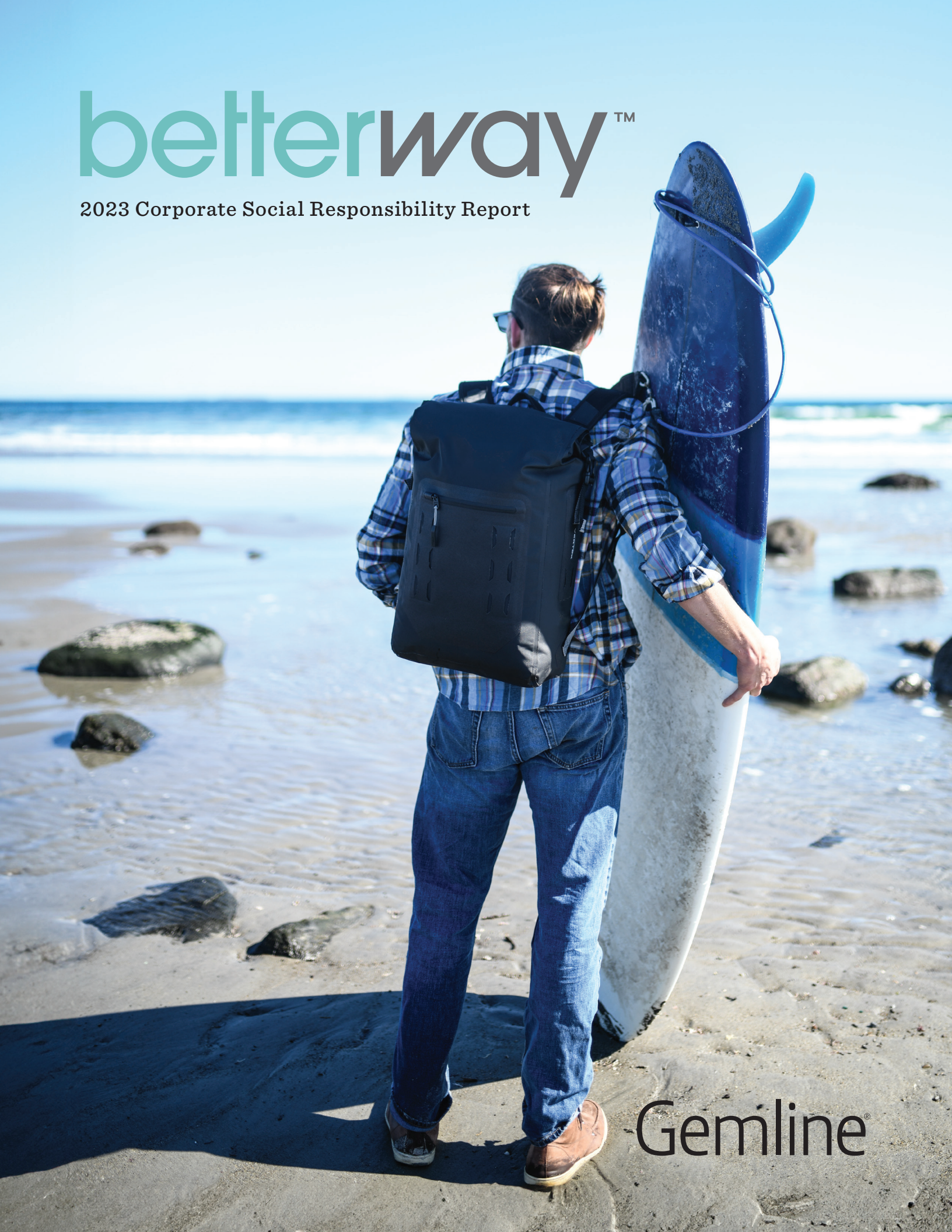
betterway™

2023 Corporate Social Responsibility Report



Gemline®

A MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP

Dear Gemline Partners,

Our purpose, "We Promote Community™," is our guiding principle. It is not just a statement; it is woven into the fabric of our culture and shapes everything we do.

Betterway™, our framework for social responsibility, reflects our commitment to making a meaningful difference and positively impacting people, the planet, and our products. Our products are created with the intention of bringing people together to create a sense of belonging and affinity.

As a recognized industry leader in corporate social responsibility and its tangible impact, we are pleased to share our 2023 accomplishments in this report. While we reflect on them with pride, we are also acutely aware that there is much more work to be done.

As we embark on this new year, we remain committed to fostering meaningful connections and driving positive change.

Sincerely,





Frank Carpenito
President & CEO

Jonathan Isaacson
Executive Chair

Our purpose, We Promote Community, drives everything we do.
It is the cornerstone of our organization's identity. Our dedication to community underpins Betterway, which prioritizes positive impacts on people, the planet and our products.

We Promote Community™



Mindset
Community is at the core of who we are and drives everything we do.



Culture
Community is embedded in our culture and is reflected in how we treat each other with dignity and respect.



Engagement
Community is evident in our commitment to making a positive impact both locally and globally.



Products
Community is supported by the products we sell, which create connections and increase affinity between people.



Customers
Community is embodied in the trust we build with our customers by delivering an exceptional experience.

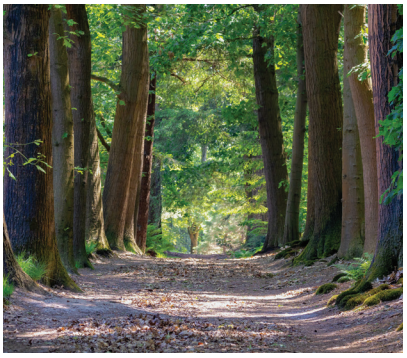
betterway™

Betterway embraces new perspectives, experiences and ideas, leading to the betterment of people and our planet, and influences the products we design as well as the partnerships we forge. With a shared vision of a better way, we are stronger together.



PEOPLE

People are the heart and soul of our business. We are committed to promoting a positive and empowering culture that is collaborative, purposeful and transparent, championing our employees, customers, communities and business partners.



PLANET

We believe in being responsible stewards of the planet. By taking purposeful action to minimize our environmental footprint, we are helping to protect our planet for generations to come.



PRODUCT

We are focused on offering responsible products that are free of chemicals that endanger people and the planet, and products that use recycled or renewable materials, and promote reuse.

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By The Numbers

2023 ACHIEVEMENTS

CHARITABLE DONATIONS

$973,000+

Donated to charitable causes that support our local community and to national partnerships with Boys & Girls Clubs of America and One Tree Planted.

SOLAR ENERGY PRODUCTION

39%

Reduction in reliance on traditional power sources as a result of the installation of a Solar Power Generation System at our Lawrence, MA headquarters.

PVC ELIMINATION

94%

Of our product line is PVC-free.

ENERGY SAVINGS

169,140kWh

(Kilowatts)

Electricity generated from the conversion of 225.52 tons of trash.

ZERO LANDFILL

0%

Waste to landfill. We diverted 100% of waste from Gemline's Lawrence, MA facility to an alternate disposal source for the 5th consecutive year.

VOLUNTEER HOURS

500%

Increase in volunteer hours used. Organizations that benefited from employee volunteers included the Boys & Girls Club of Lawrence, YMCA of Lawrence, Junior Achievement and other local organizations.

STANDARDS AND CERTIFICATIONS

Gemline was again awarded a Bronze medal from EcoVadis in recognition of its positive environmental and social change across company operations. The rating by EcoVadis, the world's largest and most trusted provider of sustainability ratings, reinforces Gemline's commitment to sustainability.
> To learn more about EcoVadis, click here.

For the second consecutive year, Gemline has utilized the Higg Index self-assessment tools for the measurement of its value-chain sustainability. The Higg Index, exclusively hosted on Worldly.io, is a standardized measurement framework that has become the most widely-used tool within the apparel, footwear and textile industries. This self-assessment has helped Gemline align with suppliers while gaining visibility into its global supply chain to identify areas to improve social and environmental performance.
> To learn more about the Higg Index, click here.

Gemline is FSC Chain-of-Custody certified by the Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®). FSC Chain-of-Custody certification traces the path of products from forests through the supply chain, verifying that FSC-certified material is identified or kept separated from non-certified material throughout the chain. FSC® C175379
> To learn more about the FSC, click here.

Gemline is a certified member of the Sustainable Business Leader Program through the Sustainable Business Network (SBN) of Massachusetts. The SBN is part of the American Sustainable Business Network, a nationwide organization that is committed to building a stakeholder-driven sustainable economy.
> To learn more about the SBN, click here.

CARBON NEUTRAL PROGRAM

Gemline is a participant in the UPS Carbon Neutral Program, which is designed to offset the CO_2 associated with our UPS shipments, and to help support environmental projects.
> To learn more about the UPS Carbon Neutral Program, click here.

The United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals

The 17 United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide a framework that can help organizations address the world's most pressing social and environmental needs. Gemline is supportive of all 17 goals, but is focused in the short-term on the eight goals where we believe we can make the greatest positive impact. **> To learn more about the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, click here.**

PEOPLE



PLANET



PRODUCT





People

People are the heart and soul of our business. We are committed to promoting a positive and empowering culture that is collaborative, purposeful and transparent, championing our employees, customers, communities and business partners.

CHARITABLE GIVING & PHILANTHROPY

In the words of one of our beloved retired board members, "Good enough is not good enough." Giving back is part of who we are, whether it's time, monetary contributions, in-kind donations or partnering with brands that also give back.

DONATIONS

In 2023, Gemline increased our giving by **31%**, donating over **$973,000** USD in cash and in-kind donations to both local and national charitable causes. Locally, our focus continues to be on health and wellness programs, housing and human welfare programs and leadership activities in our local community of Lawrence, MA. We are a proud supporter of the **Boys and Girls Club of Lawrence, Greater Lawrence Family Health Center, Elevate New England, Northern Essex Community College, Lawrence Community Works, One Family and Junior Achievement,** to name a few.

Gemline also supported our local communities through employee engagement in coat and food drives held throughout the year.

Nationally, we joined forces with two organizations to extend our giving to a broader audience.

BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF AMERICA



Boys & Girls Clubs of America is a national youth organization of more than 5,100 local clubs, providing safe places, caring mentors and life-enhancing programs for millions of young people. Our partnership with the national Boys & Girls Clubs of America allows us to support youth across the United States, in areas where some of our employees, customers and partners reside. Join us in doing even more good. **https://www.bgca.org/**

ONETREEPLANTED



One Tree Planted, a nonprofit dedicated to global reforestation, is actively engaged in restoring natural habitats and biodiversity through tree planting initiatives. Gemline's partnership with One Tree Planted has facilitated significant contributions to these restoration efforts. In 2023, we proudly lent our support to two impactful projects: the El Delgadito Mangrove Reforestation initiative in Mexico, which saw the planting of 37,500 trees, and the Tukwila Crystal Springs Park urban reforestation effort in Washington, where 350 trees were planted. **https://gemline-plants-trees.raisely.com/#**

CHARITABLE GIVING & PHILANTHROPY





VOLUNTEER TIME

In 2023, Gemline experienced a **500% increase in volunteer hours used.** Organizations that benefited from employee volunteers included the **Boys & Girls Club of Lawrence, YMCA of Lawrence, Junior Achievement** and other local organizations.



FOSTERING A POSITIVE, FLEXIBLE & DIVERSE COMPANY CULTURE

COMPANY CULTURE

At Gemline, we pride ourselves on cultivating a positive and supportive workplace culture. Through dedicated volunteer hours, ongoing development initiatives, a focus on continuous improvement, and a flexible work environment, we empower our employees to thrive professionally and personally, driving innovation and success.

CELEBRATING TENURE

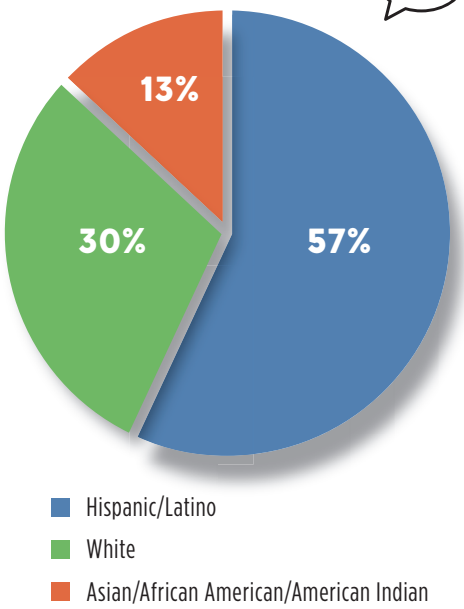
We are honored to have employees that have spent much of their career with Gemline. In fact, over **18%** of employees have been with Gemline for **20+** years, and over **35%** for **10+** years. We celebrate these milestones annually to recognize the dedication of these team members.

COMMITMENT TO DEVELOPMENT

In 2023, Gemline invested **4,577** hours in training and development for our employees. This equates to approximately 10 hours of training per employee.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

Diversity is important to Gemline because it is unquestionably the right thing to do. Our behaviors are based on striving to be open-minded and our quest to learn and grow. We work together to create an environment that embraces what makes each of us unique. We aspire to promote equality by demonstrating value, respect and trust for people.



Our diverse team speaks 10 languages fluently!

English	Spanish	Cambodian	Kannada	Tamil
Mandarin	Romanian	Hindi	Thai	Afrikaans

In 2023, Gemline celebrated our diversity with a day dedicated to the cultures represented on our team with opportunities to interact, educate, build trust and foster an environment of inclusivity. This impactful Diversity Day event included food, games and activities representing different parts of the globe.

FLOATING HOLIDAY

Our floating holiday initiative is designed to recognize and respect the diverse backgrounds, cultures and traditions of our employees. Each employee is offered a floating holiday, allowing them to celebrate holidays that are most meaningful to them.

BRAND PARTNERS THAT GIVE BACK

We've partnered with brands that contribute funds to charitable efforts and are making an impact in the world through sustainable practices and giving back.
> Choose products that make a difference.



CORKCICLE.

Every CORKCICLE® purchase helps bring clean water to people in need through CORKCICLE's partnership with charity: water. By giving people access to clean water, they are restoring health, providing new opportunities and creating real change in developing countries.
> Learn more.



MiiR

All MiiR products sold help fund transparent giving projects. A B Corporation, 1% For The Planet member, Certified Climate Neutral and Certified Evergreen company, MiiR has given over $4 million to 175 organizations working across four continents toward social and environmental change.
> Learn more.



MOLESKINE

Every Moleskine Smart Writing Set and Notebook from the Art Collection helps unlock the creative potential of young people around the world. Every sale helps fund access to quality educational experiences and creative spaces for marginalized youth. **> Learn more.**



OUT OF THE WOODS®

Out of the Woods® proudly donates 1% of revenue to organizations that support the planet.
> Learn more.

BRAND PARTNERS THAT GIVE BACK



SLOWTIDE

Slowtide understands the importance of working together to build community and create a better world. Through partnerships with Surfrider Foundation, Sustainable Coastlines, Waves For Change and Good Juju, every Slowtide purchase helps support ocean conservation and surf therapy for underserved youth. **> Learn more.**



VSSL

VSSL has partnered with Communitas: a not-for-profit that serves young people with special needs. After all the parts of a VSSL arrive at the warehouse in Canada, they get carefully assembled by some of the exceptional young people that are a part of the Communitas program.
> Learn more.



w&p

W&P is passionate about food and equally passionate about ending food insecurity. W&P is proud to partner with City Harvest to support food rescue initiatives—including rescuing 100,000 pounds of food directly supporting 28,000 families. W&P proudly supports City Harvest through volunteer work, give back opportunities and amplification of the City Harvest mission.
> Learn more.

RESPONSIBLE SOURCING

At Gemline, we take pride in our commitment to responsible sourcing. While others may work with intermediaries, Gemline's Asia-based technical center manages our supply chain by working directly with fabric mills, accessory suppliers and source plants. Upholding the highest standards of ethical, moral and legal business conduct, we prioritize the well-being of both our team members and those involved in producing our goods. We firmly believe that every individual involved deserves a safe and healthy working environment, and we spare no effort to make this a reality. This approach isn't just a philosophy; it's a differentiator for us.

VENDOR SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY PROGRAM



The **Gemline Code of Conduct** covers a range of social, environmental and ethical questions so we can ensure our supply chain meets our ethical standards.

We engage third parties to conduct audits that follow international standards like SMETA, BSCI and SA 8000 to ensure that our sourcing guidelines are met in all facilities and factories.

- 100% of our Tier 1 and Tier 2 suppliers completed a social accountability audit in 2023.

PRODUCT SAFETY AND COMPLIANCE

Gemline's approach to compliance is multifaceted. Starting with our in-house product design and development process, our goal is to make certain that products are built to meet our high standards for safety, quality and usability, while exceeding any regulatory requirements. We conduct both internal and third-party testing for restricted chemicals, confirming functional claims, tracing recycled materials to the source and obtaining appropriate product certifications.

> To view our product safety and compliance statements, please click here.



Planet

We believe in being responsible stewards of the planet. By taking purposeful action to minimize our environmental footprint, we are helping to protect our planet for generations to come.

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

2023 ACHIEVEMENTS



SOLAR

Gemline installed a Solar Power Generation System in late 2022 at our Lawrence, MA headquarters, **which generated 39% of the energy needs at our Lawrence, MA facility in 2023.**

CARBON FOOTPRINT

We reduced our Scope 1 (controlled by Gemline) and Scope 2 (purchased by Gemline) carbon footprint by 14.5%, resulting in a decrease in the amount of Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG's) that our organization caused to get released into the environment.

CARBON OFFSETS

Gemline worked with One Tree Planted to purchase certified carbon offsets for our Scope 1 & 2 emissions from 2023. This initiative was divided between two distinguished projects in the United States, each accredited by the Climate Action Reserve.

Noles Farm in North Carolina and Pungo River in South Carolina are Avoided Forest Conversion projects, protecting acres of forest from human development. Through Gemline's support, **1,026 acres at Noles Farm** and an additional **704 acres at Pungo River** have been conserved for generations to come.

CARBON NEUTRAL PROGRAM

Gemline is a participant in the UPS Carbon Neutral Program. In 2023, on behalf of Gemline, **UPS mitigated 505.6 metric tons of CO_2**. This is the equivalent of CO_2 emissions from 57,716 gallons of gasoline or the annual CO_2 emissions from 110 cars.

PACKAGING

We purchased 447,055 shipping cartons in 2023, all made from at least **85% post-consumer waste.**

We reduced our packaging waste by **42% in 2023** by **eliminating the use of 183k feet of traditional bubble wrap and transitioning to air pillow technology**. The use of air pillows in packaging is more space-efficient than bubble wrap, resulting in less packaging, lighter boxes, and lower emissions from transportation.



ZERO LANDFILL FACILITY

No waste from Gemline's headquarters and manufacturing operations in Lawrence, MA went into a landfill for the 5th consecutive year.

- **225.52** tons of trash were converted into **169,140** kilowatts of electricity, which is enough to furnish power to approximately **3,289,773** homes.
- **293.86** tons of cardboard was recycled.
- We reduced the amount of waste that went into Energy Recovery from our Lawrence, MA facility by **22%**.

THIS SAVED THE PLANET:

- **13,518** Gallons of oil
- **882** Cubic yards of landfill space
- **1,578,640** Kilowatts of energy
- **205,702** Gallons of water
- **4,996** Trees



Product

We are focused on offering responsible products that are free of chemicals that endanger people and the planet, and products that use recycled or renewable materials and promote reuse.

RuMe® Recycled Medium Tote

TRANSPARENCY & TRACEABILITY

Gemline is committed to sustainability and supply-chain transparency
to guarantee the authenticity of the products we sell.

The Global Recycled Standard (GRS) is a voluntary product standard for tracking and verifying the content of recycled materials in a finished product. The standard applies to the full supply chain and addresses traceability, environmental principles, social requirements, chemical content and labeling. GRS covers processing, manufacturing, packaging, labeling, trading and distribution of all products made with a minimum of 20% recycled material. It also sets requirements for third-party certification of recycled content, chain of custody, social and environmental practices, and chemical restrictions.

Gemline is committed to incorporating recycled materials responsibly and transparently into our products. GRS verifies the recycled content in all of the products Gemline designs and develops in-house.

> To view more details, please click here.

Aware™, renowned as the world's first hybrid traceability technology, combines physical tracers with a public blockchain to create a virtual passport that authenticates sustainable materials throughout the production process. This revolutionary technology guarantees the authenticity of products made from sustainable materials.

> For more information about Aware™, visit wearaware.co.

In 2023, Gemline redefined industry standards by being the first US company to partner with Aware through the newly redesigned MiiR Olympus 2.0 collection, built with recycled materials containing Aware textile transparency technology. In early 2024, we launched a line of recycled cotton products containing the Aware technology which are priced under $10 USD. We continue to identify opportunities to include Aware traceability technology in future product collections.



ECO-CONSCIOUS PRODUCTS

PVC ELIMINATION

PVC stands for Polyvinyl Chloride, which is a type of plastic polymer.
In the Promotional Products Industry, PVC is commonly used as a backing material in bags, and can be found in packaging, inks and many other inexpensive items sold in the industry.

PVC is bad for people, our planet and the products we use as the production and disposal of PVC is hazardous, products that contain PVC are minimally recyclable, and production of PVC has a high carbon footprint.

Gemline is committed to removing PVC from our products with a goal of a PVC-free product line by 2025. By the end of 2023, we made great strides in our PVC-free journey, resulting in a **94% PVC-free product line.** **> Learn more about the dangers of PVC here.**

ECO-CONSCIOUS SOLUTIONS

Gemline offers hundreds of products made with recycled materials, made with materials derived from renewable resources, or intended to help reduce single-use plastics.
48% of all of the new products Gemline introduced in 2023 met at least one of these criteria.

Gemline is committed to offering eco-conscious product solutions.

- Using more recycled fabrics like rPET and Aware™ textile traceability technology
- Sourcing materials made from renewable resources like bamboo and acacia wood
- Designing products intended to replace single-use plastics
- Using more recyclable materials and aluminum

ECO-CONSCIOUS PRODUCTS

RECYCLED MATERIALS

Recycled-content products are made from materials that would otherwise have been discarded. Examples of these materials include rPET and recycled cotton.



Renew rPET Zippered Tote

Recycled PET (rPET) is PET that has already been used at least once, recycled and put back into use. It is a more sustainable version of raw PET and has a smaller carbon footprint.



AWARE™ Recycled Cotton Tote

Recycled cotton is sourced from pre-consumer waste, or excess materials generated during the production of fabrics. Cotton recycling mitigates waste and is a more sustainable alternative to disposal, as harvesting raw cotton is resource intensive.

RENEWABLE MATERIALS

A renewable material is made of natural resources that can be replenished, again and again, like bamboo and acacia wood, contributing to a better conserved planet.



Aviana™ Bamboo Mini Backpack Cooler

Bamboo is a natural, renewable resource. It is a fast-growing plant that thrives without fertilizer or pesticides and requires significantly less water to grow, making it the perfect resource to harvest again and again.



La Cuisine Nesting Snack Bowl Set

Acacia wood is a natural, renewable resource because acacia trees are rapid-growing and are abundant in the world. With over 1,300 different varieties available, acacia wood is accessible in almost every market.

RECYCLABLE MATERIALS



Pre-Game Aluminum Stadium Cup - 18 oz.

Recyclable products are those made with materials, like aluminum, that can be recycled again and again, with no loss of material and are capable of being used to make similar products.

REDUCE SINGLE-USE



W&P Porter Sustainable Lunch Bundle

Reducing the use of single-use plastic items helps eliminate waste, as half of all plastic products that are designed for single-use purposes are used once and thrown away.

RESPONSIBLE PRODUCTS

BRAND PARTNERSHIPS

We are committed to building a sustainable future and seeking partnerships with brands that offer responsible products that make an impact on the world through sustainable practices and eco-conscious product innovation.



OSPREY

Osprey offers high performing and long lasting sustainable carry solutions made with high-quality bluesign®-approved recycled fabrics.
> Learn more.

OUT OF THE OCEAN®

Out of the Ocean® is cleaning up the ocean with every bag. Each bag they make removes the equivalent of three (3) plastic bottles from our oceans and waterways.
> Learn more.

OUT OF THE WOODS®

Out of the Woods® specializes in reusable bags and insulated coolers that are made from Supernatural Paper™, which is FSC®-certified (FSC® C175379) and made of tree cellulose, a renewable resource, from responsibly managed forests.
> Learn more.

SLOWTIDE

Slowtide products are responsibly crafted with premium and sustainable materials such as recycled polyester and certifiably sourced cotton.
> Learn more.

w&p

W&P is on a mission to do better for people & the planet. W&P beautifully replaces single-use kitchen disposables, empowering consumers to make sustainable choices that are better for them and the planet while bringing to life their personal style.
> Learn more.



What's Next

We are proud of what we have accomplished thus far, but also know there is much more to do. As we continue our journey, we will be expanding our current CSR initiatives, as well as taking on new ones. We are looking forward to creating a better way, together.

PURPOSEFUL GOALS FOR 2024

PLANET

IMPROVE OUR SUSTAINABILITY PRACTICES

TRANSPARENCY

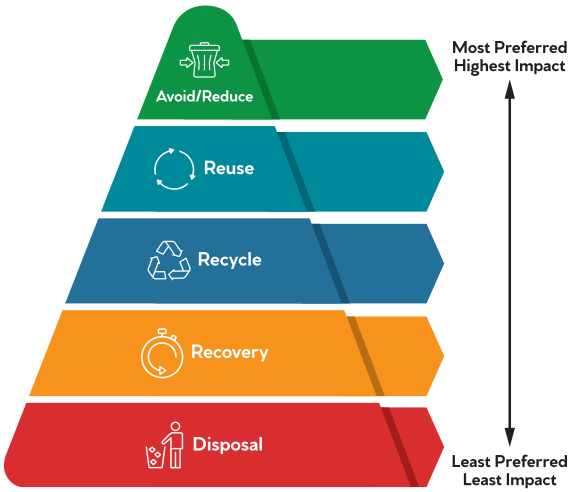
Gemline plans to offset all of its Scope 1 (controlled by Gemline) and Scope 2 (purchased by Gemline) carbon footprint in 2024 to decrease the amount of Greenhouse Gases (GHGs) that our organization causes to get released into the environment.

Gemline is also actively working to manage our Scope 3 emissions by implementing innovative tracking solutions that allow for a more comprehensive and transparent approach to environmental responsibility.

TRACEABILITY

In 2023, Gemline was the first company in the US to collaborate with Aware™, the world's first hybrid traceability technology. Aware's traceability technology works like a virtual passport to authenticate sustainable materials throughout the production process. In 2024, we launched a line of recycled cotton products containing the Aware tracker. Our goal for 2024 is to include Aware technology in up to 100 new or current products.

CONTINUE WASTE MANAGEMENT SUCCESS



In 2024, Gemline will be implementing a new bin recycling system throughout our Lawrence, MA facility. We will also include composting bins in several key areas throughout the building. These initiatives will continue our mission to reduce the amount of waste that goes to Energy Recovery.

PRODUCT

ELIMINATE PVC

PVC FREE

Reducing the use of PVC is important to us because plastic production requires an enormous amount of energy and resources, and is difficult to recycle. This causes carbon emissions and contributes to global warming. For the good of our environment and general safety of consumers using our products, we are committed to our journey toward the elimination of PVC from our Gemline product offering by the end of 2025.

> For more information on the dangers of PVC, click here.

PURPOSEFUL GOALS FOR 2024

PEOPLE

COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY

In 2024, we will continue our national partnership with **Boys & Girls Clubs of America** and **One Tree Planted**. Gemline will also continue to support our surrounding community and global humanitarian efforts with thoughtful charitable donations.





BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF AMERICA

Boys & Girls Clubs of America is a national youth organization of more than 5,100 local clubs, providing safe places, caring mentors and life-enhancing programs for millions of young people.

ONETREEPLANTED

One Tree Planted is a nonprofit committed to global reforestation. They plant trees to restore nature and biodiversity.



DEDICATE TIME TO EMPLOYEE DEI TRAINING

As part of our commitment to Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, Gemline will provide additional training to all managers in 2024.

Gemline®

Our purpose drives everything we do.

We Promote Community™

9 INTERNATIONAL WAY · LAWRENCE, MA 01843 · GEMLINE.COM · GEMLINE.CA

> To view this report online, click here.