

Markel's Matching Gift program

Supporting the causes that are important to Markel's employees



Inspired by the Markel Style, a lot of the charitable giving at Markel is done by our employees, who are eager to give back to their communities through volunteering and donating to charitable causes.

Many employees—over 700 in the US and Bermuda in 2020, for example—increase their generosity by leveraging the Markel Matching Gift program. The program adds a company match to an employee's donations to qualifying charitable organizations. Markel's Matching Gift program varies by country. In the US, for instance, Markel offers a 3:1 matching gift program. That means if a US employee gives \$500 to an eligible charity, Markel will donate \$1,500—triple the original amount—to the same charity.

The following stories feature Markel employees who are passionately involved with a charity and use the Matching Gift program to extend their contributions.



Markel Bermuda employee's two causes

Elizabeth Stewart, Markel's Senior Director, RM Excess Liability, is known for dedicating her free time to volunteering. Empowered by her mother's Alzheimer's diagnosis, she founded Action on Alzheimer's & Dementia (AAD) to spread awareness in Bermuda about dementia as well as provide resources and emotional support to those affected by the disease.

“To say caring for someone with dementia is the hardest thing you will ever do is an understatement,” said Stewart, who is also President of AAD. “It is devastating on so many levels that you really can't explain it unless you have lived it.”

AAD supports people impacted by dementia by offering monthly support group meetings for family members and home caregivers, an activities program featuring music, games and crafts, and access to an occupational therapist specializing in dementia care. In addition, AAD focuses on increasing public awareness of dementia through its annual Dementia Awareness Week and by speaking with government ministers in Bermuda to improve provisions for the community and create a national dementia strategy.

Along with her work at AAD, Stewart volunteers for the Bermuda Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA). She spends at least every other day at the SPCA helping carry out its mission of promoting kindness to animals.

“I started volunteering for the SPCA as a dog walker about three years ago. I live very close to the SPCA and used to see the walkers coming past, so I put up my hand to help,” Stewart recalled.

A four-week COVID-19 lockdown in 2020 in Bermuda didn't stop Stewart's commitment to the SPCA. With travel limited to 1.5 kilometers (0.93 miles) from her house and the SPCA partially open, Stewart continued walking dogs.

“Because the SPCA was so close to my house, I spent about eight or nine weeks walking the dogs for four hours each day, which equated to nine-to-ten miles a day,” she noted.

Stewart is as equally generous with her financial support to the SPCA as she is with volunteering. She used her entire matching gifts dollar limit in 2020 to help the SPCA with operating costs and maintenance. For her unwavering commitment, Stewart was named the Bermuda SPCA Volunteer of the Year in 2020.

Markel International reaches out to the elderly

For the last ten years, Batul Rajabali, Markel International's (MINT) Database & Applications Support Analyst, has volunteered for



Re-engage, a London-based organization addressing social isolation and loneliness among older people. Her dedication to Re-engage led to Markel supporting the charity.

“Re-engage was named MINT's Charity of the Year in 2018 and 2019, and Markel has continued to support the charity ever since,” recalled Rajabali. “Our team has done charity events for Re-engage and used the matching gifts program to the organization's benefit.”

Prior to COVID-19, the charity held monthly tea parties, which provided social interactions for older people, and volunteers drove attendees to and from the events.

MINT even hosted a tea party at its London office in December 2019. When COVID-19 lockdowns

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started in the UK, however, volunteers like Rajabali were unable to help with Re-engage's tea parties. In response, MINT donated £22,850 to the organization at the end of 2020 to support Re-engage's new telephone service for the elderly—"call companions."

The service arranges for volunteers to chat with the elderly during the pandemic to combat the isolation and loneliness older people feel during the lockdown. Volunteers call their matched person two to four times a month to see how they're doing and provide comfort when they feel alone.

"Call companions is important at a time when older people may feel more vulnerable, especially those with few family members or friends to speak with," explained Rajabali.

Supporting organizations like Re-engage means a lot to MINT employees. In 2020, 128 employees gave their year-end "thank you" gift to charitable causes, which led to an employee gift of £12,800 to Re-engage and three other charities. Over the past year, MINT has donated £228,308 to charitable causes, which includes £127,963 from the Markel Matching Gifts program.

"The matching gifts program is another generous option that Markel gives its employees," said Rajabali. "It is a great program to take advantage of to double the money you raise for your charity."

Rosemont and Chicago offices engage in friendly competition for Make-A-Wish



The Make-A-Wish Foundation has been the preferred charity for Markel's Rosemont and Chicago offices since 2010. During that time, the offices have raised more than \$400,000 for Make-A-Wish and granted 51 wishes. Wish kids have enjoyed Disney World trips, swimming with dolphins in Florida, and other gifts through the offices' fundraising efforts.

Part of the offices' fundraising for Make-A-Wish includes some friendly competition. Each year, Rosemont and Chicago employees compete to determine which office can raise the most money. The competition includes an activity like softball, bowling, or the Markel Olympics (i.e., events like water balloon toss and three-legged races). For the past five years, a wish kid and their family have attended the event and participated in the fun activity. Many attending parents have complimented Markel on how nice it is to have a day of fun and see a smile on their child's face.

"Each year, Rosemont and Chicago employees are asked if we should continue fundraising for Make-A-Wish, and the answer is a resounding 'yes'," said

Tim Allen, Markel's Director, Actuarial, US and lead volunteer for the Rosemont office. "We at Markel are pleased to be recognized by Make-A-Wish as one of their largest donors in the Chicago area. The partnership between Markel and Make-A-Wish benefits both sides as our employees see first-hand the struggles wish kids and their families go through."

Despite COVID-19 canceling the 2020 fundraising competition, the Markel match made a significant impact on the amount donated to Make-A-Wish and helping kids' wishes come true. In 2020,



employees at the Rosemont and Chicago offices donated \$6,873 to Make-A-Wish, and the Markel match contributed \$17,649. The donations helped grant wishes to three kids.

"It is awe inspiring to see the amount of money donated each year by employees and matched by Markel," Allen shared. "Our employees see how their donation, together with Markel's match, has such an impact on the wish kids and their families."

Empowering our employees to give back

No matter the cause, Markel encourages all employees to use the Matching Gift program to support their communities and charitable giving.

"Markel's commitment to increasing the impact of employee donations is fantastic," said Henry Gardener, Director, Legal, Regulatory & Compliance at MINT. **"It helps our employees around the globe and has an even bigger impact in how we contribute to our communities."**