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## Where Politics Just Doesn't Matter

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Have you heard the adage that says there are two things you are never supposed to discuss at a cocktail party – religion and politics?

What I've discovered in the course of running various charities and consulting for others, is that outreach and impact often tie back to both topics. Of course, this blog is not about religion. Nor is it about politics. It is about finding those non-profit organizations that you feel good about, no matter which side of the political aisle you are on.

Here's just a few examples of how our industry has stayed philanthropic rather than partisan during this political season

\* [Work Options for Women](#) contacted [Cooking Up Better Lives](#) when planning centerpieces for its annual dinner. The event is a fundraiser to provide scholarships and training for line workers in a cafeteria and kitchen WOW runs in one of Denver's new city and county buildings. WOW's mission: Build a kitchen, train the personnel, employ new workers, serve the community by providing quality food at affordable prices. Cooking Up Better Lives, in partnership with manufacturer Crestware, was pleased to provide stockpots (filled with goodies) as centerpieces that were later given to program graduates as a practical gift.

\* [Boulder Prep Alternative High School](#) here in Colorado takes on the challenge of performance as a charter school. Boulder Prep was created primarily to serve expelled, suspended and adjudicated youth, but its target population has become broader to include any students looking for a personalized college preparatory experience. With no room to store foods donated by Community Food Share, Boulder Prep contacted a local dealer who referred them to CUBL. In turn, an affordable deal was reached with Ascend Refrigeration to provide needed storage equipment.

\* This fall, philanthropic commitment in our industry reached new heights as more than \$200,000 worth of equipment and services were donated to a new kitchen for Texas' 5th largest women's shelter, [The Bridge Over Troubled Waters](#). While political debates were heated on the other side of town just a week before the election, people at the press conference for The Bridge left politics aside and stood alongside a dishwasher from Insinger Machine that symbolized the donated equipment. The result: instead of turning 800 to 1,000 women and children away because of lack of prepared meals, 60,000 more meals a year will now be served. A full list of manufacturers and dealers donating to "The Bridge" is available at [Cooking Up Better Lives web site](#).

Yes, social needs such as job training, educating those at risk or supporting women's shelters can have political undertones or philosophies surrounding them. Yet, rather than focusing on partisan differences, our industry has found a way to cross food and political lines and focus instead directly on creating positive outcomes: more job-holders, more graduates, more people fed. So, next time you're asked to contribute to one of these causes, know that our industry has ways to leave politics by the roadside and put our best efforts directly into kitchens. After all, making sure others are fed is what we know and what we do...no matter our politics.