

New MeasureUp Finger Lakes program making a positive impact

One of the most popular quotes in business management states, “If you can’t measure it, you can’t improve it.”

A small group of local Certified B Corp organizations has taken those words, attributed to the late Peter Drucker, to heart. More notably, they have taken action with their recently launched program MeasureUp Finger Lakes.

MeasureUp Finger Lakes challenges all Rochester- and Finger Lakes-area businesses to make a positive impact in our community—and the world—by first measuring and then improving their social, environmental, and economic impacts. Metrics include performance, accountability, and transparency in employment practices, sustainability, community involvement, and more.

Sponsored by the New York State Pollution Prevention Institute (housed at RIT) in collaboration with the international nonprofit B Lab and a Steering Committee led by local businesses Staach, Butler/Till Media, and SWBR, Rochester’s MeasureUp program is being modeled after similar initiatives adopted in New York City, Philadelphia, Colorado, Grand Rapids, Chattanooga, and Waterloo, Ontario, Canada.

The program’s founders recognized alignment between their organizations’ goals and the goals and priorities of the Finger Lakes region, defined in



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the Finger Lakes Forward report presented by Empire State Development. They saw a unique opportunity to make meaningful progress toward achieving those shared goals while bringing valuable attention to our area and its businesses.

The MeasureUp Finger Lakes program empowers Rochester and Finger Lakes regional businesses to:

Compare: Complete a mini-assessment to get a

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high-level view of their business’ impacts, then advance to a full Impact Assessment to find areas of strength and opportunities for improvement.

Compete: See how their business stacks up against its peers and vie for recognition based on impact.

Improve: Utilize available tools, workshops and peer learning groups to improve impact.

Repeat: Use the information, resources, and community assets to continuously grow year after year.

The Impact Assessment built into the program is a free and confidential tool currently being used by more than 55,000 businesses worldwide for learning, benchmarking, and managing business performance, and it evaluates businesses in five key impact areas: Governance, Workers, Community, Environment, and Customers.

Once a business completes the Impact Assessment, MeasureUp provides companies with the tools they need to quantify the impacts of their business moving forward and identifies opportunities to improve those impacts and their bottom line. Local resource partners and peer learning groups are made available to participants to provide assistance

and support when necessary.

Current local resource partners and supporters of the program include the New York State Pollution Prevention Institute, NextCorps (formerly High Tech Rochester), Greater Rochester Chamber of Commerce, The United Way, The Rochester Sustainability Collaborative, Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council, and more.

MeasureUp’s programmatic model follows in the footsteps of Best for NYC, a collaborative effort between B Lab and the

New York City Economic Development Council (NYCEDC) established in 2015 that has set the stage for MeasureUp and many similar programs across the county in places like Colorado, Philadelphia, and Portland, Oregon.

“This program is a great way to shine a light on leading companies who use their business to make a positive impact and elevate Rochester and the Finger Lakes,” explains Anne Sherman, director of sustainability and operations at Staach.

Program participants not only get to see how their business stacks up against others in their community and their industry, they learn best practices and have access to the resources they need to improve their impacts, attract and retain employees, and remain competitive in a changing business landscape—all while connecting and collaborating with like-minded organizations and improving their brand recognition.

To learn more about how your business can engage in this unique program and receive news about upcoming events, contact program manager Patricia Donohue at PODASP@RIT.EDU, or log on to take the Quick Impact Assessment and see how you MeasureUp! www.bimpac-tassessment.net/MeasureUpFingerLakes

Liz Chatterton is a writer, blogger, serial volunteer, and avid advocate for positive change in our community.