



Arkansas Oklahoma Gas Co.

# 2020 Community Engagement Report



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# Message from our CEO

2020 was a difficult year for our customers, the communities we serve and members of our team. I couldn't be prouder of how quickly our team reacted to the COVID-19 pandemic, transitioned to the 'new normal' and immediately went to work focusing on how to be part of the solution in the communities we serve throughout Arkansas and Oklahoma.

As the COVID-19 pandemic began to take a toll on the economy along with our friends and neighbors, AOG immediately transitioned to a remote work environment. We also procured new personal protection equipment to protect our team members and customers while we provided continuous essential natural gas service to communities throughout Arkansas and Oklahoma.

Additionally, we quickly donated \$20,000 to nonprofit organizations throughout the Fort Smith area. Our donations focused on remedying the financial, educational and health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, while also supporting additional charitable efforts with our volunteer time off program.

While this year was difficult for all of us, we have so much to be proud of, including AOG earning the designation of being one of Arkansas 2020 Best Places to Work. This outstanding honor is a testament to our culture. We have worked hard to build a diverse and inclusive workforce so that we can continue to achieve our mission of providing energy solutions to our customers and community members with exceptional customer service and commitment to the community. I am filled with gratitude every day to lead such an incredible team of people.

Overall, we learned that together, in partnership with the communities we serve, we can make a difference regardless of how difficult the circumstances. We truly are all in this together.

Kurt Adams  
President and CEO

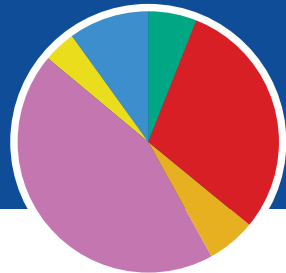




# Volunteerism

In 2020, AOG provided members of our team\* with 20 hours of paid time off to use volunteering with non-profit organizations in the communities we serve. This year, even amid the new safety precautions brought on by COVID-19, AOG team members donated just over 734 hours of volunteer time. Creative social distancing practices allowed for individual AOG team members to volunteer and serve on local nonprofit boards via virtual meeting capabilities. While many team members use their 20 hours to volunteer for individual causes, in 2020, AOG team members prioritized their health and safety by choosing socially distanced volunteer opportunities. The various opportunities included manning a call center for a local non-profit, distributing facemasks to community members on behalf of the City of Fort Smith, and sorting cleaning, and organizing a food closet for an area charity. AOG individual team members were the primary volunteer group that collected food boxes via "porch pickup" in our tri-county service area. All of the food collected benefited area cancer patients and homebound elderly for the holidays.

*\*Benefits for some positions in Arkansas and Oklahoma are governed by a Collective Bargaining Agreement and may differ from the benefits we provide to our other employees.*



**734**  
Volunteer Hours

HRS	CAUSE
44.05	Environmental & Conservation
220.28	Basic Human Needs & Energy
44.05	Educational
323.07	Community Enrichment
29.37	Veterans
73.43	Other



## Partners in Education Darby Junior High

Each year, AOG participates in The Partners in Education Program, which establishes mutually beneficial relationships between businesses and schools. Participating businesses and schools commit themselves to reciprocal activities that are based on their needs and resources. AOG's school partner is Darby Jr. High in Fort Smith where we contributed school supplies and most notably, Wi-Fi support. In mid-March, upon receiving notification that schools would be adjusting to online instruction due to the COVID-19 pandemic, AOG's IT team swiftly responded by refurbishing ten Verizon Jetpack hotspot devices for use to underserved Darby Jr. High students who may need connectivity assistance to do online homework. These devices can be used to access the internet on a smartphone, tablet, laptop, or Chromebook. A total of forty devices were allocated to service area schools where AOG agreed to support these devices allowing for students to complete coursework through the close of the 2020 school year.







# Energy Efficiency

Since 2013, AOG has spent approximately \$2.7 million on energy efficiency programs for customers. This includes no cost weatherization for severely energy inefficient homes as well as rebates for heating equipment, water heaters and smart thermostats. In Arkansas, AOG partners with Oklahoma Gas & Electric to provide the free weatherization services. This helps reduce monthly energy bills, increases efficiency, and reduces emissions, while customers enjoy the reliability and comfort of natural gas. From 2013 to 2019, AOG's energy efficiency programs helped reduce carbon emissions by about 21,000 metric tons<sup>[1]</sup>. That is equivalent to taking 4,548 cars off the road or offsetting the emissions of 2,428 homes<sup>[2]</sup>.

<sup>[1]</sup>Based on an independent evaluation from ADM Associates using guidance from the "Arkansas Technical Reference Manual, Version 7.0"

<sup>[2]</sup>Source: <https://www.epa.gov/energy/greenhouse-gas-equivalencies-calculator>



\$2.7 million  
invested



4,548  
cars off the road

We're all in this  
**Together**

# Community Giving

AOG is dedicated to the people we serve and will continue to commit resources that maintain and improve Arkansas and Oklahoma's sense of community. Whether it is providing funding for community events and services or offering funding to local organizations for community-building efforts.

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, we immediately donated \$20,000 to a variety of nonprofit organizations who were focused on remedying the financial, educational and health impact brought on by the pandemic.

## 2020 COVID-19 Relief Awardees:

- Area on Aging of Western Arkansas
- Community Services Clearinghouse
- Disabled American Veterans  
Fort Smith Chapter
- The Salvation Army
- United Way of Fort Smith  
COVID-19 Response Fund



The Salvation Army was swiftly able to assist 20 families with past due utility bills which piled up due to temporary job loss.



## Community Giving Program

AOG sponsors many events throughout the year in the communities we serve.

*Some of the 2020 events include:*

- Health awareness programs
- School events
- Home showcases
- The United Way Day of Caring
- HVACR Chapter meetings
- Veterans causes
- Police / State Troopers / Fire / EMT
- A blood drive

In addition to sponsoring events, AOG sponsors team members in events that they or their children are participating in and contributes to local nonprofit organizations annually, *including:*

- Arkansas Family Alliance
- Girl's Inc.
- Lupus I Care
- Partners in Education – Darby Jr High
- Poteau Kiwanis Club
- RAM Art Center
- Single Parent Scholarship Fund
- The United Way



The United Way mobilizes our community in ways that no single agency, individual or government can, to enhance the ability of people to care for one another. For more than a decade, AOG has partnered with the United Way to raise money for charitable organizations throughout the communities it serves. In 2020, amid the coronavirus pandemic, AOG swiftly allocated \$10K in COVID-19 relief funds that were immediately distributed to families and individuals who called the United Way 2-1-1 Community Resource line identifying themselves as needing utility assistance. Additionally, AOG team members give generously to the United Way by way of volunteerism to area nonprofits and many individuals give monetarily with the understanding that AOG matches overall employee contributions up to \$5,000 annually.







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