

MITSUBISHI ELECTRIC AMERICA FOUNDATION VOLUNTEERS MOBILIZE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN HONOR OF 30TH ANNIVERSARY

1,000 Volunteers Demonstrate the Foundation's Commitment to Empower Youth with Disabilities

WASHINGTON, DC, October 29, 2020 —

Capping off a month of volunteer recruitment during National Disability Employment Awareness Month in October, the [Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation](#) announced that 1,000 [Mitsubishi Electric](#) employees, family and friends joined in Make a Difference Day activities to raise awareness of the Foundation's 30 year commitment to its mission of maximizing the potential and participation of youth with disabilities in society.



Mr. Kent Hora, President and CEO of Mitsubishi Electric US, Inc., and his wife walk to Make a Difference on Oct. 24, 2020 in California.

Volunteers in communities across the United States, as well as Canada, Colombia, Mexico, and Japan, joined the inaugural, company-wide Mitsubishi Electric Make a Difference Day virtual event on Saturday, October 24, where they walked, ran and skated in a safe, physically distanced 5K, posting photos and videos to social media with the hashtag #itmatterstoME. With the Foundation pledging a \$10 donation for each participant, the event garnered \$10,000 for nonprofit organizations focused on empowering youth with disabilities. The Foundation will also match individual employee donations dedicated to the cause.

The primary beneficiary of the monies raised was [Exceptional Minds](#), a Los Angeles-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit academy and studio for visual effects artists and animators with autism that the Foundation has supported since 2017. Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation grant funding helps provide vocational training for youth with autism to start productive careers at companies such as Walt Disney Co., Warner Bros. Entertainment, ViacomCBS, Inc. and other film studios. For its 30th anniversary and to celebrate the partnership, the Foundation commissioned Exceptional Minds' students and graduates to produce a short video that featured their employment success stories.

“As communities across the country are still grappling with the effects of the global pandemic, we wanted to provide a safe way Mitsubishi Electric volunteers could demonstrate our ongoing commitment to the Foundation’s vision of empowering youth with disabilities.,” said Kevin R. Webb, senior director of the Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation. “Exceptional Minds has successfully transitioned to providing quality distance education, which is leading to competitive, remote employment opportunities for people with autism. We wanted to draw attention to the organization’s success and demonstrate that volunteers can continue to help make a difference, even in these difficult times.”



*Mitsubishi Electric Automotive America, Inc.
volunteers walk in Michigan.*

In addition to Exceptional Minds, volunteers at Mitsubishi Electric Automotive America, Inc. near Detroit, Michigan took advantage of the Make a Difference Day opportunity to support two local schools providing special education services, raising \$3,000 for [Cooke School](#), and the [Redford Union Oral Program for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing](#).

In preparation for National Disability Employment Awareness Month, the Foundation hosted its Annual Volunteer Leadership Workshop on September 25 followed by a series of training sessions throughout October. The virtual events involved more than two dozen employee volunteer leaders across Mitsubishi Electric’s U.S. corporate headquarters and seven business divisions. At the kick-off, Exceptional Minds debuted [What is Your Superpower?!](#), an animated video that combines live video interviews and character animation, and highlights the talent and creativity of artists on the spectrum, which effectively illustrates the Foundation’s vision

“The video was the perfect way to lead us into the 75th anniversary of National Disability Employment Awareness Month because it demonstrated what’s possible when youth with disabilities are empowered and trained in a profession they obviously love,” said Webb. “Exceptional Minds students and graduates created a powerful work of art that will serve as a high-quality portfolio piece that demonstrates their creative and technical talent to prospective employers.”

The Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation, based in the Washington, DC area, was established in 1991 by Mitsubishi Electric Corporation and the Mitsubishi Electric U.S. companies, which produce, sell and distribute a wide range of consumer, industrial, commercial and professional electronics products. The Foundation has contributed more than \$17 million to organizations that are empowering young people with disabilities to lead more inclusive and productive lives. It was also recently recognized by Nuts, Bolts & Thingamajigs®, the charitable foundation of the Fabricators & Manufacturers Association, International®, as a recipient of the 2020 Impact on Industry Award.

To learn more, visit www.MEAF.org.

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