



Domino's Pizza CEO
David Brandon

CEOs WHO SHINE

For these four philanthropic CEOs, giving back means everything from chairing capital campaigns to fixing a first-rate peanut butter and jelly sandwich.

By Nancy Crotti

Running a major corporation in these dicey economic times is no easy task. There are shareholders to satisfy, employees to protect, customers to keep happy and a bottom line to consider. Who has time left over for charity? As it turns out, many top executives do, and it's not just about writing checks or swooping down on a homeless shelter to serve soup once a year.

Some CEOs devote countless hours to their charities of choice, not only in fundraising efforts but also by lending their leadership expertise, which can be invaluable to a nonprofit. We surveyed the ranks and found four CEOs who make philanthropy a focus in both their personal lives and their corporate ethos.

DAVID BRANDON

COMPANY: Domino's Pizza

CHARITIES: C.S. Mott Children's Hospital, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, The Parade Company

David Brandon sums up his philanthropic ideals in three words: Do good stuff. That's the mission of the foundation that Brandon, CEO of Domino's Pizza, started with his family 25 years ago.

Since then, the foundation has done a lot of good, especially for sick children—a cause that hits close to home for Brandon and his wife, Jan. When their twin sons, Nick and Chris, were born with a rare blood disorder 28 years ago, they were rushed to C.S. Mott

Photo: Joe Vaughn

Children's Hospital at the University of Michigan, where a resident was familiar with the disorder. "The minute they unloaded the boys, he knew exactly what it was. He knew exactly what to do," Brandon recalls.

The treatment saved the boys' lives, so when Brandon heard that the university wanted to build a new women's and children's hospital, he was anxious to get involved. He and Jan, along with recently retired Michigan Wolverines football coach Lloyd Carr and his wife, Laurie, are co-chairing the hospital's \$75 million capital campaign. The Brandons donated \$2 million, and the neonatal intensive care unit will be named for their now-healthy sons.

"Having [Brandon] on your team gives you an advantage right off the bat," says Tammi Carr, senior major gift officer for the hospital. "He always makes himself available to us. I get e-mails from the man at 1 a.m. I don't think he ever stops working."

"He is the real deal," adds Grant Teaff, executive director of the American Football Coaches Association and Foundation, which

gave Brandon its CEO Coach of the Year Award in 2007 in recognition of his leadership. "He is very astute in his leadership, but he is a real person who cares about people."

At Domino's headquarters in Ann Arbor, Mich., Brandon lets employees select charities for corporate giving. "These are not just passions of mine but also passions of our organization," he says. The most recent beneficiary was St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis, for which Domino's raised more than \$4.3 million in four years.

Locally, Brandon is not afraid to put himself out there for causes he believes in—even if it means dressing up as a clown. For the past 13 years, he has sat on the board of The Parade Company, a nonprofit that promotes Detroit's cultural community through an annual Thanksgiving parade and other events. Each year, Brandon and his wife don colorful costumes to march in the parade.

"It really does symbolize what Dave stands for," says Joan Le Mahieu, president of The Parade Company. "He's community-oriented and there to make the community better for people from all walks of life."

STEPHEN SADOVE

COMPANY: Saks

CHARITIES: Hamilton College, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, Hazelden Foundation, A Better Chance, Women in Need, Charity: Water

Shortly after the Sept. 11 attacks, officials at Hamilton College in upstate New York received a phone call. It was from 1973 graduate Stephen Sadove, now CEO of Saks Inc. Knowing that three Hamilton alumni had perished in the attacks, he proposed a scholarship fund for survivors of Sept. 11 victims.

"He was on this very, very quickly," says Richard Tantillo, Hamilton's vice president for communications and development. "We alerted the entire alumni community and had a significant outpouring of attention to this project."

The fund now contains \$350,000 and has already helped three students. "If it weren't for this fund," Tantillo says, "they wouldn't be at Hamilton." Sadove and his wife, Karin, also donated \$4 million to renovate a former

fraternity house into a student center. Their daughter graduated from the college in 2007, and their son is a junior there.

Hamilton is just one of a long list of organizations that have benefited from Sadove's involvement. Individually and with Saks' corporate backing, he has been involved with St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, Hazelden Foundation, A Better Chance, Women in Need and Charity: Water, among others.

When Sadove became CEO of Saks in 2006 and heard about the work being done by Women in Need to help homeless women and their families, he got involved right away. "He really understood the need for an organization for women in need and how it was so important for New York, which was really phenomenal," says Jaqui Lividini, secretary of the organization. Sadove hosted a gala the following year that raised \$1.7 million, and he personally matched \$25,000 in donations to send homeless children to summer camp. In just two months this year, Saks also raised \$400,000 for Charity: Water, a nonprofit that provides clean water in Africa.

Photo: Aaron Warkov

I enjoy helping others. ... I've been very fortunate and feel like it's part of my responsibility to give back.

—Saks CEO Stephen Sadove

Saks CEO
Stephen Sadove

Ervin Shames, the retired CEO of General Foods (which hired Sadove right out of Harvard Business School), says Sadove's concern for individual kids and society at large inspires his volunteer work. It was Shames who inspired Sadove to get involved in A Better Chance, which helps place talented young people of color in excellent high schools. "When asked to participate, I don't remem-

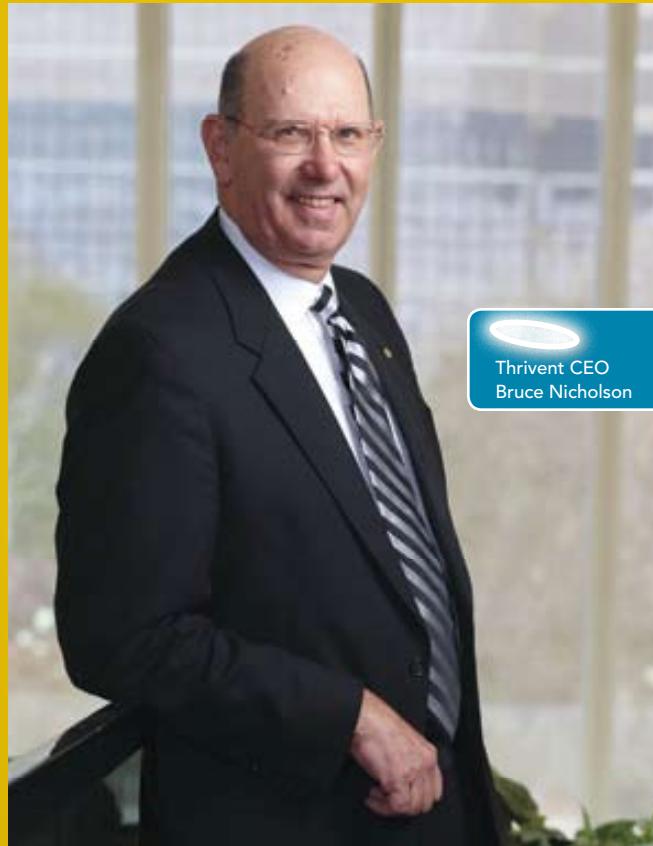
ber Steve ever saying no," says Shames.

"I enjoy helping others. I enjoy watching success stories," Sadove says. "I think watching the kids become successful at A Better Chance—type of a program or watching people help people overcome some of their own issues, it's helping make it better for everybody. I've been very fortunate and feel like it's part of my responsibility to give back."

BRUCE NICHOLSON

COMPANY: Thrivent Financial for Lutherans

CHARITIES: The Itasca Project, Faith in the City, Habitat for Humanity



Thrivent CEO
Bruce Nicholson

Faith and financial security may seem an unlikely pairing, but for Bruce Nicholson, they're the perfect match. The CEO of Minneapolis-based Thrivent Financial for Lutherans not only looks out for the financial well-being of Thrivent's nearly 3 million members, but also does so for disadvantaged children and families.

Last year, he chaired an advisory group of educators, parents and community members to suggest ways to improve Minneapolis' public schools—a role that came through his involvement in The Itasca Project, a group of business and civic leaders working to support economic development in Minneapolis/St. Paul.

"He did a very good job of trying to synthesize and distill the essence of what we were learning," says Jill Stever-Zeitlin, an advisor to the school district's superintendent. "He was able to contribute a personal perspective of what it takes to change large organizations."

That's something Nicholson knows well, having presided over the 2002 merger of Aid Association for Lutherans and Lutheran Brotherhood to form Thrivent. He says orchestrating that business merger was actually more straightforward than working with the school advisory group and its hot-button issues—including a steep drop in public school enrollment and racial disparities in test scores. The difficult part of chairing the group, he says, was keeping the focus on facts, not impressions.

"It's tough, but ultimately I think it's really all about the kids and how we make a differ-

Photo: Dave Kaphingst

ence in their lives, so they have the chance to be successful in this world like everybody else does," he says.

Nicholson's emphasis on charity also carries through to Thrivent. He has led Thrivent's involvement in Faith in the City, an effort by Minneapolis/St. Paul Lutheran organizations to improve the quality of life in disadvantaged neighborhoods. Today, its personal finance center offers lessons in money management, banking, consumer issues and taxes.

Nationally, Thrivent has formed a strong partnership with Habitat for Humanity International. Between 1991 and 2005, Thrivent raised \$25 million and built 500 homes with Habitat, but in 2005 Nicholson upped the



Thrivent has built a strong partnership with Habitat for Humanity.

company's involvement with a commitment to donate \$125 million and build 1,600 houses by the end of 2008.

"What I so appreciate about Bruce and all the Thrivent folks is there's such a sense of shared mission," says Habitat CEO Jonathan Reckford. "There's not only a belief that it's important for Thrivent to do good works in the community and in the world, but there's such a genuine personal passion from Bruce around that as well as from his colleagues."

For Nicholson, it all comes down to putting faith into action. "We often talk here at Thrivent about how a person's faith should really kind of shape their values," he says. "What are you called to do?"

DAVID BRONCZEK

COMPANY: FedEx Express

CHARITIES: Heart to Heart International, Safe Kids Worldwide, United Way of the Mid-South

FedEx Express CEO David Bronczek has always loved working in the corporate world, but he's also drawn to charity work. That's how he ended up in Calcutta in 1996, orchestrating a FedEx delivery of medical supplies to the city, along with 10,000 toys for orphans.

After spending several days with Mother Teresa at an orphanage, Bronczek—then a senior vice president of the company—wondered how he could do more. His friend Dr. Gary Morsch, founder of the aid group Heart to Heart International, reminded him of the powerful position he was already in.

"We all have something to give to make a

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Photo: Lisa Buser



FedEx Express CEO
David Bronczek

"[Bronczek is] truly involved, and I think it sets a really good example for his employees."

—Moira Donahue, Safe Kids Worldwide

5 WAYS YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

1. BUILD A HOUSE WITH HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

You can volunteer in your hometown or across the world, since Habitat for Humanity builds houses everywhere from Mississippi to Mozambique. Visit habitat.org.

2. GET IN SHAPE FOR ST. JUDE

Run in the St. Jude Memphis Marathon, half marathon or 5K on Dec. 6 to raise money for the hospital. If you're not a runner, you can still volunteer to help out on race day. Visit stjudemarathon.org.

3. DONATE TO CHARITY: WATER

Give \$20, and you provide safe drinking water for one person for 20 years; \$5,000 pays for an entire well in countries like Ethiopia and Honduras. Visit charitywater.org/getinvolved/volunteer.html.

4. ASSEMBLE KITS FOR HEART TO HEART INTERNATIONAL

Put together care kits and school kits for those in need in the United States and overseas. Or you could travel overseas yourself as part of a medical team. Visit hearttoheart.org.

5. JOIN UNITED WAY

With nearly 1,300 local organizations across the country, there is a wide variety of volunteer opportunities from which to choose. Visit liveunited.org/volunteer.

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difference in the world, and we don't do it in the same way," Morsch told him that day.

When Bronczek became CEO of FedEx Express in 2000, he found his way to make a difference. Under his leadership, the Memphis-based company increased its commitment to Heart to Heart, providing aircraft for its work in Africa, Turkey and China.

Bronczek also got FedEx Express involved with Safe Kids Worldwide, whose mission is preventing injuries to children. "He showed up with a check in his hand and said, 'We want to do this. Do you want to work with us?'" marvels Moira Donahue, Safe Kids' program manager. "That doesn't happen very much around here."

FedEx has since donated more than \$10 million to Safe Kids, and its couriers have taught children around the world how to walk safely near vehicles. Bronczek serves on Safe Kids' corporate advisory board. "He's truly involved, and I think it sets a really good

example for his employees," Donahue says.

Bronczek's charitable efforts are also felt locally. In 2000, he chaired the fundraising campaign for the Memphis-based United Way of the Mid-South, and he's stayed personally involved ever since.

"One of my fondest memories was when I was participating in United Way's 'Day of Caring' at a home for senior citizens," Bronczek recalls. "I was assigned the task of making peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. When I accidentally spilled some of my jelly, a 90-year-old resident pointed her finger at me and said, 'Young man, if you're going to work here, you can't waste the jelly!' I'll never forget the faces and conversations I had with those residents."

Today, Morsch occasionally reminds Bronczek about the conversation they had in Calcutta in 1996. "Every company wants to be the biggest and the best and the most on-time," Morsch says. "Truly, David more than that wants to be a good steward of what God has given him, and if he can do it through FedEx, then by golly he's going to do it." ▼

Nancy Crotti is a business writer based in Minneapolis/St. Paul.



David Bronczek met Mother Teresa in 1996, when he orchestrated a delivery of medical supplies to Calcutta.

For the KIDS

St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis benefits greatly from corporate and CEO support. "To have on our team geniuses like Dave Brandon and Steve Sadove is truly a blessing to the children of St. Jude," says John P. Moses, CEO of the hospital's fundraising organization.

When entertainer Danny Thomas founded St. Jude in 1962, his goal was to conduct scientific research and treat young patients from around the world, regardless of their ability to pay. The hospital has accomplished those goals and then some. Its research has led to an increase in survival rates for several forms of cancer. And in keeping with Thomas' vision, St. Jude pays for travel, lodging and ancillary costs for each patient and a family member.



Corporate sponsors play a big part in helping to fund these programs. During St. Jude's annual Thanks and Giving Campaign, companies ask customers to add a donation for St. Jude to each transaction. Domino's raised more than \$1.3 million in 2007 and Saks \$1.2

million since 2006 that way. "When you combine that money, 85.3 cents of each dollar received goes to support the research and treatment," Moses says. "No family ever gets a bill from us. We've been able to keep that promise for 46 years." —N. C.