

B the Change

Student teams help aspiring B-Corps make the grade

Friday, October 23, 2020

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SARAH WILKINSON '22

Certified B Corporations are businesses that meet the highest standards of verified social and environmental performance, public transparency, and legal accountability to balance profit and purpose. Every semester, UNH students have the opportunity to help firms such as Timberland, Lonza, Orvis, and Jack's Pizza work toward B-Corp Certification, recertification, or simply to assess and improve their effect on the world through the [Changemaker Collaborative's B-Impact Clinic](#), of which Paul College is a founding partner.

At the heart of the Clinic is the B Impact Assessment, an opensource tool developed by the non-profit B Lab, widely considered to be the most rigorous and comprehensive assessment of a sustainable company.

Economics and sustainability dual major Sarah Wilkinson '22 worked on a B-Impact Clinic student team that partnered with Orvis to help the legendary outdoors brand and retailer. Though only a sophomore, the Oxford, PA. native said her team “hit the ground running” and, over the course of the 2019 fall semester, made recommendations for improving everything “from water usage and packaging to standardizing facilities inspections and adjusting manager roles to include social and environmental performance.”

Paul College alum Rob Bean '96, the project mentor and chief financial officer at Orvis, lauded the “exceptional team of students” for quickly gaining “an intimate knowledge of the business” and “materially lifting the administrative burden” of completing the B Impact Assessment from Orvis’ operating team.

“Without their assistance, the process would have taken significantly longer,” Bean said.

Wilkinson said the students not only learned what constituted a truly sustainable business, how to communicate with busy professionals in a fast-paced environment and analyze business processes, they also got free fly-fishing lessons from Orvis staff.

Said Wilkinson, “I’ve always wanted to learn that!”

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The stories are written by the staff of [UNH Communications and Public Affairs](#).

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