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Panasonic and Ericsson Recognized for CSR & COVID-19 Response Leadership

GBA announces this year's CSR winners during virtual event, showcasing the unique ways international companies strengthen the communities in which they sustainably operate

WASHINGTON – The Global Business Alliance (formerly known as OFII) today announced Panasonic Corporation of North America as its annual Corporate Social Responsibility Award winner and Ericsson for its innovative contribution to combating the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Every year, we take a moment to recognize the incredible work that international companies conduct in the local communities in which they sustainably operate,” said **Nancy McLernon**, president and CEO of the Global Business Alliance. “Given the extraordinary moment we all find ourselves in, we thought it all the more important to spotlight a few of these stories of hope, growth and caring.”

In announcing Panasonic Corporation of North America as the organization's CSR Award Winner, and in recognizing Ericsson for its COVID-19 response, McLernon emphasized the purpose of this initiative.

“No company takes on something like this for the recognition, but we could not let such undertakings go unrecognized,” said **McLernon**. “You can learn more about all of the great initiatives our members have undertaken on our website at GlobalBusiness.org, but today, we spotlight Panasonic and Ericsson, which are emblematic of the way international companies have stepped up to support communities, first responders, and America's most vulnerable during these challenging times.”

To address the widespread gap between future tech jobs and access to science, tech, engineering, arts and math education, especially in underserved communities, the Panasonic Foundation partnered with the **Skyhook Foundation** to support Camp Skyhook's Eco-Vans initiative throughout the greater Los Angeles area. This mobile alternative to the camp located in the Angeles National Forest delivers immersive, hands-on outdoor STEM learning opportunities for students during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“There's an urgent need to introduce students to STEAM concepts at a young age before they lose interest, which, according to recent research, for more than 90% of students is before the 6th grade,” said **Jeff Werner**, Vice President, Corporate and Government Affairs at Panasonic Corporation of North America. “It moves us to support initiatives that we know will deliver these critical curriculums early and set the next generation up to thrive in and shape the 21st Century economy.”

The Skyhook Foundation's mission is to "Give Kids a Shot That Can't Be Blocked" by bringing educational STEM opportunities to underserved communities. The Skyhook Foundation's groundbreaking Eco-Van Program brings mobile classrooms to the students of Los Angeles United School District, connecting the natural world and our city, by making STEM education accessible and achievable during the pandemic. To date, Camp Skyhook has reached nearly 15,500 students, of which 80 percent learned English as a second language and over 70 percent have limited or no experiences in natural environments. View Kareem Abdul-Jabbar discuss the initiative on [CNBC's 'Closing Bell'](#). For more information: skyhookfoundation.org

Throughout the pandemic, GBA members have utilized their expertise, resources and dedicated employees to combat the COVID-19 pandemic.

"What's amazing about Ericsson's story is how they mobilized their highly-skilled workforce to share their technical expertise in deep learning to help researchers better understand this disease," said **McLernon**.

At the onset of the pandemic in the U.S., more than 350 Ericsson employees came together virtually as a volunteer team, leveraging automation and artificial intelligence (AI) techniques to create tools to accurately utilize the ever-growing set of academic papers published on the COVID-19 virus. In just 27 days, the team completed and submitted a solution for all nine tasks included within the federal government's COVID-19 Open Research Dataset Challenge (CORD-19), which aimed to develop AI tools to help the medical research community address urgent questions posed by the pandemic.

"Ericsson employees have always been eager to jump in and help, leveraging our technology for good. It's truly part of our culture where our employees embrace the responsibility to give back through selfless volunteering," said **Niklas Heuvel**, President and Head of Ericsson North America. "This was a very different challenge and a true testament to the resourcefulness and dedication of our team across the world, mobilizing quickly to help contribute to a solution for this global pandemic. Thank you Global Business Alliance for supporting international companies in the United States, and recognizing Ericsson for this award."

Ericsson's effort produced significant results in the form of research tools that enable medical professionals, public health officials and other leaders to synthesize the increasing volume of medical research on COVID-19 and related viruses that now consists of over 200,000 articles.

The CSR Awards, which were presented by GBA in a virtual event streamed earlier today, showcase the significant contributions that international companies make to local U.S. communities. Many international companies offer their employees the opportunity to volunteer and help direct the company's corporate social responsibility efforts. Finalists for this year's awards included several noteworthy initiatives.

About the Global Business Alliance

As the premier voice of international companies in the United States, the Global Business Alliance (GBA) actively promotes and defends an open economy that welcomes international companies to invest in America. Our members are American companies with global heritage and an indispensable part of our nation's economic success. When America is open for business, we all benefit. Learn more about how international companies are benefiting U.S. workers and communities by visiting www.globalbusiness.org.

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