

Be Kind Daily



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Uplifting stories during unsettling times.

March 2020 was the beginning of many changes for BKD as COVID-19 upended life as we knew it. Throughout the coming months, BKD CEO Ted Dickman implemented a series of internal weekly messages to promote transparency and keep the firm connected and updated on relevant news. But after the first several weeks, Ted realized his messages needed an important addition—a new segment focused on positive news and updates from around BKD.

After he heard from his daughter, Maria, about John Krasinski's YouTube series, "**Some Good News**," Ted realized it would be an excellent opportunity to implement a similar feature for the firm. This article brings some of those highlights to you.

Serving heroes in the healthcare community



LICAA has donated massive quantities of PPE equipment for immediate use to dozens of hospitals, including NYU Winthrop Hospital, the designated hospital for treating COVID-19 patients.

Senior Managing Consultant Koren Chen of BKD's New York location specializes in advisory services for special needs organizations. After recognizing New York City's medical community was in dire need of qualified personal protective equipment (PPE) during COVID-19, Koren and additional volunteers with the Long Island Chinese American Association (LICAA) were eager to offer support. Aided by immediate and tremendous community donations, LICAA was able to purchase and donate tens of thousands of face masks for healthcare workers on the front lines of the global pandemic.

Koren has volunteered with LICAA since its inception in 2014 and became the board treasurer in 2018. Over the past few years, the volunteer-led organization has hosted many substantial cultural events and attracted thousands to join.

"We quickly formed a group of about 20 volunteers to lead this project," says Koren. "We separated into distinct functions: researching reliable PPE sources, logistics, quality control, data collection on PPE needs, legal, accounting, etc. We've donated more than 130,000 KN95 and surgical masks, 3,000 gowns, face shields, and glasses to those in need."

Elsewhere in New York, Managing Director Deborah Lynch responded to critical outreach from the Empire State Association of Assisted Living (ESAAL). New York City Emergency Management had PPE available to give to the city's adult care facilities, but they weren't able to determine an appropriate site for coordinating these deliveries. ESAAL contacted Deborah for assistance in obtaining a site, and she is now in charge of coordinating and receiving the delivery from this office of more than 4,500 PPE items, which include masks, face guards, and gowns. She is involved in portioning these items and distributing them to more than 15 adult care facilities.

Chicago Partner Michael Senko's wife, Kelly, worked tirelessly making masks and delivering them to various locations. In addition, she and a friend have raised more than \$2,000 in donations and worked with Jimmy John's to provide meals for firefighters and three local hospitals.



Michael Senko's wife, Kelly, and a friend give support to local firefighters and three hospitals.

In Colorado, Denver Partner Rob McCoy's wife, Kristine, made masks for Tad Goodenbour, a partner in BKD's Colorado Springs office. Rob and Kristine figured Tad hadn't had the time to find masks amid completing a considerable amount of Paycheck Protection Program work for his clients, so the couple drove to Colorado Springs with a care package—masks, homemade banana bread, and more.

"Our clients are looking to us as their trusted advisors. We need to be there to respond to their questions and concerns, and it doesn't hurt to have a little banana bread along the way," says Tad.

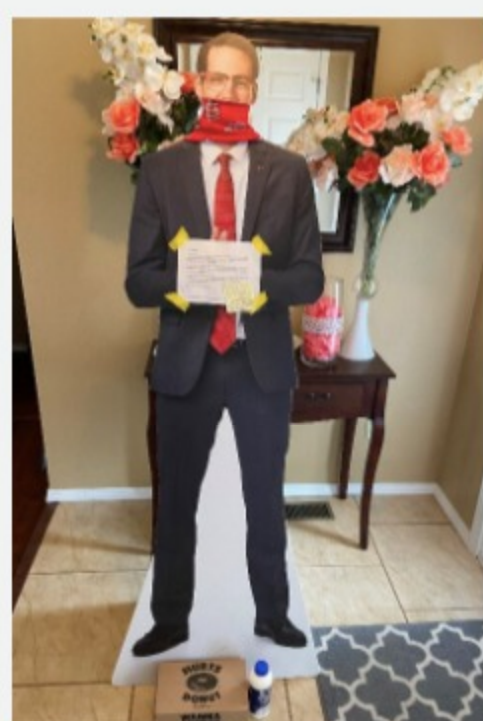
Tad even helped a client apply for a loan in excess of \$4 million. Above all, the client appreciated Tad's commitment to understanding the rapidly changing rules and regulations around COVID-19. When the U.S. Small Business Administration and U.S. Department of the Treasury issued guidance in the evening, Tad thoroughly reviewed the new information and emailed his client the same night with his thoughts and interpretations.

Knock, knock—it's Ben!

Simple gestures can have meaningful effects—especially when they involve food.

More than 20 international students attending the same church as Innovation Product Manager John Yoo were unable to return to their homes overseas during lockdown, so John and additional church members prepared and delivered nourishment to the student dorms.

In Houston, Partner Tracy Young and his wife, Lisa, joined neighbors in providing an Italian dinner to all of the ER and ICU doctors and nurses at the Houston Methodist hospital in Sugarland. And in Wichita, Recruiting Director Jerica Newby delivered homemade cookies to the administrative staff still working in the office.



Ben embodies BKD's **Unmatched Client Service** standards and is an extension of the firm's PRIDE values. Sometimes he's a Cardinals fan, but it depends on whose house he's visiting.

BKDs also are lending a helping hand to each other. Across the firm, BKDs have been receiving surprise "visits" from Ben—half of BKD's brand persona—accompanied with personalized notes and various treats.

Springfield Director Ryan Sivill and his team sent Ben to Senior Associate Austin Nesom's home, where Austin was greeted with a note recognizing his hard work, and cookies from the local Aviary Café. Associate Justin Kim sent an appropriately masked Ben to visit Senior Manager Rebecca Barrientos with Hurts Donuts.

"BKD does an awesome job recognizing their employees and I could not be more thankful," says Austin. "Cookies are nice, but the gesture, comments, and overall good spirits are really what matter to me. These many acts of kindness are one of the many things that make this firm great."

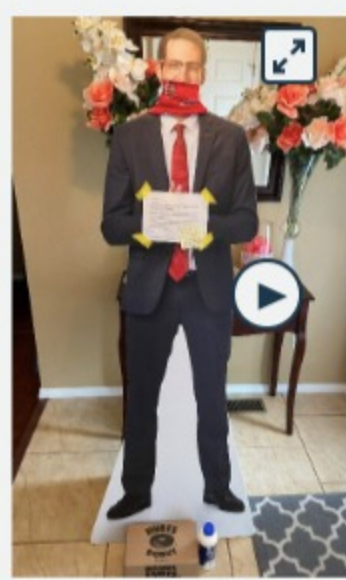
Keep the good news coming

Work meetings, church services, and even grocery shopping look different, but BKDs have continually displayed resilience in their adjustment and innovation during COVID-19. As many local organizations were unable to operate when shelter-in-place restrictions were first put in place, Director Jason Corson has been assisting his church leadership with facilitating the streaming of services each Sunday. He spends his personal time on Friday and nearly the entire day on Saturday to make sure the services reach homes each week in the Springfield, Missouri, area.

In addition, members of BKD's St. Louis and Decatur offices organized a Zoom video meeting to celebrate Tax Partner Gene Morgenthaler's last April 15 with the firm. After 39 years of incredible service in public accounting, Gene retired on May 31, 2020. The retirement celebration may have looked different, but the sentiment was as present as ever.

Finally, if it weren't for quarantine times, the firm's abundance of musical talent just may have gone unheard. Tulsa Managing Director Craig Steen wrote the lyrics to "Pandemic Man"—a parody of Elton John's classic "Rocket Man"—and the lyrics made their way into Regional Managing Partner Tom Watson's inbox. Tom was then inspired to challenge the entire firm to submit their best audio/visual performance of "Pandemic Man." BKDs broke out their guitars, pianos, and William Shatner impressions to give their best rendition of the newest hit.

Instilling an intentional approach to share good news around the firm has helped keep spirits lifted and focused in a positive direction. We can't change our circumstances, but we can choose to act, think, and speak with purpose. At BKD, we choose to be kind daily.



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* Last Name

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* What's your story?

This form collects your information, so we may fulfill your request. You confirm you are over the age of 16 and consent to data processing in accordance to the terms of our [Privacy Policy](#) and [Terms of Use](#), which explain how we protect, manage, and use your data.

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Do you know a BKDer with admirable community involvement, interesting hobbies, exciting accomplishments, or a unique client story? We want to hear all about it! For more information or to submit, contact bkdlife@bkd.com.