



## Charities Need Our Time



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Do philanthropists consider their time as valuable as their money? Charities clearly require monetary donations to operate, but they also desperately need volunteers to leverage their efforts. I would argue that serving on boards & committees, helping fund raise, volunteering at special events, and simply helping with day to day activities are equally as important as the donations most of us can give.

My wife, Melissa, and I both have ties to breast cancer. Her mother and my grandmother are survivors. So, in 2003, we began volunteering with the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation. Over the years, we have served in multiple capacities from picking up trash at Race for the Cure to Board President for the San Antonio affiliate. We have also made monetary donations, but I can easily say that the time we have given has been more impactful. Volunteering with Komen has been incredibly rewarding. I have truly taken more away than I have given. We have formed lifelong friendships, gained invaluable leadership experience and grown personally more than we ever would have expected. We also gained a better understanding of the needs in San Antonio and have gotten to interact with those impacted by breast cancer. Most importantly, we feel like we have made a difference. In 2006 and 2013 respectively, Melissa's mother and my grandmother were diagnosed again with breast cancer. Thankfully, both have since won their battles and are cancer free. In each case, when we received the news, we were grateful for our relationship with Komen. It has also made me grateful to work for a firm where community service is a core component of our culture.

I think almost everyone can find a cause that they have a connection to. The key is to be passionate about the volunteer work you are doing. If you have passion, you will not only do a great job, you will enjoy the time you give. I will concede that it is not always easy for busy professionals to commit time to philanthropic interests. As we have families and advance in our careers, our time becomes that much more precious. But it does not take a lot of time to have a big impact. A lot of boards even meet over lunch. So, when you are thinking about supporting a charity, consider giving your time as well as your donation.