

Published: April 15, 2013 Updated: 11:51 a.m.

Ad agency marks 25th year by giving back



One person recommends this. Be the first of your friends.



By **LAURA BARRON-LOPEZ** / ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

They sit on carpeted cubes for meetings and play ping-pong to get the creative juices flowing. There are a few bottles of Maker's Mark and Jack Daniel's lying around the office.

Not untypical for an ad agency, say the employees at **DGWB Advertising & Communications** in Santa Ana. What's unusual is the agency's latest goal – tackling 25 community-based and internal projects in one year.



DGWB advertising and communications members – from right to left: Mike Besack, Julie Esler, and Selena Devore – prepare breakfast Thursday at Ronald McDonald House of Orange.

MICHAEL LOPEZ, ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

[MORE PHOTOS »](#)

They call it the 25 for 25 project. DGWB wanted to celebrate its 25th anniversary with a bang, while furthering its connection with the community.

The year's to-do list includes: adopting 25 families for Christmas, planting 25 trees, logging 250 miles on public transit, throwing a 1988-theme prom for agency employees, volunteering 25 hours per employee in the community, adopting 25 pets and giving 250 compliments to random strangers.

"We develop communities," said Bob Ochsner, public relations director for the ad agency. "And we wanted to remind others of who we are and what we have been doing for 25 years."

Traces of 25 for 25 are evident throughout the warm, vibrant agency office, which is housed in the former Santa Ana City Hall building.

Hanging on a clothing rack next to Johanna Curgus' desk is a complete wardrobe.

Instead of simply donating random articles of clothing, the agency is waiting to gather enough pieces to create assembled outfits (with accessories to boot) that can be worn to work.

So far they have 50 completed outfits and 24 partial ones, said Curgus, an account director.

Beside (and inside) the office elevators, fliers tell of coworkers who promised to take the stairs for the duration of the project. Simply put, if you see these people in the elevator, usher them out – politely, of course.

Last week, employees such as Charity Equila volunteered their time at the Ronald McDonald House in Orange. She has been with DGWB for seven years.

"Downtown Santa Ana has developed a lot over the past few years and it was clear that we should tie in our 25 for 25 initiative into our own neighborhood," Equila said. "It's been fun being a part of DGWB's progression through the years, seeing the camaraderie within the agency, and positively impacting our community."

Many of the projects are ones that employees already spent time on outside the office. But that doesn't mean they're easily checked off.

A few still left to complete are awarding a \$2,500 scholarship to a CSUF advertising student every year for five years, trying 25 new lunch spots in Santa Ana and staffing 25 volunteers for beach cleanup events.

"We've discovered that brands are only really as good as the relationships they have with their customers and their communities," said Annie Liu, a DGWB account coordinator. "And it's no different for us."



DGWB advertising and communications members -- from left to right: Lauren Wood, Julie Esler, Charity Equila, Kristen Foss, and Sung Choi -- chat with guests after cooking breakfast for guests Thursday at Ronald McDonald House of Orange.

MICHAEL LOPEZ, ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

[Related article »](#)

[Print Photo](#)

[Share](#)

[Pin It](#)

[VIEW ALL OCREGISTER.COM GALLERIES](#)



DGWB advertising and communications co-founder Mike Weisman makes a aluminum funnel while he and his co-workers make breakfast Thursday at Ronald McDonald House of Orange.

MICHAEL LOPEZ, ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

[Related article »](#)

[Print Photo](#)

[Share](#)

[Pin It](#)

[VIEW ALL OCREGISTER.COM GALLERIES](#)



DGWB advertising and communications members -- from right to left: Mike Besack, Julie Esler, and Selena Devore -- prepare breakfast Thursday at Ronald McDonald House of Orange.

MICHAEL LOPEZ, ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

[Related article »](#)

[Print Photo](#)

[Share](#)

[Pin It](#)

[VIEW ALL OCREGISTER.COM GALLERIES](#)