

EVENTS / CAUSES

## Fairmont Hotels organizes global charity programs with local partners

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By JOE MCCARTHY

Fairmont Hotels & Resorts is beginning a month-long charity initiative in September that tackles issues relevant to its properties' surrounding areas.

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The "Community Connections Month" invites Fairmont colleagues and hotel guests to work with local organizations to volunteer at shelters, improve elderly facilities, spread knowledge of bee preservation and other charitable activities. Making a sweeping effort to aid community outreach projects will likely appeal to luxury travelers who search for brands engaged in authentic philanthropy.

"We strive to demonstrate positive citizenship and leadership by getting involved in our local communities," said Mike Taylor, director of public relations at **Fairmont Hotels & Resorts**, Toronto.

"Our upcoming Community Month is a great opportunity for our properties to demonstrate their local support and encourage them to further build meaningful and lasting relationships with local community groups and organizations," he said.

"This ensures Fairmont's contributions make a sustainable impact and foster growth within the communities we call home."

## Humans to help

The form that Fairmont's outreach will take differs from region to region. Certain programs will be open to guests who have specified philanthropy as a passion in their Fairmont President's Club profiles.



### *Fairmont Savoy river clean-up*

Throughout Canada, the brand will host cultural events, give tours teaching the importance of bees for the region, organize clothing drives and establish fund raisers for local organizations.

In the United States, colleagues will help transform a food bank, host food drives, repair a senior center, hold a car wash and collect books for English as a second language classes.

Meanwhile, guests at Bermuda locations are invited to help clean the beaches.



### *Fairmont coastal clean-up*

Similarly, the Fairmont Mayakoba, Mexico will raise awareness of protecting the coral reef by offering beach clean-ups, recycling workshops, arts and crafts and cooking

classes focusing on the lion fish, an invasive species harming the local ecosystem.



*Fairmont Mayakoba, Mexico beach clean-up*

Supporting children and families in need is the focus for European properties.

Fairmont United Arab Emirates has teamed up with luxury cosmetics company Estée Lauder to launch the "Passion in Pink" week Sept. 23-30, with various activities focusing on raising awareness and early detection.

Additionally, African properties are working with local partners to plant trees for community spaces.

Manila's Fairmont Makati will aid a local charity for street children and Fairmont Singapore will host initiatives aimed at assisting the elderly and terminally ill children.

"This is but just one example in which Fairmont positively contributes to the well-being of diverse communities," Mr. Taylor said.

"It also shows collaboration on a global scale, while still allowing flexibility for our properties to address specific issues and challenges on a local level," he said.

"Taking a look at our overall corporate social responsibility programming over the years, it's safe to say we've enjoyed great success and all of our activity has had a positive impact on the communities where we do business."

Which hat to fill

Other luxury brands have dedicated their resources to more narrow philanthropic agendas.

For example, Italian fashion house Gucci is attracting young consumers through its Timepieces & Jewelry Music Fund that is giving students in China, Britain and Japan a chance to participate in the Grammy Awards Foundation 2013 Grammy Camp in New York and Los Angeles.

This initiative is part of Gucci Timepieces & Jewelry Music Fund's three-year partnership with The Recording Academy. Gucci is likely aiming to draw in younger consumers with its music-themed, charity partnerships ([see story](#)).

Similarly, British jeweler and retailer Astley Clarke is boosting its philanthropic efforts by selling a new rose gold bracelet to benefit Britain and Ireland's Breast Cancer Campaign.

The bracelet is being sold in boutiques, select retailers and online, while 20 percent of the proceeds from the sale of each bracelet will go directly to the Breast Cancer Campaign research. To promote the new bracelet and the cause, Astley Clarke hosted a release event and is using digital platforms ([see story](#)).

With all corporate-driven philanthropic endeavors, fostering an environment that will engage the consumer is key.

"Demonstrating leadership and providing genuine and meaningful ways for our guests to connect with our destinations is important to us," Mr. Taylor said.

"We regularly seek feedback from our loyal customers and they continue to tell us that social responsibility is important to them," he said.

"With an initiative like our Community Connections Month, we're able to focus attention on our activity in this area, while providing opportunities for our guests and area residents to get involved as well."

Final Take

*Joe, McCarthy, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York*

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