

# STEPPING UP FOR SKILLS

In difficult economic and social situations, education and skills give young people a chance to overcome discrimination and exclusion, obtain work, and play a fulfilling role in society. Helping people to obtain work and career opportunities is part of the Adecco Group's core business. As the world leader in HR services, we have over 32,000 colleagues in touch with the tough challenges many young people face around the globe. In carrying out our role, we adhere to the UN Global Compact and its Ten Principles. In 2010, our colleagues went many steps further and took part in our first Win4Youth project.

By Lilian Furrer



Win4Youth became a transformational initiative for the Adecco Group. The concept was simple: run together with colleagues or clients and for every kilometre completed the Adecco Group would donate a dollar to charitable foundations in India, Chile, Haiti, Spain, France and the United States. They all share one mission: helping young people obtain the education and skills they need for a better life. We launched the Win4Youth project in mid-January 2010. By December 2010, an astonishing 29,255 colleague and 729 client runs were recorded at 1,855 events, spanning 58 countries. A total of 228,002 km were completed – far beyond our initial expectations.

## Exemplifying CSR and our values

Win4Youth engages colleagues in an active way with our corporate social responsibility (CSR) strategy as well as our core values. Our CSR strategy has three pillars: Excellence, Integration, and Skills. By raising funds to further the development of young people in need, our Win4Youth project has now come to symbolise the Skills pillar worldwide. Moreover, by making Win4Youth happen, colleagues brought to life our four

core values: Team Spirit, Customer Focus, Responsibility and Entrepreneurship. All over the globe, colleagues ran together for a good cause, involving hundreds of clients and organising and promoting thousands of running events aimed at making a difference.

## Win4Youth “ambassadors” in New York

Adecco launched the project at the Global

Management Conference in January 2010. We announced that the Group was to prepare a team of 65 colleagues from around the world to run in the New York Marathon on November 7. After an application process and many hours of dedicated training, 62 colleagues made the starting line, with only one person – due to injury – being unable to complete the course. Our ambassadors for the Win4Youth project added 2,574 km to the total distance accomplished.



One of Adecco's New York City Marathon runners, Zahra Boumahoud from Adecco Morocco, said: "Through running for Win4Youth we are all taking 'responsibility' to make a great project happen."

### Global mobilisation

After the launch, this uniting programme provoked the exchange of news from local runs that sprang up worldwide. Over the nine-month period, colleagues in India contributed the most km (75,754), and those in Morocco ran the highest number of km per colleague (87,79).

People were clearly motivated by the cause. Armelle Derieux, from Adecco Group France, dedicated her 230 km trek in Nepal to Win4Youth and reported: "On reaching a 6,189 metre summit, a group of Germans asked about my Win4Youth shirt: I was really proud to explain the commitment of Adecco." The biggest team effort was a Win4Youth "Solidarity Day," when 2,700 colleagues in the French region, Switzerland, India and the Middle East added over 13,000 km. Keen to lead by example, the Adecco Group CEO, Patrick De Maeseneire, ran with his executive team and HQ colleagues, saying: "It's great to be part of the global Win4Youth team. We are building up an amazing team spirit and make contributions to six charitable foundations. And we carry the banner of our values high."

### Making a positive difference

At the end of March 2011, Adecco country managers of France, North America, Spain, India, Chile and Switzerland (for Haiti) each handed over a check for \$38,000 to the chosen foundations.

In India, we supported the Parikrma Humanity Foundation, which helps underprivileged youth from poor urban areas achieve a first-class education. Shukla Bose, the Foundation's CEO, said, "This support will help us fulfill our promise that children never 'get left behind.'" In Spain, a donation was made to Fundació Èxit, dedicated to teenagers from 16 to 18 years old in Catalonia and Madrid. Eighteen-year-old Abdelrahim Es, originally from Morocco, has attended an Èxit Foundation Centre in Madrid. "Always, in my country I have studied, but I had never before been in contact with the working world. Thanks to Èxit, I now have a lot of plans for my future."

Funds also went to the HEKS (Hilfswerk der Evangelischen Kirchen Schweiz), the foundation that supports Rural Centres for Primary Education in Haiti. The project has benefitted over 4,000 poverty-stricken children aged between 6 and 12 years. HEKS representative, Susanne Loosli, said, "We can further improve school buildings and train more teachers. We will also intensify our activities that enable families make a better living, so that they can afford to let children go to school." Manie, one of their students, said: "Other schools just teach in Creole but I can learn French and this will help me get a proper job later." In France, Win4Youth 2010 supported Entreprene

pour Apprendre, an organisation focusing on people aged between 13 and 20 to gain skills and knowledge to become entrepreneurs. In Chile, funds went to Fundación de Solidaridad Romanos XII, a training centre to enhance the employability of young people in the field of computer technology and telecoms. And finally in the United States, we contributed to the National Urban League efforts to provide academic and social support to high school students preparing for life after education.

With Win4Youth we have created a shared sense of social responsibility among colleagues, while also making a positive difference to society. Looking back, this programme united our employees in over 60 countries, making everybody live and incorporate our core values, and it grew to the global programme, representing our Skills pillar within CSR. That is why it will go on – 77 colleagues from 42 countries will be the ambassadors for Win4Youth 2011 by cycling up Mont Ventoux in France. But all of our 32,000 colleagues around the world will pedal in joint events to raise money for three newly selected foundations in Asia, Europe and Latin America. They are all involved in innovative projects giving young people skills and education to achieve new perspectives and a better life. ■



Left: Adecco's Win4Youth ambassadors getting ready for the NYC Marathon 2010.

Right: Girls at Parikrma Humanity Foundation show their gratitude to Adecco and the Win4Youth initiative.