From Acorns
Grow Mighty Oaks
“Large streams from little fountains flow,  
Tall oaks from little acorns grow.”  
~ D. Everett in The Columbian Orator, 1797
Take RPM, for example. It was founded in 1947, when Frank C. Sullivan formed the company with a single product – a roof coating called Alumanation. Like most entrepreneurs, he was driven to start a business, build it into something great and leave a lasting legacy. Sales in the first year were $90,000. Today, RPM is a global business with hundreds of products and $5 billion in annual sales. Clearly, he achieved his goals.

Thanks to RPM’s continued success, we are fortunate to have the opportunity to direct some of our resources toward the communities in which we operate so they, too, can grow and succeed. In some cases, we harness our founder’s entrepreneurial spirit and apply it to launching new community initiatives from the ground up to meet unmet areas of need. You’ll find several examples of our “community entrepreneurship” on the pages that follow.

This need to support our communities is rooted deep in RPM’s culture. It stems from a philosophy we call The Value of 168. That figure was our founder’s favorite number because it represents the number of hours in a week. For him, it was a reminder that time is fleeting and that we should make the most of it, whether with our families, at work or in our charitable endeavors.

Over the past five years, RPM has donated or pledged nearly $7 million to approximately 275 organizations and provided an estimated $100,000 annually in in-kind donations. However, our community involvement is more than just signing checks; it’s partnering with select charitable organizations to deliver programs and services to constituents that go far beyond the impact of monetary donations. With help from our employees, RPM often multiplies the value of our cash contributions by bringing private sector expertise to bear in the non-profit sector.

In addition to the charitable activities of RPM’s lean corporate headquarters staff, our more than 14,000 employees and 60 operating companies worldwide have their own corporate contribution budgets that they use to make a difference in their own communities. Here in Northeast Ohio, more than 1,000 RPM employees at our Tremco Incorporated, Euclid Chemical Company and Day-Glo Color Corp. subsidiaries further the impact that RPM has on the community through their own involvement in a wide variety of civic endeavors, as well as separate corporate contributions.

We are proud of RPM’s positive impact on our community and are pleased to share some of the results with you.

Sincerely,

Randell McShepard
Vice President – Public Affairs

Frank C. Sullivan
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer
A Lasting Legacy

Reflected in the Culture of RPM

Thomas C. Sullivan
Retired Chairman and CEO
RPM International Inc.
For decades, Tom and RPM have supported Urban Community School, which primarily serves children from low-income families on Cleveland’s Near West Side.

During his five decades leading RPM, Tom Sullivan began many business practices that are hallmarks of RPM’s business success today, including an acquisition program that attracts and retains entrepreneurs, a disciplined planning process, a sense of urgency, and adherence to the highest standards of corporate governance and business ethics. He also set an example of giving back to the community.

In August 1971, Tom – at age 34, with six young children at home – was thrust into the role as RPM’s leader after his father and the company’s founder, Frank C. Sullivan, died suddenly. As he set out to aggressively grow the then $11 million company, extensive business travel was a necessity, putting much of the child-rearing duties on his wife, Sandy. Sandy was very interested in community service, but the duties of raising six children precluded this. Tom told her that after the children were grown, he would not only support her desire of community involvement, but he would be an active participant in it.

Tom was true to his word and jumped in with both feet, a checkbook in one hand and his time and talent as a business leader in the other. To be sure, RPM corporately supports the community’s marquee charitable causes, but Tom’s personal focus was on great causes often overlooked and in need of business acumen in addition to funding.

Tom focused on Cleveland’s Near West Side, the original destination of many Irish American immigrants, from which he descended. Through board service, he funded and supported several organizations in this area, including West Side Ecumenical Ministry, May Dugan Center, Malachi House (co-founded by his sister, Kaki O’Neill) and Urban Community School.

In this latter case, when Tom became involved with UCS, it was a private, non-denominational elementary school serving underprivileged youth, with the goal of getting them high school and college scholarships. But it was housed in an ancient building adjacent to St. Malachi Church, supplemented by rusted trailers. In 2003, Tom co-chaired a capital campaign that netted $16 million, $9.6 million of which was used to build a new school nearby. With another capital campaign of $20 million launched in 2011, a middle school was funded, and enrollment now stands at more than 500, with a goal of 600 by 2020.

While much of Tom and Sandy’s philanthropy is focused on education, it is not limited to it. Tom was instrumental in the formation of the Gordon Square Arts District, which has become a transformational catalyst in the Detroit Shoreway area of Cleveland’s West Side. In addition to a sizeable personal contribution, he encouraged friends to contribute and served as a business advisor for several years.

Tom and Sandy’s philanthropy is directed through the Thomas C. and Sandra S. Sullivan Foundation, as well as the Sullivan Scholars program, which provides dozens of scholarships annually for inner city children to attend parochial high schools.

The philanthropy of Tom and Sandy was recognized in 2006 by the Jewish Federation of Cleveland, which bestowed its prestigious Charles Eisenman Award for Community Service to its first Roman Catholic honorees.

Clearly, Tom and Sandy have left a lasting legacy on all of the organizations they have touched over the years. Their approach to community service is one to emulate.
City Year Cleveland has celebrated more than 20 years of dedication to helping students in Cleveland reach their full potential and graduate high school. City Year focuses on the educational needs of high-poverty schools to transform student achievement.
From the very beginning, RPM has lent a helping hand to City Year, a program dedicated to keeping at-risk youths in school and on track to graduation. The Cleveland chapter started as a tiny bud, after RPM helped launch it in 1996. For more than two decades, RPM has served as both a financial and strategic partner, continuing to support, develop and grow the program into the mighty oak it is today.

The nation’s public high school graduation rate hit a record high of 83% for the Class of 2014. However, the nation continues to suffer from severe gaps in graduation rates affecting students of color, from low-income families, with disabilities and learning the English language. Ohio is one of 10 states that graduates less than 70% of students in these subgroups. In the Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD), the graduation rate is 66%, according to a state report card.

With support from RPM, City Year is determined to bridge the gap at the CMSD by working one-on-one with students at risk of failing or dropping out. City Year Cleveland participants are collaborating with the CMSD to provide tutoring and mentoring to children attending public schools in Cleveland. City Year serves more than 3,000 students and mentors 789 off-track students in attendance, behavior, math and English each year.

Since its launch, City Year Cleveland has graduated more than 1,400 young adults who have collectively exceeded 2 million hours of service. Graduates who have completed 1,700 hours of service are given a $5,815 Segal AmeriCorps Education Award to apply toward an undergraduate or graduate college degree program.

In recent years, RPM has made its facilities available to City Year Cleveland for retreats and meetings. Randell McShepard, City Year’s first Cleveland leader and RPM’s current vice president of public affairs, served on City Year’s 20th Anniversary advisory committee, overseeing events and community outreach.

“RPM has been an exceptional champion, advisor and strategic partner to City Year Cleveland since our inception 20 years ago. Much of our growth and success in transitioning our strategic focus towards public education reform is due in large part to RPM’s unwavering support, financial investment, and dedicated partnership. RPM’s commitment to City Year has enabled us to expand our program and increase our impact on the academic and personal success of thousands of at-risk Cleveland Metropolitan School District students.”

- Toi D. Comer, Vice President and Executive Director, City Year Cleveland
A Sapling Takes Root

Celebrating 10 Years of Success

- 557 graduates
- 949 students admitted
- $24.3 million in student scholarships awarded
- 10 ivy league scholars
- 14 national merit scholars
The Cleveland School of Science and Medicine (CSSM) has taken root and continues to grow and thrive from the tiny seed it once was. RPM executives have supported CSSM for more than a decade. They championed and funded CSSM’s launch in 2006 and remain financially supportive and involved with its board of directors.

Frank Sullivan of RPM was a major influence in the creation of the school, as he proposed the school’s concept to the CMSD after it had renovated the former John Hay High School and was seeking a new use for the structure. He wanted to capitalize on Cleveland’s emergence as a medical powerhouse. CSSM formed a board of directors made up of business, health care and education executives – including Sullivan and McShepard – to make this vision a reality.

Today, CSSM partners with the CMSD and nine world-class Cleveland medical institutions to prepare students for success in postsecondary education and careers in science, medicine and related fields. Students gain networking and field experience with University Hospitals, the Cleveland Clinic, Case Western Reserve University’s School of Medicine, the Northeast Ohio Medical University and Cleveland State University.

CSSM offers a unique college-preparatory education for motivated, high-achieving students interested in science or health-related professions. The rigorous study regimen at CSSM, which includes extended hours and Saturday classes, coupled with high-quality educators from neighboring institutions, has resulted in 100% of CSSM graduates continuing their education in college. Students have been accepted into Ivy League schools such as Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Columbia and Dartmouth. Further, 85% of graduates have received some or total scholarship support.

CSSM has been designated Academically Excellent by the State of Ohio and named “One of America’s Best High Schools” by U.S. News and World Report.

“RPM International has been a dynamic sponsor of the Cleveland School of Science and Medicine from its inception over a decade ago. In that time, the lives of hundreds of students, families and faculty members have been enriched by this company’s deep commitment to public service and urban education. Whether engaging faculty members in opportunities for professional growth, supporting innovative academic programming or providing mentorships for students, RPM employees invest their time, talent and treasure toward advancing the mission of our school. We are incredibly grateful to have the ongoing support of this unique, community-minded company!”

- Michelle Perez, Principal, Cleveland School of Science and Medicine
A center focused on improving educational opportunity for foster care youth has planted itself at Cleveland State University (CSU). RPM is a supporter of The Pratt Center – Fostering Success and Leadership, a CSU program focused on better supporting students who have exited the foster care system. According to a recent study, only 10% of former foster care youth will attend college, and of that 10%, only 3% will graduate. RPM is working to increase these odds as it supports the growth and development of the new center.
When children age out of foster care, they abruptly become ineligible to receive state assistance with housing, food and medical care under the foster care system, making the transition to adulthood difficult. With more than 1,000 Ohio young adults aging out of foster care annually, Frank and Barbara Sullivan recognized a need to create support for students exiting the system. They pursued a solution with determination and later incorporated RPM into the cause as well. The Pratt Center is a mere seed now, but is growing rapidly. It provides expanded academic support services, as well as personal and professional development activities, for more than 70 Cleveland State University students who have aged out of foster care.

Frank and Barbara Sullivan wanted to help the university increase the impact of its efforts to assist former foster care students through the higher educational process, so they provided a generous financial gift that kicked off The Pratt Center. The center is designed to provide personal support and mentoring services. Workshops that teach tools like financial literacy, stress management and study skills are offered to these students.

The Pratt Center builds on the Sullivan/Deckard Scholars Opportunity program, which provides scholarships for tuition and year-round living expenses to select foster care students. The program was created by the Sullivans, along with Jenniffer and Daryl Deckard. Jenniffer serves on the RPM board of directors. The program aims to help students make a smooth transition to independent living, develop personally and professionally, and ultimately earn a degree. Each year, 10 students who have aged out of foster care are awarded full scholarships to CSU.

Both The Pratt Center and the Sullivan/Deckard Scholars Opportunity program are essential assets for CSU’s goal to be the “go-to” university for those who have aged out of foster care. In the 2017 freshman class, 13 students have self-identified as having been in foster care.

“Foster children are one of the more at-risk populations in society, and one of the least likely groups to obtain a college degree. The Pratt Center creates a holistic support system that gives this population the tools necessary to succeed academically and generates a pathway for these young people to realize their career aspirations. This would not be possible without the generous support of Frank and Barbara Sullivan, which builds upon a long and productive relationship between RPM and CSU. RPM also provides numerous internships for CSU students and serves as a major employer of our graduates. CSU is proud to work together with RPM to improve our community.”

- Dr. Ronald Berkman, President, Cleveland State University
Branching Out
to Create Greater Impact in the Community

RPM’s community involvement extends well beyond simply writing checks. Many of our employees give their time and talents to help area non-profits achieve their missions.
The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland is the fifth oldest legal aid organization in the United States and has been resolving fundamental problems for those with low incomes since 1905. The high-quality legal services provided by Legal Aid hit close to home for RPM.

Edward Moore, RPM’s senior vice president, general counsel and chief compliance officer, adopted two children, Aziza and Jean-Marie, from the war-torn Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2009. Unbeknownst to Moore, Legal Aid had obtained visas for the children to come to the United States two years prior. When Moore found out how much Legal Aid had helped his family, he began financially supporting the organization and then joined the Legal Aid board of directors.

RPM’s ties to Legal Aid began when it supported the organization with a grant to fund Legal Aid’s work to remove legal barriers to healthcare in a medical-legal partnership with MetroHealth Hospital. Legal Aid attorneys ensure shelter, safety and economic stability for MetroHealth patients and help improve health outcomes through this work.

RPM then transitioned to general operating support of Legal Aid and became an event sponsor. Along with financial support, in-house RPM attorneys volunteer their time at pro-bono legal clinics sponsored by Legal Aid. RPM’s involvement has allowed Legal Aid to deliver on its mission to bring justice to the poor.

Legal Aid staff and volunteers provide advice, representation, community outreach, education and board-based solutions to systematic issues that affect the low-income population. The organization’s three main areas of focus are: access to justice; economics and education; and health, shelter and safety. Legal Aid’s clients are low-income people who live in or have a legal problem in Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake or Lorain County.

“The work Legal Aid does in Northeast Ohio helps bring fairness and justice to thousands of people each year. Legal Aid accomplishes these outcomes by using the power of the law to help those who are poor and vulnerable. I am honored to be able to assist Legal Aid in that work.”

- Edward W. Moore, Senior Vice President, General Counsel and Chief Compliance Officer, RPM International Inc.
Beech Brook has been serving Northeast Ohio for more than 165 years. As a leading behavioral health agency, Beech Brook serves more than 15,000 children, youth and families each year through programs that emphasize the promotion of healthy child development, strengthening resiliency and enhancing family stability.

Foster care and adoption, family preservation and outpatient counseling are among the programs that Beech Brook offers to support youth and families. Its mission is to help children and families become healthy, self-sufficient, contributing members of safe and stable communities.

“It is very satisfying to be part of Beech Brook’s long and distinguished legacy of 165 years of service to Northeast Ohio. I am particularly proud of our community-based services that reach people where they live, work and go to school. Our dedicated staff truly makes a difference every day in the lives of some of our most vulnerable neighbors.”

~ Tracy Crandall, Vice President - Associate General Counsel and Assistant Secretary, RPM International Inc.

RPM is a corporate sponsor of Beech Brook’s annual fundraising event, the Beech Ball, helping to support Beech Brook’s mission and growth. The Beech Ball supports the organization’s goal to provide critical services to Northeast Ohio’s most vulnerable children and families. The proceeds from Beech Ball help to ensure the success of Beech Brook’s community-based prevention and early intervention programs. RPM has been a major sponsor of the event for many years.

Tracy Crandall, RPM vice president, associate general counsel and assistant secretary, serves on Beech Brook’s board of directors and has been co-chair of the Beech Ball event for more than five years. Each year, Crandall has taken a leadership role in securing corporate sponsorships from major corporations throughout the region, which is critical to the Beech Ball’s success.

165 years

15,000 children, youth and families each year
United Way

RPM has achieved Pacesetter status for helping United Way of Greater Cleveland grow and achieve great things, particularly in its home community of Medina County. United Way raises funds to address the community’s most critical issues. Through the work of 128 funded programs and generosity from the community, United Way helps families and individuals with health and financial stability, ensures children are getting a good education, and gives resources needed to help those in the community achieve self-sufficiency.

Medina Creative Housing

Medina Creative Housing develops quality housing, services and support to help individuals with disabilities achieve independence. Each individual requires different levels of training, support and security, and Medina Creative Housing responds to meet those needs. Its homes allow individuals with disabilities to live in an affordable, accessible and safe neighborhood while receiving the care they need. Diana Riley, RPM’s manager of community affairs and corporate events, has served on the board of trustees since 2010 and chaired its annual benefit, Raising the Roof, for nearly a decade.

PolicyBridge

PolicyBridge is a nonpartisan, African American-led public policy think tank that researches policy issues affecting all minority communities and underserved populations. Through research reports and briefs, PolicyBridge executives analyze data and provide public policy recommendations from an economic impact perspective. RPM’s Randell McShepard, vice president of public affairs, is one of the organization’s founders. PolicyBridge’s focus areas are economic development, urban and workforce development, education, health and wellness, and social justice.
Near West Theatre

RPM has been partnering with Near West Theatre since 1999. Near West Theatre is dedicated to building strong relationships and engaging diverse people in strengthening their sense of identity, purpose and individuality through transformational theatre arts experiences.

Through financial support, technical assistance and campaign fundraising leadership, RPM supports the organization’s programs, operations, and capital campaign. In 2012, RPM stepped up to partner with Near West Theatre in pursuit of building a new, super-insulated building designed to keep the audience comfortable while reducing energy consumption. The new home to Near West Theatre opened in 2015.

The Diversity Center

The Diversity Center of Northeast Ohio is dedicated to eliminating bias, bigotry and racism. Through youth programs and addressing institutional bias in the workplace, The Diversity Center strives toward its vision of creating communities where all people are connected, respected and valued. RPM is a major sponsor for the Walk Rock & Run and Humanitarian Award events. Proceeds for these events go toward the youth programs, which serve nearly 10,000 students each year.

Community West Foundation

RPM has been a lead sponsor for the Community West Foundation’s Triumph for the Cure Golf Outing for years. Proceeds from the event provide free mammograms and breast exams to uninsured and underinsured women in the Cleveland area community. The Community West Foundation is dedicated to supporting organizations that provide basic needs of food, clothing, shelter and medical care to those who need it around Western Cuyahoga County.
RPM’s vice president of finance and controller, Keith Smiley, has provided support for those who are impacted by lung disease by volunteering with the American Lung Association. The American Lung Association is the leading organization working to save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease.

As a member of the Cleveland Celebrity Golf Tournament committee, Smiley recruits sponsors, participants and many of the auction items. Along with Smiley, RPM sponsors and participates in the Cleveland Celebrity Golf Tournament each year. It provides packages for the auction that generate additional revenue.

Over the years, the tournament has raised more than $5 million for the American Lung Association. These funds go to supporting programs and services that assist young and old who struggle to breathe, help smokers who want to quit the bad habit, and prevent adolescents from starting to smoke or use tobacco products.

“My involvement with the American Lung Association for nearly a decade has been a very rewarding experience. Over this time, I have grown and expanded my awareness of the various types of lung disease, beyond my initial concerns related to chronic asthma. Staying involved has allowed me to realize the American Lung Association is the trusted source for lung health education and lung disease research, in addition to offering support programs, services and advocacy. It is gratifying to know that with its continued research the American Lung Association will lead the way to helping Americans breathe easier.”

- Keith Smiley, Vice President - Finance and Controller, RPM International Inc.
RPM has a long tradition of supporting the Cleveland Clinic Children’s Hospital. Ron Rice, RPM’s president and chief operating officer, has headed the committee for the annual golf tournament to support the Children’s Hospital for more than ten years. Funds raised from the Cleveland Clinic Children’s golf tournament support vital research being done at Cleveland Clinic Children’s Pediatric Research Center.

Rice also became the chair of the Corporate Committee for the Children’s Gala (formerly known as the Heart Throb Ball), a fundraiser for Cleveland Clinic Children’s. The event benefits and honors young patients at the hospital who fight their medical complications with great determination.

RPM is a major sponsor for both of these events. Today, these two fundraising events generate four times more in annual proceeds since RPM’s involvement. In 2017, the Children’s Gala raised $1.2 million, with more than 800 people in attendance.

One of RPM’s subsidiaries, Rust-Oleum, made a sizable donation to the Cleveland Clinic Children’s in 2015. The gift was used to support the advancement of the research program to enhance the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of childhood disease and illness.

Cleveland Clinic Children’s Hospital is dedicated to medical, surgical and rehabilitative care of infants, children and adolescents. It is constantly rated among the “Best Children’s Hospitals” by U.S. News and World Report.
These are some of the many entities that RPM supports:

- Malachi House
- Towards Employment
- Boys and Girls Club
- Leadership Medina
- Progress with Chess
- Cogswell Hall
- May Dugan Center
- Youth Opportunities Unlimited
- Breakthrough Schools
- The Cleveland Orchestra
- The Gathering Place
- Ohio Cancer Research
- St. Vincent Charity Medical Center
- Bluecoats of Medina County
- West Side Catholic Center
- College NOW
- Boys Hope Girls Hope
- Cuyahoga Community College
- The Cleveland Playhouse
- Black Professionals Association Charitable Foundation
- The Cleveland Institute of Art
- Lutheran Metropolitan Ministries
- Esperanza
- Greater Cleveland Urban Film Festival
- The Higher Education Compact
- The Cleveland Playhouse
- Teach for America
- Community Service Alliance
- The Cleveland Orchestra
- The Cleveland Playhouse

We are proud to support these organizations and look forward to watching them grow and blossom.