



CASE STUDY



FULL STEAM AHEAD

**The Power of Values-Driven Collaboration
Between CSX & WWP**

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C4 product being introduced at an event.

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ANGELA COSTA
Community Investment
Manager at CSX

OVERVIEW

CSX, a premier transportation company, has been a longtime partner of **Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP)**. Through its signature community investment initiative, **Pride in Service**, CSX connects national and local veterans, military personnel, and first responders and their families to what they need when needed.

GOAL

CSX's goals for partnering with WWP are twofold:

- ★ To provide vital financial support and resources that enable WWP to expand its programs and services, ultimately improving the lives of veterans and their families.
- ★ To enhance CSX's corporate culture and brand reputation by actively engaging employees in meaningful volunteer opportunities and attracting and retaining top talent with a solid commitment to social responsibility.

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“Wounded Warrior Project shares our values and vision, making them the perfect partner to help us achieve our goals.”

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*Community Investment
Manager at CSX*

BACKSTORY

In 2018, through its signature community investment initiative, Pride in Service, CSX embarked on a journey to create a focused impact initiative that deeply connects with its business, values, and culture.

★ Supporting a Cause that Matters to Employees & Communities

Recognizing the long-standing connection between the company and military service, CSX’s leadership and community investment team saw an opportunity to channel their corporate social responsibility efforts into a cause that truly mattered to their employees and the communities where they live, work, and serve.

★ Ties to the Military Community

The decision to partner with Wounded Warrior Project was a natural extension of this commitment. CSX’s deep ties to the military community were evident.

Nearly one in five CSX railroaders has served in the armed forces, the U.S. military is a railroad customer, and the company’s tracks roll through several military towns on the country’s eastern half. In addition, while the partnership touches several states and communities, CSX and WWP headquarters share a hometown in Jacksonville, Florida.

★ Service is Part of CSX’s DNA

Angela Costa, Community Investment Manager at CSX, said, “Service is part of our DNA at CSX. It just makes sense for us to focus on those who gave – and continue to give – so much to our country to make a meaningful impact.

Wounded Warrior Project shares our values and vision, making them the perfect partner to help us achieve our goals.”

★ More than Writing a Check

From the beginning, CSX and WWP intended the partnership to be more than just writing checks. CSX wanted to roll up its sleeves and get involved in hands-on ways. This meant not only providing financial support but also getting employees involved through volunteering and offering in-kind resources and expertise that matched the unique needs of veterans.

The shared values between CSX and WWP made it easy for both sides to work together, and the partnership has only grown stronger over time, with a mutual commitment to making a real difference for those who have served.

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STRATEGIC APPROACH

The partnership between CSX and Wounded Warrior Project included various programs and initiatives that combine CSX's unique assets and resources with WWP's reach and expertise to make a real impact.

★ Veteran Workforce Development

CSX collaborated with WWP's Warriors to Work program to help veterans transition their military skills into the civilian workforce. This involved a multidimensional approach, including support from HR and talent development team members for job fairs and "lunch and learns."

CSX and WWP have also proactively identified areas of overlap within CSX's own operations and high-potential "jobs of the future" for veterans, including the drone certification program. Through this initiative, CSX provided equipment and sites for hands-on training, while CSX's subject-matter experts helped mentor veteran trainees and build skills that the actual workforce needs.

★ Employee Engagement & Volunteerism

CSX encouraged its employees to support WWP's mission as well. Volunteers enthusiastically participated in activities like food drives, skills-based volunteering, and the annual WWP Carry Forward® 5K in Jacksonville.

These events raised funds and awareness for wounded warriors. They allowed CSX employees to go beyond their day jobs, participate in team building, and contribute meaningfully to their communities.

★ Thought Leadership

CSX has demonstrated its commitment to thought leadership by sponsoring WWP's Annual Warrior Survey (AWS). This survey provides critical insights into the mental, physical, and financial challenges of post-9/11 veterans, helping organizations better shape their services and policies to meet veterans' needs.



★ Warrior Financial Assistance

CSX is committed to supporting WWP's Emergency Financial Assistance Program (now part of WWP's Financial Readiness Program) to mitigate food insecurity in the warrior population by providing critical funding and hosting employee-led food drives.

★ Warrior Mental Health Initiatives

Understanding the importance of mental health, CSX supported WWP's mental health and suicide prevention programs. They've even brought WWP's suicide prevention training to CSX's employees, especially those who work directly with local communities.

★ Community Partnership Engagement

CSX sponsored WWP's Community Partner Convening event to strengthen military and veteran nonprofit community connections. This support helps spark meaningful conversations and shared best practices, resources, and tools, advancing local organizations' collective mission while putting CSX at the forefront of veteran support.

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“For us at CSX, our shared value in service, team-building, and bolstering culture was crucial. It ensured that we were working toward the same goals, fostering a deep mutual understanding and commitment from both sides.”

LASANDRA BOYKIN
Director of Community Investment, CSX

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RESULTS

The partnership has benefitted both CSX and WWP. While WWP has received vital financial support and resources to advance its mission, CSX has reaped the rewards through enhanced employee engagement, positive public relations, and talent pipeline support.

★ Financial Contribution and Impact

Since 2018, CSX and its employees have contributed over \$3.4 million to WWP. This financial support has been crucial in funding programs benefiting veterans and their families.

CSX and its employees raised funds through direct contributions and various initiatives, such as food drives, volunteer events, and participation in the Carry Forward 5K.

This level of financial involvement has supported WWP's mission and positioned CSX as a key player in veteran support, enhancing the company's reputation as a responsible corporate citizen.

★ Business and Employee Engagement

The partnership has significantly strengthened CSX's internal culture. By involving employees in meaningful volunteer opportunities, CSX has boosted employee morale and engagement.

Activities like WWP Carry Forward 5K and skills-based volunteering allowed employees to connect deeply with the company's mission, fostering pride and unity within the workforce. This increased engagement has contributed to higher retention rates and a stronger "ONE CSX" culture, where employees feel more connected to their work and community.

★ Community Impact

CSX's involvement with WWP has extended beyond financial contributions and employee engagement. By sponsoring events like the WWP Community Partner Convening, CSX has played a critical role in fostering conversations and collaborations within the veteran nonprofit community. This involvement has strengthened CSX's ties to local communities.



★ Veteran Workforce Development

Through the Warriors to Work program, CSX has supported veterans in finding meaningful employment and benefited from the influx of skilled workers into their operations, making CSX one of the top military employers in the country.

The company has filled critical roles with highly trained individuals who bring a unique perspective and experience to the table, enhancing the company's operational capabilities.

★ Positive Public Relations and Brand Awareness

The partnership has generated significant media coverage nationally and locally. National coverage included features on Fox & Friends and Connecting Vets, while local outlets such as First Coast News and the Jax Daily Record have also covered the partnership's achievements.

This media attention has increased awareness of CSX's commitment to supporting veterans and positioned the company as a thought leader.

The partnership's success has been recognized further through awards such as the 2024 Engage for Good Golden Halo Award for Best Employee Engagement Initiative, a Silver Halo Award for Best Direct Service Initiative, and the PRNews Impact Communications Award for Corporate Community Partnership, further boosting CSX's brand reputation.

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PARTNER INSIGHTS

CSX executives offer these insights to companies considering a nonprofit partnership:

★ Align your values and objectives.

“When you’re considering a nonprofit partnership, it’s essential that your company’s values, interests, and goals align closely with those of the nonprofit. A partnership isn’t just about corporate responsibility – it’s about bringing the best of both parties together to create more meaningful impact than one partner could do, sustaining and scaling that impact,” said LaSandra Boykin, CSX’s Director of Community Investment.

“For us at CSX, our shared value in service, team-building, and bolstering culture, which matched Wounded Warrior Project, was crucial. It ensured that we were working toward the same goals, fostering a deep mutual understanding and commitment from both sides.”

★ Engage your employees in a range of ways.

“One of the most powerful aspects of our partnership with WWP has been the engagement of our employees. From fundraising to volunteering to mentoring, when you involve your teams at all levels and across all departments in impact-led programs, you see a tremendous boost in morale,” Angela Costa says.

“Engaged employees are more motivated and take great pride in knowing their company is committed to making a real difference. As CSX, this has translated into a stronger, more unified ONE CSX workforce.”



Joe Hinrichs
President and CEO, CSX

★ Aim for change-making vs. check-writing.

“A successful partnership goes beyond just financial contributions – it’s about actively collaborating on programs and initiatives,” said Bryan Tucker, Vice President, Stakeholder Engagement and Sustainability at CSX.

“At CSX, we’ve found that offering our in-kind equipment, subject-matter expertise, rail yards and office space, and people power can complement what WWP is best at and amplify the impact we can make together. Our hands-on approach with WWP has shown that when both partners actively contribute, the outcomes are far more effective and rewarding for everyone involved.”

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“Just as CSX empowers WWP through our funding, resources, and partnership, WWP also empowers CSX.

From our talent team to our special agents, drone pilots, and hundreds of employees, we are empowered as ONE CSX to show up in multiple ways for our nation’s wounded warriors.

WWP and CSX empower each other year after year, which is the sign of a true partnership!”

Bryan Tucker
***Vice President,
Stakeholder Engagement
and Sustainability, CSX***





★ **THANK YOU** ★

To learn more about how your company can support Wounded Warrior Project, visit
woundedwarriorproject.org/corporate-giving
or contact us at partners@woundedwarriorproject.org