Ford Motor Company has been delivering innovative products for 112 years – from the Model T to the new Ford GT supercar. While innovation is easy to see in the high-tech vehicles of today, it also plays a pivotal role in Ford Fund’s work to create a better world.

Henry Ford once said, “If everyone is moving forward together, then success takes care of itself.” That same concept of teamwork guides Ford Fund through innovation and creative collaboration with our more than 1,100 global partners.

Since 1949, Ford Fund has invested nearly $1.5 billion in communities around the world. Our financial support for scholarships, hunger and disaster relief, the arts and other projects is as strong as ever. But that’s not all we do. We are working with Ford employees, dealers, community partners and area residents who come together to assess and meet local needs. Modern technology may allow us to cross the globe instantly, but it’s original thinking and collaboration that set us and our partners apart when it comes to making people’s lives better.

One example of our innovative approach to community service is Ford Resource and Engagement Center (FREC) in Detroit. Working with a team of nonprofit partners and Ford volunteers, we are able to feed the hungry, assist with taxes and financial questions, and educate and entertain thousands of residents in a vibrant and improving neighborhood. Two years after opening, FREC provides a 3-to-1 return on investment. That’s how we go further to efficiently and effectively assist more people. We see tremendous potential for the FREC concept, and are planning to open additional centers globally starting this year.

We are accelerating innovation in other core Ford Fund areas of education and safety. Our Ford STEAM Lab program adds an arts component to the traditional STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) outreach to spur student creativity and collaboration. The Ford College Community Challenge is expanding to Africa this year for the first time, matching the company’s focus on this important and growing part of the global economy. Ford Driving Skills for Life (DSFL), our award-winning global driver safety education program, is now in 23 countries, including Mexico.

The Ford Volunteer Corps and its Ford Global Week of Caring program celebrate 10 years of service in 2015. This remarkable organization and its innovative, behind-the-scenes volunteer management system truly sets Ford apart. Over the years, hundreds of thousands of Ford volunteers have taken their hands, their hearts and their skills into communities in more than 40 countries. They’ve used shipping containers to expand housing and soup kitchens in South Africa, improved access to clean drinking water in Argentina, India, Indonesia and the Philippines, and built homes in Mexico and the United States. All told, our employees have provided more than 1 million hours of volunteer service to make our world better.

It is exciting and gratifying to see the results of our community work over the last year. Not only are we continuing to increase our financial contributions, we are working more effectively than ever with our partners to improve lives in the communities we serve. Moving forward, innovation will drive everything we do as we redouble our efforts to help our neighbors around the world achieve their dreams.

Jim Vella,
President,
Ford Motor Company Fund and Community Services

**A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF FORD MOTOR COMPANY FUND**

As we move forward, innovation will drive everything we do as we redouble our efforts to help our neighbors around the world achieve their dreams.

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Cover photo: Basil Raman, operations manager at Ford’s Struandale Engine Plant in South Africa, hugs the owner of a new home built from a shipping container with help from the Ford Volunteer Corps. Click here for more on the project: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z1AVIXQ1Xxo
Five young women in bright clothes take their places in the dance studio. They are from Living Arts in Southwest Detroit, and they are rehearsing for an upcoming performance at Ford Resource and Engagement Center (FREC).

On the other side of the FREC’s brightly lit atrium, a neighborhood couple receives professional advice for filing their tax returns.

FREC is an innovative model of community service and neighborhood involvement. It is one way Ford Fund builds communities by focusing on basic needs, economic growth and quality of life. Opened in June 2013 as part of a $10 million, five-year initiative in Detroit, FREC is also generating strong returns, providing $3 in services for every $1 invested.

Our commitment to improving community life builds on our 112-year-old heritage of being good neighbors wherever we do business. Each year, we support nearly 500 organizations across the U.S. that provide services to hunger relief, disaster recovery, healthcare, multicultural programs and military veterans, as well as cultural activities such as music and arts organizations.

Many of these programs are done in partnership with local Ford dealers using an innovative approach we call Operation Better World. Launched in 2008, Operation Better World is now a global network in which we collaborate with dealers and other groups on programs and nonprofit outreach. By working with our dealers and others through this strategic approach to philanthropy, we have a home field advantage and better effectiveness in understanding and addressing local concerns.

Learn more at corporate.ford.com/company/community

“Being located at the FREC gives neighborhood residents easy access to services that can make their lives better. Our Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program last year provided free services to more than 1,500 people who received an average tax return of $1,200. That’s a significant amount of money for a low- to middle-income family.”

Maria Mendez
FREC tax site coordinator
Accounting Aid Society
Detroit, Michigan
On a stage in Louisville, Kentucky, high school students take turns interviewing Jimmy Settles, vice president, UAW Ford Department, and Bill Dirksen, Ford vice president, Labor Affairs.

It’s a talk-show format, and students from Ford Next Generation Learning (Ford NGL) are quizzing the executives on how the union and Ford collaborate to provide training for future workers.

Innovative thinking is the engine behind Ford NGL, a nationally recognized program that reinvents the high school experience with career-themed academies in fields such as engineering, manufacturing and technology. It’s a continuation of what Henry Ford started when he founded dozens of schools during his lifetime, linking classroom learning to the skills a student might later use in the workplace.

Ford Fund works with communities around the world to drive sustainable innovation in education through scholarships and grants. All Ford Blue Oval Scholarship winners are eligible to join Ford Blue Oval Network — an elite, Web-based community of Ford scholarship winners that includes thousands of members.

The Ford College Community Challenge global grant competition provides funding for sustainable student-led programs that address pressing community needs. In the U.S., the Ford Driving Dreams Tour promotes on-time high school graduation and college enrollment among Latino youth.

Get more information at fordblueovalnetwork.org/

“Being put in real-life situations and learning from mistakes is where true learning happens. I think more people are starting to realize that. They want to know how they can apply their lessons to the real world and that’s a great thing, especially if we’re building a work force equipped with 21st century skills.”

Malik Jones
Ford NGL student advisor
high school senior
Louisville, Kentucky
It’s 7:30 a.m. on a Saturday. One hundred high school students from Dallas, Texas, gather in a large parking lot. Many are not happy their parents signed them up for a Ford Driving Skills for Life (DSFL) hands-on driving clinic so early on a weekend. Four hours later, it’s a different story.

Smiling kids talk excitedly about learning vehicle control while dodging cones in new Mustangs. And then there are the “drunk” goggles. Students cheekily compare notes on steering a car wearing specialized goggles that simulate impaired driving.

It’s all part of the Ford DSFL experience, the free, award-winning, international hands-on safety training course for new drivers. Established in 2003 by Ford Motor Company Fund, the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) and a panel of safety experts, Ford DSFL’s mission is to teach newly licensed drivers the necessary skills for safer driving, and the importance of making good decisions while driving.

Whether in Russia, Vietnam, Mexico or California, the core curriculum is the same: hands-on ride-and-drive clinics, classroom material and an interactive website that focus on vehicle handling, hazard recognition, speed and space management and distracted and impaired driving. Ford DSFL also continually updates classes for hazardous driving trends such as “driving selfies.” New curriculum this year includes increased discussion around impaired driving as more U.S. states legalize marijuana use, and a strong emphasis on parental behavior, which research shows has a direct effect on teen driving behavior.

More information at drivingskillsforlife.com/

“It was an incredible experience because a few days before the training, I lost control of my car on the highway and was involved in a very bad accident. During the training, I sat in the driving seat and drove for the first time since the accident. The atmosphere made for a reassuring and controlled environment, which helped me get my confidence back.”

Stefania Scivoletto
Ford DSFL participant
Rome, Italy
In the impoverished Vastrap settlement in South Africa, 2,000 people share a single water tap.

Residents live in shelters cobbled together from plywood and plastic sheets. Workers at Ford’s nearby Struandale Engine Plant saw an innovative way to help. During the company’s Global Week of Caring, Ford volunteers converted metal shipping containers into 10 houses, a daycare, a senior center, and a soup kitchen capable of serving 500 people a week.

Projects like the one in Vastrap happen all over the world through the Ford Volunteer Corps. Launched 10 years ago to coordinate and expand the company’s global network of community service activities, Ford Volunteer Corps is making a difference. Since 2005, more than 216,000 Ford volunteers have provided more than 1 million hours of service on 9,000 global projects in 48 countries on six continents.

Ford volunteers are active throughout the year, but on four Ford Accelerated Action Days, MODEL Teams of employees in the U.S. concentrate on specific, urgent community needs identified by nonprofit agency partners. Ford Fund provides grants for many of the projects to cover the cost of tools and materials. Through this system, volunteers are strategically connected to the projects in their local communities where they are needed most.

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IN THE IMPOVERTISHED VASTRAP SETTLEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA, 2,000 PEOPLE SHARE A SINGLE WATER TAP.

Residents live in shelters cobbled together from plywood and plastic sheets. Workers at Ford’s nearby Struandale Engine Plant saw an innovative way to help. During the company’s Global Week of Caring, Ford volunteers converted metal shipping containers into 10 houses, a daycare, a senior center, and a soup kitchen capable of serving 500 people a week.

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“More than 17 years ago, I found Habitat for Humanity by volunteering through Ford, and it has impacted my life as much as those we serve. Helping to build a home for someone’s family and understanding the profound change it has on their lives provides a spiritual reward that I can’t get anywhere else. Everyone needs help from time to time. I find personal fulfillment in knowing that by working with Habitat, I’ve been able to help improve someone’s life.”

Craig Erzen
Senior purchasing manager, Ford Motor Company
Ford Volunteer Corps
Dearborn, Michigan
As Ford Motor Company increases its global reach, Ford Motor Company Fund is growing along with it.

In 2012, Ford Fund launched the global Operation Better World initiative, extending our reach outside of the U.S. for the first time. Through this initiative, Ford Fund seeks to drive sustainable community innovation by making strategic local investments that support grassroots efforts in: education, sustainability (with a focus on water), automotive safety and community development, which ranges from nonprofit capacity building to disaster relief and sanitation. We now support programs in more than 30 countries.

We work with the nonprofit Global Giving Foundation to vet and monitor donations and projects. And we leverage the expertise of our employees, dealers and other partners to provide a strategic approach to philanthropy that ensures we are connecting effectively with people and communities.

Key programs include the Ford Conservation and Environmental Grants, China and Level Up initiatives, which provide comprehensive support to China environmental NGOs, sharpening their ability to continue sustainability efforts and raise awareness about environmental issues; and the Ford Enactus College Community Challenge, which provides grants for innovative, student-led community-building initiatives with real-world impact.

Ford is working to empower women in the villages surrounding the company’s manufacturing facility in Chennai, India. So far, more than 600 women have learned sewing and tailoring skills, helping them supplement their family income and start small businesses. One of them is Viji, a wife and mother of two small children, who attended the training last year.

“I knew the basics of tailoring and didn’t have much confidence,” Viji said, through an interpreter.

Viji enrolled in the classes to broaden her skills and earn extra income for her family. Viji’s sewing abilities took on even more importance after her husband was injured in a traffic accident and unable to work for weeks.

“This was a really difficult period for us. But since I had picked up some skills through the training, I started taking orders on my own and stitching from home,” said Viji.

Viji progressed from stitching men’s shirts to adding intricate embroidery and decorative stone work. The quality of her sewing caught the eye of customers and orders started coming in.

“I have seen her confidence grow since she took the tailoring class,” said Sangeeta, a friend and neighbor. “She knows now that she can be independent financially and stand on her own two feet.”

Viji’s journey is not only helping her family, her success has inspired other women to take the tailoring training to help improve their living conditions.

“This program has empowered women like me to step out of the household and create our own identities,” she said.

A video version of Viji’s story can be found at: http://bit.ly/FordBetterWorld
Beyond the work of Ford Fund, Ford Motor Company has many long-established relationships with nonprofit organizations.

For more than 90 years, Ford has maintained a strong partnership with DAV (formerly Disabled American Veterans), providing funds to purchase vehicles for the DAV Transportation Network, and supporting DAV’s Winter Sports Clinic and student volunteer scholarship program.

Ford and the American Red Cross have been partners for more than 30 years. As part of the Red Cross Disaster Responder Program, Ford provides funding before a disaster strikes, and supports emergency preparedness training.

Ford’s partnership with the Smithsonian dates back 40 years, with support for exhibits and programs that provide educational opportunities for families, including the Giant Panda Cam at the National Zoo, the latest Spark!Lab in Anchorage, Alaska, and traveling exhibitions such as American Sabor, which explores the influence of Latino musicians in America.

Ford Motor Company, its employees and its dealers make direct contributions to a number of organizations in addition to community investments made by Ford Fund. Ford has contributed more to United Way for Southeastern Michigan than any other corporation since the organization was founded in 1949. Ford is JDRF’s leading global partner, with fundraising activities to deliver groundbreaking advances in the treatment of type 1 diabetes. For more than 20 years, Ford has been unwavering in its commitment to the fight against breast cancer, including donating 100 percent of net proceeds from sales of its specially designed Warriors in Pink apparel and accessories line to its charity partners.