

ARIZONAwoman

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Allison Swanson,
founder and chief
executive officer
of Controls West

They next signed on to help two families they could actually meet and ended up helping one of them, a single mother and her children, well beyond the holidays.

They offered computers and back-to-school clothes, threw a party when one son graduated from high school, and even helped one of the sons get his driver's license.

The firm is now considering a program that will give employees volunteer time off during the workweek.

"It's hard for people who work 40 hours (a week). It would be refreshing for employees to have time off during the week. If you can't give all the money, your time and your caring makes that difference," says Swanson,

who also serves as the Volunteer Center's board president.

Tempe-based Controls West, a process control and measurement firm, has just eight employees. But over the past several years, the firm has committed to helping others during the holidays. In the beginning, employees purchased items on wish lists and then handed off the goods to the nonprofit working with the family.

But employees wanted to make those human connections themselves, says Allison Swanson, 56, the firm's founder and chief executive officer.

Corporate

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OUTREACH
PROGRAM**

For years, Controls West has focused its charitable giving on adopting families during the holidays, but the company's founder now wants to turn it up a notch by giving employees time to volunteer during the work day. >>

Giving