



Pulling together across a vast network

By ANDREW P. LOGAN

Aside from their accounting practices, what do the 13 firms making up DFK Canada have in common? The answer lies in their common vision of the importance of giving back to the community. Corporate responsibility is a term that many firms may pay lip service to, but DFK Canada firms continually put this vision into action in a variety of ways and for multiple causes.

A perfect example is DFK Canada's commitment to supporting DFK International's Movember campaign in support of men's health issues.

Since 2011, DFK Canada has jumped wholeheartedly into the annual Movember campaign in aid of the Movember Foundation and helped DFK to regularly feature in the top 50 fundraising leaderboard of multinational networks.

In 2015 DFK Canada raised \$30,000, while on an international level more than \$61,500 was raised. The efforts of DFK Canada and its international colleagues have now raised more than \$360,000 since DFK members grew their first moustaches six years ago.

Paul Panabaker, immediate past president of DFK Canada, co-ordinates the international efforts of DFK and is a regular Movember participant. On launching the 2016 campaign, he said: "Movember is a worthy cause that DFK is committed to supporting each year. All of our member firms get involved and challenge each other to raise as much money and awareness for this important cause as we can — all done under the DFK banner.

"Movember has helped to make huge progress in raising awareness and funds for men's health issues such as prostate cancer and a massive thank you must go to everyone who has taken part or donated.

"We're once again encouraging all our members to participate, support and share their involvement with Movember with DFK colleagues around the world."

Having that "giving back spirit" firmly ingrained in firm culture also gave rise to recognizing the great needs of the community of Fort McMurray that was ravaged by devastating wildfires in May.

Hugh Faloon of the GGFL accounting firm in Ottawa, immediately reached out to Kingston Ross Pasnak (KRP) partner Chad Knippel in



Paul Panabaker, senior partner at David Martindale in London, Ont., co-ordinates the annual Movember campaign across the international network of DFK, of which his firm is a member. In the six years DFK has participated, members have raised more than \$360,000.

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Edmonton to try to gather information on local needs. Together they quickly formed a plan and put out the challenge to all DFK Canada firm partners to make personal financial contributions to the growing needs of this community.

quickly from all over the country. A lofty goal of \$100,000 was set out in the request to the partners and was easily surpassed when a staggering \$113,500 was raised in 10 short days.

Donations from the firm partners were all pledged individ-

Fort McMurray residents, through his volunteer role as the chair of Northlands, a non-profit organization that (among other things) runs the Edmonton Expo Centre, which hosted many of the evacuees from Fort McMurray.

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The response was immediate and overwhelming. Although tax season had just ended and many partners were away on vacation, the pledges of support came in

usually through the Red Cross, which meant that those donations were matched dollar for dollar by both the province of Alberta and the government of Canada. Close to \$350,000 was therefore generated for the community through the donations of DFK firm members.

This figure does not take into account the additional support and contributions made on a more local and personal level. KRP partner Geoff Oberg had special insight into the needs of

As a result, the team at KRP displayed an especially strong outpouring of support and random acts of kindness to the victims, including the opening of their doors to offer office space and assistance as required to their Fort McMurray clients. In a meeting with KRP staff, Oberg offered the following: "Thank you KRP for the amazing support and generosity for those displaced by the Fort McMurray disaster. I know many of our KRP team have been dir-

ectly affected with family and friends forced to evacuate. Thank you for the continued support of each other and to all evacuees that have experienced unimaginable hardship over the last few days. You are truly exceptional people. I'm so proud of our KRP team for everything we are doing to assist."

Far across the country on the east coast, Newfoundland firm Noseworthy Chapman also had personal connections to the tragedy taking place in Fort Mac. Firm partner David Howe notes that "with 15,000 Newfoundlanders residing in Fort McMurray, it is often referred to as Newfoundland's third largest city and so most people down our way know, or are related to, someone affected."

Noseworthy Chapman was no exception. They had a staff member whose family living in Fort McMurray was directly affected and who lost all of their belongings. So, in addition to the firm partner donations to the Red Cross, Noseworthy Chapman held internal fundraisers for this family and paid for return flight tickets for their staff member to visit Alberta. Support from Noseworthy Chapman also extended beyond the firm into other charities the firm supports. In a message to fellow DFK member firms, Noseworthy Chapman partner David Howe said: "I attended a Rotary auction committee meeting and we decided to donate a portion of our June auction proceeds to the relief effort. I am sure this type of thing is going on right across the country. Makes you proud to be a Canadian. Keep up the great effort you are undertaking to rally DFK to support those affected."

Giving back to the communities we serve, while not part of DFK's core mandate, is still an important aspect of the organization. It is incredible to know that an association of accounting firms with a common vision can rally together as a national organization to contribute to both ongoing causes as well as to respond to emergency pleas for assistance.

Andrew P. Logan CPA, CA is the president of DFK Canada, an association representing 13 public accounting firms across the nation. DFK Canada is part of DFK International which is present in 85 countries worldwide. Logan is a senior partner at Teed Saunders Doyle in New Brunswick and has affiliations with many community organizations.