

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



State &
Federal
COMMUNICATIONS
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2020 ANNUAL REPORT

STATE AND FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS

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Cover Art

Photos on the cover, clockwise from top, center

1. State and Federal Communications Diversity Equity and Inclusion committee logo
2. The company's personalized PPE
3. The company was a sponsor of the virtual YouToo Social Media Conference in April, 2020
4. The company received the 2020 COGEL Outstanding Service Award
5. President and CEO Elizabeth Bartz presenting a check to Jim Mullen, President and CEO of United Way of Summit and Medina
6. State and Federal Communications recycles paper, eWaste, fluorescent bulbs, and aluminum cans
7. Elizabeth Bartz presenting a check to Dan Flowers, President and CEO, Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank

Sherrod Brown at Akron Roundtable - January, 2020



The Great Donut Drop

Message from Elizabeth Bartz

No one could have seen this pandemic coming. When it became clear what was happening, State and Federal Communications jumped into action. We implemented COVID-19 precautions, adapted to work-at-home models, distributed personal protective equipment, and got to work. With skill and ingenuity, our staff forged ahead giving the highest level of service to our clients throughout 2020.

It might have been easier to get through this by just looking out for ourselves, but we took a good look around our community and saw daunting challenges. We saw a record number of people showing up in queues to receive food, and a record number of people calling hotlines for rent and mortgage assistance. It has been a humanitarian crisis.

The unprecedented challenges brought things into clear focus and we stepped up in unprecedented ways. In the face of increased hunger, we quadrupled our giving to the Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank's Harvest for Hunger Campaign. In the face of a housing crisis, we increased our pledges to the United Way by 20%. We continued to sponsor key national and local organizations and their events. With promotional videos and photos on social media, we joined the Greater Akron Chamber's #MaskUp330 campaign to raise awareness for the importance of simply wearing a mask. I am proud of our team.

It is no accident that the same strategic partners we always work with in our CSR efforts are the same organizations making a difference during this pandemic. As you will see in this report, we have supported them with our financial resources, by volunteering, and by leveraging our communications channels. This is not a time to shrink from the challenges.

To everyone in our community who is suffering, and to all who are on the front lines offering help, I want you to know we are here. We will not let you walk this road alone. We walk with you and will help with everything we have. Thank you for your interest in our CSR program.

Most sincerely,
Elizabeth Bartz
President and CEO
State and Federal Communications



LEADING in a Crisis

Since the outset of the pandemic in March of 2020, State and Federal Communications implemented a plan to distribute PPE, to practice social distancing, and to work remotely. Keeping our employees safe was a top priority, while ensuring we were seamlessly offering the website and compliance services on which our clients depend. The company continued to offer competitive salaries, first-class healthcare benefits, an award-winning wellness program, and professional development to our staff.



Creating Space for GOOD to Happen



State and Federal Communications was honored to receive the 2020 Healthy Worksite Bronze Award (for an employer with fewer than 300 employees) from the Healthy Business Council of Ohio. The Healthy Worksite Award recognized 100 Ohio employers who demonstrated a commitment to employee wellness through comprehensive worksite health promotion and wellness programs. The focus of our wellness program for the year was social, education, exercise, diet, and sleep (SEEDS).

Events: State and Federal Communications hosted an on-site chair massage for the employees.

Challenges: We had a sleep challenge where the goal was to sleep a minimum of seven hours each night for one month. We even provided the employees with sleep masks!

Due to COVID, we quickly changed the rest of our wellness program. We began focusing on the overall health and wellbeing of our staff by providing information in our monthly HR Newsletters on topics such as mental health, exercise, and nutrition. We also continuously reminded employees of our Employee Assistance Program (EAP), especially since COVID took such a toll on mental health. Throughout the year, State and Federal Communications also stressed the importance of utilizing PTO, especially during the pandemic to avoid burnout.

Voting: State and Federal Communications encourages all employees to take the time on Election Day to vote. The company allows employees to take one hour that morning to vote prior to arriving to work, or one hour prior to Election Day when they can go to their county Board of Elections and vote.



Strengthening Our Communities

The devastating effects of the pandemic on our community gave greater urgency to corporate philanthropy. The question was, what kind of community did we wish to have and what could we do about it? State and Federal Communications was determined to

help. At a time when organizations began to question the viability of corporate philanthropy, we increased our giving. State and Federal Communications works with area organizations to provide significant benefit to the community far beyond what our individual contributions could. Because of their 211 service, Family Resource Centers, and Financial Empowerment Program, the United Way of Summit and Medina was uniquely positioned to face the growing crisis. People in need of help with food and money for rent and mortgages were connected to the resources they needed.

State and Federal Communications has held United Way campaigns for the last 21 years. The company matches every dollar donated by its employees. In 2020, the company had 100% employee participation. It raised \$34,400, plus the company matching dollars, and it donated \$1,000 in lieu of the usual Donut and Cider Sale, for a grand total of \$69,800! The pledge was a 21% increase over the previous year, with an average staff pledge of \$905.



*** 21% INCREASE OVER 2019 GIVING TOTAL ***

Community Engagement

Due to pandemic restrictions, our community engagement opportunities changed. Our employees participated in the iC.A.R.E. Mentoring program and at the Annunciation Akron Church's Good Samaritans program prior to restrictions. Elizabeth Bartz and the team created public service announcement videos in support of the Foodbank's Harvest for Hunger Campaign and Hunger Action Month. The total community engagement was 39 hours.

Because of the pandemic, State and Federal Communications' Charitable Service Program was paused from mid-March until December 2020: Normally, as a benefit of donating 1% of their salary to the United Way campaign, employees of State and Federal Communications receive 30 hours of charitable service, where they can use those hours at the nonprofit of their choice. Those who donate ½% receive 12 hours of charitable service. We look forward to reimplementing this program in 2021.



**Good Samaritans
Food Distribution Program
Annunciation Church**

Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank



The Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank held its 29th Annual Harvest for Hunger Campaign Kickoff on February 25, 2020 at the John S. Knight Center in Akron, OH. Elizabeth Bartz led the charge as co-chair of the event. She presented to a room of 500 people, encouraging everyone to “Be the Change” by taking the coins we have lying around and filling the Be the Change coin boxes.

Little did we know just how important the campaign would turn out to be. Because of the pandemic, the increase in the need for food was staggering. Vulnerable populations - the homeless and families living paycheck to paycheck - were hit hard.

According to the ACRFB website, “Feeding America estimates that the food insecurity rate in Summit County is 17.3 percent of the total population, a 31 percent increase caused by COVID-19. The child food insecurity is 26.2 percent, a 44 percent increase caused by the pandemic.”

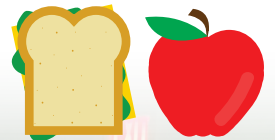
Put another way, 93,660 people in Summit County are food insecure and among those, 30,270 are children.

This great increase in need put pressure on the Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank. Nevertheless, it supplied 10,231,858 meals to hungry neighbors, or 2,588,618 pounds of food distributed in 2020.



Our Harvest for Hunger TOTAL:

\$3,100 = 12,400 MEALS PROVIDED
\$1 = 4 meals



Harvest for Hunger Campaign

Our Campaign

State and Federal Communications ran its second annual Harvest for Hunger Campaign. We knew in-person fundraising events would be out of the question, so we widened our scope to include friends and family and community groups to join in our giving. We implemented two ways to raise funds:

Be the Change

Everyone was encouraged to fill the Be the Change boxes with their loose change and return it to our office. Employees, family members, Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church, and Akron Rotary Foundation all contributed. By November, the program raised \$1500. The Be the Change campaign has been a wonderful way for us to reach out to the community for untapped donations. We dug into our couch cushions, and our idle coins saved lives.

TeamRaiser

Using the Foodbank's online funding platform TeamRaiser, State and Federal Communications reached out to employees and their families, as well as to our friends in the government relations industry to contribute. The company's TeamRaiser campaign brought in \$1,600. Along with the Be the Change contributions, it raised a grand total of \$3,100.



*** 464% INCREASE OVER 2019 GIVING TOTAL ***

The Great Donut Drop

This would have been our 11th Donut and Cider Sale, where we have raised money for the United Way and have fun with the community. With the pandemic the sale was impossible, but we still love donuts! For all the wonderful staff and National Guard at the Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank, State and Federal Communications brought 30 dozen donuts for a morning treat on Wednesday, November 4, 2020.

Hunger Action Month



In September, State and Federal Communications participated in promoting Hunger Action Month on behalf of the Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank. The company created a pair of public service announcement videos to raise awareness of hunger in our community and how we are supporting the Foodbank.

Protecting Our Environment



State and Federal Communications is committed to doing its part to protect the environment. The company focuses on four areas: 1) single-use packaging, 2) paper and cardboard, 3) electronic waste, and 4) fluorescent bulbs. The waste generated at the office prompted our commitment to work with the city of Akron's single-stream recycling program for downtown businesses. Single-use containers, such as plastic bottles, aluminum cans, and product boxes can now be placed in proper recycling bins rather than sent to landfills.¹ In 2014, State and Federal Communications began using a reverse osmosis water dispensing system. State and Federal Communications recycles paper and cardboard waste. SecurShred (Weaver Industries, Akron) shreds and recycles all our business paper. The city of Akron program collects flattened cardboard for processing at its local facility, which is managed by Greenstar Recycling of Houston, Texas.

Recycling Statistics

48 lbs Fluorescent Lamps

215 lbs eWaste

- Computers, Electronics, Batteries

2,982 lbs Paper

- Shredded and Recycled

**TOTAL: 3,425 lbs
or 1.623 tons
recycled in 2020**

Five Toner Cartridges Recycled

Many of our individual, desktop printers qualify to have their used, Toner Cartridges mailed back to a designated facility for proper recycling. Our larger, departmental printers increasingly use improved designs to reduce this waste, or will have their exhausted, consumable-related items routed back with Service Technicians for proper handling.

Both electronic waste and fluorescent bulbs are toxic when buried in landfills. Our policy is to upgrade all failed fluorescent bulbs or fixtures to LED. All retired fluorescent bulbs continue to be processed by Veolia North America. All computers, monitors, cables, batteries, and small electronic items taken out of service annually are sent to eWaste of Hudson, Ohio, for proper handling and disposal.

¹ Akron's Curbside Recycling program does not provide individual results. Instead, community results are reported to the state EPA in the aggregate by Summit ReWorks.

Cans for Corridors

In 2020, State and Federal Communications continued to partner with the Akron Zoo in their Cans for Corridors program. By bringing aluminum cans to their collection center, the Akron Zoo sends the money collected from recycling to the Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust. This organization works with Instituto De Pesquisas Ecologicas in Brazil to plant trees, reestablishing vital tree corridors in the suffering Brazilian rainforest. By discarding our used aluminum cans, we are now planting trees in Brazil! In 2020, we collected 1,972 cans and planted 38 trees.



Ovations



DAN FLOWERS

President and CEO, Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank

"Elizabeth, I just watched our harvest for a hunger kick off video and it touched my heart to see you there, making such a heartfelt pitch on our behalf. Your delivery was outstanding. But I'm always the most touched by your sincerity. There's a saying that people will never believe the message if they don't believe the messenger, and your integrity, goodness, and authenticity make your message one people can count on. It's an honor to partner with you and call you a friend. Warmest thanks, Dan Flowers."



AMY LOPREST

Executive Director, New York City Campaign Finance Board

"State and Federal Communications has been a valued member of the COGEL community for many years. I was honored to present the 2020 COGEL Outstanding Service Award to the firm. Members of the team have attended the annual COGEL conference for 19 years and have served on the Programming Committee, the 2012 Host Committee, and as presenters and facilitators of breakfast table topics. The team has provided valuable insight at the conferences into the views and needs of the regulated community to the governmental regulators who make up a large portion of COGEL's population. For 20 years, Editor Jim Sedor has provided the best curated news to the government relations and ethics oversight communities. With State and Federal Communications' weekly News You Can Use newsletter, Jim Sedor has offered to COGEL members roughly 50 news articles per week from the best sources in the areas of lobbying law, campaign finance, procurement, and ethics law. State and Federal Communications has always been generous with its support and supplied full IT support to the 2012 COGEL Conference in Columbus and during the 2014 conference in Pittsburgh. President and CEO Elizabeth Bartz has also served on COGEL's Steering Committee."



DOUG PINKHAM

President, Public Affairs Council

"We've always appreciated the support and involvement of State and Federal Communications in the work of the Public Affairs Council. Elizabeth Bartz and her team not only sponsor major executive education events and our foundation; they also set an example for others by actively participating in a wide array of programs. When State and Federal Communications gets involved in a community group or national association, they always make those organizations stronger."

Leadership

Akron Roundtable with Sherrod Brown

State and Federal Communications was the luncheon sponsor for the Akron Roundtable featuring U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown on March 6, 2020. Brown is the senior U.S. Senator from Ohio, elected to his seat in 2006. Brown's presentation was in honor of his recently published book, *Desk 88 - Eight Progressive Senators Who Changed America*.



General Elections Candidates Conference

State and Federal Communications is committed to promoting good and civil public discourse on issues that matter. We were proud to sponsor the Greater Akron Chamber's two-part General Elections Candidates Conference, along with our friends at the University of Akron's Ray C. Bliss Institute of Applied Politics. The General Election Candidates Conference for Democratic candidates was held as a virtual event on October 13, 2020. The same conference for the Republican candidates was held on October 27.

Seventeen candidates in all were featured, including Congresswoman Marcia Fudge, Congressman Tim Ryan, Congressman Anthony Gonzalez, and candidate for Congress Laverne Gore. This event allowed the business community a crucial opportunity to engage the candidates in discussion.

Commission on Presidential Debates

State and Federal Communications was proud to sponsor the 2020 Commission on Presidential Debates, featuring the Presidential and Vice Presidential debate series.



WE SUPPORT...

National Organizations

- Council on Governmental Ethics Laws
- Greek Orthodox Archdiocese COVID-19 Relief Fund
- National Conference of State Legislatures
- National Institute for Lobbying and Ethics
- Ohio Birthday Party
- Public Leadership Education Network
- Professional Women In Advocacy
- Public Affairs Council
- State Governmental Affairs Council
- The National Governor's Association
- U.S. Chamber of Commerce
- Washington Area State Relations Group
- Women In Government
- Women in Government Relations

Local Organizations

- Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank
- Akron Press Club
- Akron Area PRSA and YouToo Social Media Conference
- Akron Roundtable
- Akron Urban League
- American Heart Association Go Red for Women
- Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church Good Samaritans
- ATHENA Akron
- Community Legal Aid Services
- Greater Akron Chamber
- Heart to Heart Communications
- International Soap Box Derby
- Leadership Akron
- Project Grad Akron
- Project Learn of Summit County
- Stewart's Caring Place
- United Way of Summit and Medina
- WKSU Radio

Jim Sedor - COGEL Outstanding Service Award



On December 15, 2020, State and Federal Communications received the Council on Governmental Ethics Laws (COGEL) 2020 Outstanding Service Award at the organization's virtual conference. According to their website, "The COGEL Outstanding Service Award is conferred upon a COGEL member, or an employee of a member agency, who has provided exceptional service to COGEL. Outstanding Service Award recipients are those rare colleagues whose participation in COGEL activities have made its membership more valuable and the conferences more meaningful."

Amy Loprest, the Executive Director of the New York City Board of Ethics presented the award. This was a high honor acknowledging Jim Sedor, our Manager of News Services, as well as the extraordinary work of the whole company. Jim Sedor has been an integral part of our relationship with COGEL by providing the community with the valuable News You Can Use service. It is wonderful for this award to coincide with Jim Sedor's 20th anniversary at State and Federal Communications!



Elizabeth Bartz

Elizabeth Bartz, President and CEO of State and Federal Communications, serves on the Board of Directors of the National Institute on Lobbying and Ethics, the Public Affairs Council, the Public Leaders Education Network, the Greater Akron Chamber, and the American Hellenic Institute. Additionally, she is a Platinum Foundation member of the National Conference of State Legislatures, and member of the WKSU Community Advisory Council.



Adrienne Borgstahl

Adrienne Borgstahl, Esq., Manager, Compliance Services, is a member of the Board of Trustees for the Court Appointed Special Advocates.



Gamble Hayden

Gamble Hayden, Coordinator, Federal Compliance Services, serves as Chair for the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee of Women in Government Relations.



Jonathan Spontarelli

Jonathan Spontarelli, Manager, Marketing and Digital Services, serves on the Board of Directors for the Washington Area State Relations Group.

Diversity

In the Summer of 2020, State and Federal Communications made a conscious decision to begin working towards a formal recognition of its ongoing efforts surrounding Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI). In a year marked by a still-moving global health crisis, in addition to both civil and social unrest (all of which further highlighted the continuing inequities and polarization that exist in the world), State and Federal Communications believed it was time to take a stand and communicate not only to our staff, but our clients and friends as well, that we are committed to DEI in all of its forms, thus working to ensure that the company's hiring practices, business operations, and community involvement mirror this commitment. State and Federal Communications, recognizing the value of having cross-departmental collaboration, formed a DEI-focused Working Group, whose vision is led by President and CEO Elizabeth Bartz.



After its inaugural meeting in August of 2020, the DEI Working Group decided to spend the rest of the summer and part of the fall taking a deeper dive into where we were as an organization related to DEI. We also took this opportunity to begin to educate ourselves on a number of important DEI issues, including unconscious bias, racial equity, and poverty. State and Federal Communications developed and released a formal DEI mission statement, and the company continues to engage in efforts to become further educated on the importance of DEI, to raise awareness, and bridge gaps.



WOMEN IN SPORTS

★ VIRTUAL PANEL ★

Elizabeth Bartz moderated a virtual evening celebrating Women in Sports, hosted by the Akron RubberDucks, and sponsored by State and Federal Communications, on September 2, 2020.

2020 DEI Training Opportunities

July 9 - Leadership Akron: Supporting Leaders Towards Racial Equity

July 15 - Ethics and its Role in Diversity Inclusion: Addressing Unconscious Bias

Keynote Speakers: **Edwin Hubbard Jr.**, Director of Operations, BBB of Akron;
Charmaine Holland, Diversity, Inclusion; Leadership Development Consultant, Inspired U

July 29 - Akron Area PRSA: Uncovering Unconscious Bias

Andre Campbell, Director, Diversity Inclusion, United Way of Summit and Medina
Carla J. Davis, Marketing Communications Director, Akron-Summit County Public Library
Judi Hill, President, NAACP Akron

September 17 - United Way of Summit and Medina: Bridges Virtual Workshop

Cookies Make the World a Better Place



Elizabeth Bartz decided 2020 was the year she would buy Girl Scout Cookies from anyone who asked. The result was Bartz bought 400 boxes of assorted Girl Scout Cookies. She bought from scouts in Ohio, Virginia, and Arizona. “I bought way too many cookies!” said Bartz.

So, what do you do with 400 boxes of cookies? Always thinking about corporate social responsibility, Bartz decided to give them to an organization. She posted on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn that she was giving away cookies to a worthy group.

Red Oak Behavioral Health in Akron was the first to respond. They are a non-profit mental health agency serving the

Greater Akron community since 1963. They provide professional therapeutic and community support services for children, youth, families, and older adults.

Elizabeth Bartz and staff from State and Federal Communications had fun delivering them on June 10, 2020. Bon appétit, everyone!



Greek Orthodox Archdiocese Recognizes State and Federal Communications



State and Federal Communications was recognized by the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America for their donation to the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese COVID-19 Relief Fund in the name of President and CEO Elizabeth Bartz.

The relief fund was established to “support those around the country who have been impacted by the current pandemic,” per the Archdiocese.

“One-time grants of up to \$2,500 will be made available to those who are facing extreme financial hardship as a result of COVID-19.”

Every July the staff celebrates the company’s anniversary. In light of the pandemic, they felt it was appropriate to honor Elizabeth Bartz with this donation in her name.

State & Federal COMMUNICATIONS

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RESPONSIBILITY



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