled and homeless.

In the aftermath of the southern California wildfires which devastated parts of San Diego, attorneys, paralegals and staff from across our firm helped raise funds for two organizations which played key roles in local recovery — the San Diego City Fire Fighters Local 145 and the San Diego Foundation. The firm matched all contributions, making a significant donation to each organization as well. Also in San Diego, Latham & Watkins personnel participated in a US nationwide Quilt Pink 2007 event to benefit the Susan G. Komen for the Cure organization. Participants stitched together blocks of a beautiful six-by-seven foot quilt which was raffled off to raise money to fight breast cancer.

Several Latham offices also hold fundraisers for various charities through ever-popular Jeans Days, where participants contribute to a selected charity in exchange for the right to wear jeans in the office on a designated day. Our Jeans Days have successfully raised money for many causes, including the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, Multiple Sclerosis organizations, the American Cancer Society, AIDS organizations, the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation and the American Lung Association. In one effort of particular note, our New Jersey office held a Jeans Day in memory of our dear friend and colleague Juli Marshall, a partner in our Chicago office who passed away. Funds were raised in support of K.I.D.S. (Kids in Disaster Situations) Alliance, an organization Juli helped to create in the wake of Hurricane Katrina to address the mental health needs of children subjected to traumatic events.

Helping low-income men and women re-enter the workforce is an endeavor shared by several of our offices. Through our business clothing drives, more than 200 articles of work clothing have been donated through the Capitol PurSuit Drive in Washington, D.C. alone. In Silicon Valley, we participated in a suit drive to benefit Career Closet and A Miner Miracle, organizations that provide business-appropriate clothing to low-income individuals seeking employment. Our New York personnel hosted a similar clothing drive to benefit Career Gear and Dress for Success, as well as providing job training to underprivileged individuals trying to establish themselves as administrative professionals through the Grace Institute secretarial intern program.

Another staple of our community service efforts includes regular food donations by various offices. Extra food from Latham-hosted meetings and events is regularly donated to the D.C. Central Kitchen and the Embry Rucker Community Shelter in Northern Virginia. Our Chicago personnel raise funds for the Greater Chicago Food Depository, and the attorneys, paralegals and staff in our New Jersey office hold a food drive for the St. John’s Soup Kitchen. Latham personnel in Orange County aren’t afraid to get their hands dirty — literally — by heading out to the orchards to pick and pack fruits and vegetables for delivery to the Second Harvest Food Bank, a wonderful organization also supported through the efforts of our Silicon Valley personnel.
Some of the 60 Latham & Watkins athletes in Los Angeles who raced up the 75 floors of the US Bank Building in the Ketchum-Downtown YMCA Stair Climb to the Top.

Wendy Wilkins (third from left) presents individual contributions and a firm matching donation to executives from the San Diego Foundation, whose After-The-Fires Fund helps survivors of the 2007 San Diego Wildfires.