



The Charitable Side of Sears



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I enjoyed many great experiences during my 9 years at Sears, but one in particular stands out.

Sometime in 2010 or 2011 my colleague and friend, Diana Pace—Kids Marketing Manager--told me about a subway poster she saw for a cause called "Because I am a Girl". I was Trend Director; Diana and I were looking for a marketing angle for our newly created tween brand, Girl Confidential.

We knew nothing about Corporate Social Responsibility or charitable strategies, so to say we were out of our depth is an understatement. But Diana " cold called" Plan Canada and well, the rest is history.

The word "progressive" is not known for being associated with Sears and the word "disruptive" had not entered the popular lexicon, but we most certainly employed many progressive thinkers and quiet disrupters throughout my tenure. My story begins before Calvin and Brandon arrived on the scene; in my books, they were Sears' two top disrupters!)

At the time we pitched the Plan partnership, the only big concern was how to make it relevant and meaningful in the already robust Charitable Portfolio. At the time Sears supported Sears Drama Festival, Design Exchange, Girls and Boys Clubs and Paediatric Cancer centres across Canada--too many to mention here.

The idea of supporting girls was not exactly new, but this was before Malala Yousafzai was a mainstream name, before Emma Watson spoke to the UN about He For She , and before the Women's March. Diana and I were both so passionate about this cause and were concerned we would be shut down, so we invited Paula Roberts and her Plan Canada team to help pitch the idea. She sealed the deal for all of us.

5 years and \$500,000 raised to support girls later, I am incredibly proud of my company!

I speak for everyone involved with Because I Am a Girl at Sears, as well as our myriad other giving initiatives. Now, not only are the waves of liquidation shuttering our stores, but our substantial charitable footprint has also been washed away.

Our charities relied on Sears. Now I'm relying on you...to find it in your heart to help me help the Sears philanthropic legacy live on by supporting one, two or more of them when you think about giving.

Vince Power helped me excavate the Plan Canada plaque commemorating our support from Hogwarts (aka the Archive Room beneath the escalator on the 4th floor).

A great big shout out to Vince Power, Alicia Richler Kalman ,Dwight Skeates ...and everyone involved over the years in making Sears one of the best Canadian corporate citizens.

It truly does take a village.

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