

Honor Among Business Owners: These B Corps Are I Code for Corporate America

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There's a whole new generation of entrepreneurs who are raising the bar on what it means to be socially conscious

Wayne, Pa.-based [B Lab](#) is a non-profit organization that has created a framework against which companies can measure social responsibility. B Lab ranks companies on their treatment of workers, contribution to the community and impact on the environment.

While B Lab offers companies a free online assessment tool, it also offers [verified certification](#) for a fee. Companies that are certified as [B Corporations](#), or B Corps. A company that legally registers as a B Corp establishes itself as both a “for profit” and “for good” entity. B Corps cannot be sued by stakeholders for making decisions that put its mission above profit.

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In 20 states across the U.S., B Corp status has become a legal entity, akin to C Corp. or S Corp. There are currently 10 B Corp states and 10 countries and across 60 industries. More than 16,000 businesses have used B Lab's free online assessment tool to

independently.

Each year, B Lab releases a list of the Certified B Corps that scored in the top 10 percent on its social-impact assess category, which is defined as having between 10 and 49 employees, there were 26 businesses honorees this year.

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Here's our list of favorites. (For the full list of 92 businesses, see [B Lab's website](#).)

1. Channel Islands Outfitters

Based in: Santa Barbara, Calif.

What it does: paddle sports outfitter and fitness center.

Highlights: [Channel Islands Outfitters \(CIO\)](#) is an employee owned and operated company and the staff of adventure explorations, hiking and backpacking expeditions in the area.

2. Highland Craftsmen, Inc

Based in: Spruce Pine, N.C.

What it does: Makes and sells architectural tools for building, design and furniture professional companies and individuals. One of its most known products is a home-siding shingle that is made out of a waste product of the logging industry.

Highlights: More than 50 percent of the energy used at corporate facilities comes from renewable sources and more employees participate in professional development programs. Also, Highland Craftsmen keeps money in the community by ens

expenditures are reinvested into local suppliers.

3. Indigenous Designs Corporation

Based in: Santa Rosa, Calif.

What it does: Makes organic and fair trade clothing, thereby supporting artisans in some of the poorest regions of the world.

Highlights: More than half of the employees have some ownership in the company and 75 percent of employees have health care reimbursement. Also, nine out of ten suppliers that Indigenous Designs works with are either women or minority owned.

Related: [How and Why One Company Chose to Organize As a 'B Corp'](#)

4. Mal Warwick Associates

Based in: Berkeley, Calif.

What it does: Fundraising consultant for nonprofits and political organizations develop relationships with individual donors.

Highlights: More than 75 percent of office supplies are from recycled materials and one office building meets “green building” standards. Also, all employees have some ownership in the company and 100 percent of the health care premiums are covered.

5. Metropolitan Group

Based in: Portland, Ore.

What it does: Strategic communication group that serves exclusively socially responsible businesses.

Highlights: All corporate facilities are within a half mile of public transportation allowing employees to forego using a car. 100% of employees took time off to volunteer. A total of 2,000 hours of work was donated to charity groups.

6. Moving Forward Education

Based in: Emeryville, Calif.

What it does: A multi-generational tutoring and mentoring service for underserved students of color. Girls are encouraged to express their emotions and boys are taught how to access their emotions and develop impulse control.

Highlights: Employees get paid time off for community service projects. Almost half of the board of Moving Forward Education are traditionally underrepresented populations.

Related: [Why Eco-Conscious Entrepreneurs Like Method View B Corp as a Badge of Honor](#)

7. Re:Vision Architecture

Based in: Philadelphia, Penn.

What it does: Sustainable architecture and design firm.

Highlights: All employees are reimbursed for continuing education expenses, and employee health care premiums are subsidized. Three-quarters of the companies that Re:Vision works on are LEED certified. Seventy-five percent of employees take public transportation and staff is incentivized to use public transportation.

8. South Mountain Company, Inc

Based in: West Tisbury, Mass.

What it does: Employee-owned building and design company on Martha's Vineyard. Develops residential and commercial buildings and installs solar and wind energy systems and energy efficiency improvements.

Highlights: All employees are reimbursed for continuing education, all employees are paid a living wage and 100 percent of health insurance premiums are covered. Ten percent of profits go to charity.

9. The Paradigm Project

Based in: Colorado Springs, Colo.

What it does: This low-profit company goes into the developing world in partnership with global relief and development organizations such as World Vision, the World Food Program and Food 4 The Hungry to help identify projects that meet a need with an environmental focus. For example, The Paradigm Project has worked with World Vision to develop large-scale efficient cook stove programs.

Highlights: Employees get both language and skill training. Suppliers that work with The Paradigm Project are assessed for their social and environmental impact practices.

10. VIF International Education

Based in: Chapel Hill, N.C.

What it does: Largest teacher exchange sponsor in the U.S. Provides language immersion experiences. Helps schools and students through high school, develop international education programs.

Highlights: Local suppliers are given preferential consideration. VIF organizes community-service days. More than 80 percent of profits are reinvested in the company.

covered for full-time employees and some part-time employees have access to health benefits, too. Office buildings public transportation stops, giving employees an option for getting to work without driving a car.

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