

Patrick R. Gaston

President
Verizon Foundation

Patrick R. Gaston is president of the Verizon Foundation, one of the 15 largest corporate foundations in America, overseeing an annual budget of \$75 million and a corpus of approximately \$257 million. He is responsible for philanthropic strategy, grant-making and initiatives in the foundation's issues areas of education and literacy, family safety and health, and employee volunteerism.

Patrick has led the integration of acquired charitable entities from the former GTE and the former MCI into the Verizon Foundation, as well as directed a strategic alignment within the consolidated Verizon Foundation that has produced greater efficiencies and results from philanthropic initiatives through a targeted approach to social issues and community wellbeing. This approach leverages technology for online learning and improved program delivery, and focuses resources – both financial and volunteer – on nonprofit partners and programs that deliver measurable results.

Patrick is the architect of the Foundation's signature program for education and literacy, Verizon Thinkfinity.org, which provides free online lessons and learning resources for teachers, students of all ages, parents of school age children and afterschool programs. In 2008, Verizon Thinkfinity.org attracted over 47 million visits, and twice has been named the best Web site for free learning materials and lessons by the readers of *Edutopia*.

During his more than 25 years of service for Verizon, Patrick has served in a variety of management positions in operations, marketing, human resources, strategic planning and government relations. Prior to his appointment as president of the foundation in December 2003, he served as executive director of Verizon's Strategic Alliances Group, where he led the development of Verizon's corporate responsibility program and was responsible for overseeing corporate responsibility initiatives and managing national community affairs.

Patrick sits on a number of national nonprofit boards, including the NAACP SCF Board of Trustees, America's Charities, the Foundation of the University of West Indies, The Conference Board Contributions Council and the World Institute on Disability, and he serves as a Vice Chair of the Business Committee of The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Patrick also is a member of the board of directors of Bed Bath & Beyond, Inc., a publicly-traded company that operates a nationwide chain of retail stores. Patrick is a fellow at the Aspen Institute, and was named as one of the top 100 most influential African-Americans in corporate America by *Savoy Professional* magazine. He has served as a guest lecturer at several universities, including Rutgers University and Dartmouth College, and speaks frequently at national venues on the subjects of corporate responsibility and philanthropy.

Patrick was raised in Boston, Massachusetts, and holds a bachelor's degree in management from the University of Massachusetts and a master's degree in business administration from Northeastern University. He earned an International Certificate in Business from Ecole Supérieure de Commerce in Reims, France.