Corporate Social Responsibility
2019 REPORT

UniFirst
Uniforms • Services • Solutions
About UniFirst

From its modest beginnings in an eight-stall garage in Boston in 1936, UniFirst Corporation (NYSE: UNF) has become an industry leader in the $18 billion uniform and textile services business. With corporate headquarters located in Wilmington, MA, UniFirst operates 250-plus facilities throughout North America, serves over 300,000 business customer locations, employs more than 14,000 Team Partners, and reports annual revenues of $1.7 billion.

The company’s continued growth and leadership position can be attributed to its commitment to providing the highest quality products and services to businesses in a broad range of industries that require superior work clothing for their employees and facility service programs for their workplaces. UniFirst services 98 of the top 100 metropolitan markets (369 of the top 382) in the United States and most of Canada.

The majority of the company’s business is derived from managed rental service programs: providing customers with uniforms, work apparel, and ancillary items, plus ongoing services that include hygienic laundering, maintenance, deliveries, and any needed repairs and/or replacements—all for a reasonable weekly fee. However, UniFirst’s financial strength is due, in part, to its business offerings beyond conventional uniform rental service operations, making the company a single-source solution for an array of business needs.

UniFirst-branded work clothing includes the most important garment features, benefits, and fabrics as defined by customers. For example, the company’s line of safety garments includes its proprietary Armorex FR® Flame Resistant workwear and Spotlite LX® visibility clothing, manufactured in UniFirst’s own ISO-certified facilities using the latest designs and protective fabrics available. Other apparel brands include the award-winning UniSport® polo shirts, UniWeave® work shirts, SofTwill® work pants, ParkStreet® premium executive-style work shirts, Breeze Weave® lightweight work shirts, and UniWear® outerwear.

Comprehensive facility service programs provide quality floorcare, restroom, and other ancillary business products to help create safer, cleaner, healthier, and more attractive work environments, while reducing overall facility maintenance expenses. High-quality floor mats made exclusively by UniFirst include UniScraper® entrance mats, Great Impressions 2.0® walk-off mats, Comfort First® anti-fatigue mats, Comfort Plus® “wet area” mats, and custom photo, logo, and message mats. UniFirst also offers wet and dry UniMops®, towels and wipers, hand care products (soaps, sanitizers, dispensers, etc.) from the most trusted name in the business, GOJO Industries, and a range of Tork® paper products and dispensers.

Together with its subsidiaries, UniFirst also provides specialized protective garment programs and services to the nuclear and cleanroom industries, as well as first-aid and safety products to businesses in all industries. UniFirst maintains a centralized state-of-the-art distribution center in Kentucky, as well as five North American manufacturing facilities. In-house manufacturing of proprietary garments and floorcare products not only lowers costs for rental programs, but also allows for the creation of custom-designed items for image-conscious companies, affording UniFirst a distinct competitive advantage. In 2018, the company also unveiled its new 34,000 sq. ft. Corporate Support Services Center in San Antonio, TX, designed and built from the ground up to centralize and improve all customer service operations and enhance sales support, to better serve UniFirst’s growing customer base throughout North America.

The future of the uniform and facility services industry is bright and UniFirst fully expects to remain a North American leader. Opportunities abound, especially as businesses become increasingly aware of the positive impact and competitive advantage presentation, employee appearance, and attention to hygiene and safety have on brand image and identity.
Corporate Highlights

**Strong, reliable company**

- Positive growth every year since 1936
- Publicly traded on NYSE
- “America’s Most Trustworthy Public Companies” (TGF Analytics)
- More than 14,000 employee Team Partners
- Servicing 239 of the Fortune 500 list

**Recognized excellence**

- **Forbes** “Best Big Companies in America”
- **Glassdoor** “25 Best Companies for Career Opportunities”
- Featured on CBS-TV’s hit reality show Undercover Boss
- **Boston Globe** “Top 100 Performing Companies”
- **Selling Power** “50 Best Companies to Sell For”

**Service quality and reach**

- Outfitting nearly 2 million workers daily
- Laundering 700 million pounds of textiles per year
- Performing 8 billion points-of-quality inspections on uniforms annually
- Traveling 69 million miles for deliveries annually
- Local footprints in 96% of top metro markets
- Serving over 300,000 business customer sites in the U.S. and Canada
Welcome to UniFirst Corporation’s Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Report. This report serves as a comprehensive review of the company’s latest efforts surrounding CSR and sustainability for the benefit of all UniFirst stakeholders.

Since our 2016 inaugural report, UniFirst has undergone many positive and exciting changes related to social responsibility. At the same time, our company has experienced record-setting years of solid growth, equipping us with the resources to further expand upon these important efforts in years to come.

I’m proud to report that during this past year we’ve continued our upward trajectory within the areas of our corporate responsibility strategy: workplace culture; transparent and ethical business behavior; safety initiatives; sustainability; and citizenship efforts, among others. We’ve initiated several new social and environmental programs, while also identifying additional opportunities that are aligned with our Core Values for the benefit of the world around us and its citizens, as well as future generations of UniFirst stakeholders.

As you read through the pages of this report, you’ll see that our accomplishments to date underscore our unwavering commitment to running UniFirst in a true citizenship-minded manner, while having a conscious awareness of the global environment and the local communities that house our more than 14,000 Team Partners and the 300,000-plus business customer locations we serve every week of the year.

Many years ago, our founder, Aldo Croatti, established the company’s Core Values—Customer Focus; Respect for Others; and Commitment to Quality. These timeless values continue to be at the forefront of all we do, including our responsibility efforts, and are echoed throughout the pages of this CSR Report, guiding us on our way toward continuous improvement.

While we’ve accomplished much, there’s still more work to be done. Being a good corporate citizen doesn’t mean resting on our laurels; it’s a process that’s constantly evolving and requires resolve and determination to do more and achieve more than the year before.

Thank you for reading this report. I welcome any feedback you may have.

Sincerely,

Steven Sintros
President and CEO
Our Corporate Responsibility Process
The UniFirst Culture: Fostering a Unified Family

UniFirst Corporation’s Core Values were first developed by our company founder, Aldo Croatti: Customer Focus; Respect for Others; and Commitment to Quality. Over the years, these founding Core Values have paved the way for a unique and highly successful family culture at UniFirst. Today, maintaining and strengthening this family culture companywide remains a focus of our executive leadership and is reflected in our Team Partners’ everyday practices, actions, and procedures.

The culture at UniFirst has continued to evolve with the underlying belief that a family-like atmosphere in a customer-focused workplace ultimately makes a more competitive and stronger company; because happy employees produce higher-quality products and services, which translates into happier and more satisfied customers. As such, instilling a sense of family begins on the very first day of work for every Team Partner. New Team Partners are typically teamed up with a “buddy” who provides a tour of the facility and is available for any questions that may arise for the new hire. Additionally, new Team Partners are routinely treated to lunch on their first day and invited to join coworkers during breaks to be given an immediate sense of inclusion.

However, fostering a family culture does not end after the first few days on the job. Continued personal support and organized events at UniFirst’s hundreds of locations reflect an ongoing commitment to a sense of family. Whether it’s company cookouts and barbecues, birthday and anniversary celebrations, performance recognitions, or healthy group walks during breaks, UniFirst strongly encourages regular and ongoing gatherings that promote partnership and unity, collaboration and cooperation.

Open Door

Beyond these inclusive family-oriented activities, UniFirst recognizes that it is also important that Team Partners feel as though they have a voice within the organization and that their opinions matter. This is also a crucial step in using Team Partner input to help ensure UniFirst remains focused on exceeding customer expectations at all times. As a result, all local managers are mandated to maintain “open door” policies to listen to Team Partner suggestions and answer any and all questions and concerns. Corporate executives, including the president and CEO, regularly make visits to all company locations to check in and speak directly with UniFirst family members. In fact, UniFirst regional vice presidents travel two weeks out of every month on average (50% of their time) visiting different locations to meet and speak

UniFirst Core Values

Customer Focus
Respect for Others
Commitment to Quality

In July of every year, thousands of UniFirst Team Partners around the world come together to pay tribute to our company founder, Aldo Croatti, and celebrate his achievements. We call this day of reflection Founder’s Day.

FOUNDER’S DAY
Customers for Life

Aldo Croatti, UniFirst Founder, 1917–2001
of staff at all levels from management to service and production workers. The UniFirst Lunch with the Leader program, mandated for all locations, provides an informal opportunity for staff at all levels to participate in open discussions with their general managers. And Corrective Action Teams (CAT) at most locations, composed of Team Partners serving on a rotating basis, ensure diversity of viewpoints and provide actionable, business-specific feedback to their respective managers for follow-up considerations.

**UniFirst Listens to Staff Feedback**

UniFirst developed its forward-thinking CARE program (Conversations-Answers-Respect-Education) to help ensure all Team Partners at all locations are consistently happy and that UniFirst’s family culture is strong. The CARE team travels across North America visiting UniFirst sites to informally and openly speak with Team Partners at all levels, with no risk associated with voicing concerns or issues. Team Partners are divided into groups of up to 10 for candid, round-table meetings with no managers allowed. Following each visit, the location manager, regional vice president, senior vice president, corporate HR director, executive vice president, and company president and CEO are provided with a detailed report about the meeting findings. If necessary to maintain or repair the local family culture, the location manager(s) is asked to develop a corrective action plan to address any areas of concern raised during meetings, and an action plan must then be submitted to the regional vice president detailing the corrective steps that will be taken. Finally, a follow-up review by the CARE team is made at both six and 12 weeks post visit to ensure corrective measures are in place. This program has been instrumental in identifying and resolving various issues at different locations, and for ensuring the long-term stability of the family culture.

**UniFirst Recognizes Excellence in the Workplace**

Of course, no corporate culture can evolve or be sustained without acknowledging—and thanking—those who play active roles in its continued growth by remaining customer focused and adhering to the company’s Core Values. For example, UniFirst’s Customers for Life program requires teamwork from all levels of company staff with the intention to provide industry-leading customer service levels. In meeting this program’s objectives, staff members are awarded varying acknowledgments for service excellence including, but not limited to, bonuses for achieving customer satisfaction goals and local on-the-spot recognition. UniFirst also recognizes individual excellence through awards such as the Length of Service Awards, Top Performing Location Awards, Employee of the Year Awards, Safety Achievement Awards, Top Performing Sales Awards, and Top Performing Service Awards, like the Aldo Croatti Award, for delivering the very best in customer service.

**UniFirst Helps Provide for Financial Well-Being**

UniFirst Team Partners are included in and encouraged to take advantage of many corporate financial benefits aimed at providing for the financial well-being of the individual such as profit sharing, retirement savings plans, and competitive compensation plans. UniFirst’s corporate goal with respect to total compensation is to remain above the national average for both hourly and salaried Team Partners. On an overall average, UniFirst’s pay scales for our hourly Team Partners are 60% higher than the federal minimum wage. The family culture is also extended on a more personal level for Team Partners through the many individually focused benefits including tuition reimbursement, higher education scholarship opportunities, staff and sales referral bonuses, and a discounted catalog purchase program.
UniFirst Appreciates the Importance of Job Satisfaction
We know that individuals experience higher morale when employers appreciate them as people first and employees second. As such, we spend well over $3 million annually on various events, programs, discounts, team-building exercises, outings, holiday gifts and celebrations, and recognition of personal milestones at our locations. We believe this companywide investment goes a long way toward keeping our Team Partners engaged, motivated, and connected, and reflects our ongoing commitment to inspiring a sense of family.

UniFirst is Committed to the Overall Health of Employee Team Partners and Their Families
Since our inaugural CSR report, UniFirst has made great strides in the area of corporate health and wellness initiatives, which continue to enhance UniFirst's family culture. Robust insurance plans, including health, dental, vision, and prescription drug coverage, in addition to long- and short-term disability, accidental death or dismemberment (ADD), and supplemental life insurance, serve to protect Team Partners from rising health care costs and provide peace-of-mind care for their families.

UniFirst also offers a variety of programs that inspire better health practices among our Team Partners and has introduced many new programs this past year.

- Preventive care programs incentivize Team Partners to participate in annual physicals by providing paid time off for doctor appointments and by offering chances to win an extra week off with pay for taking yearly physicals.
- Online health risk assessments assist Team Partners in identifying possible risk factors and provide opportunities to address the findings.
- Healthy Pregnancies, Healthy Babies program helps our Team Partners who are preparing for the birth of a child and with family planning.
- MDLIVE and Amwell offer Team Partners convenient and easy access to U.S. Board-Certified doctors via the MDLIVE or Amwell app, or by calling a toll-free number anytime from anywhere. With MDLIVE or Amwell, Team Partners can get help with most non-emergency medical conditions, including a diagnosis and prescriptions (when appropriate) for a host of common medical conditions.
- Coaching programs help Team Partners who may have chronic conditions, or for weight management, tobacco cessation, and other general wellness programs to assist in reaching a personal wellness goal.
- New Work for Wellness programs that feature more than 50 on-site wellness events at several UniFirst locations, such as:
  - Wellness fairs
  - Corporate Wellness Week
  - Financial wellness seminars
  - Biometric screenings
  - Stress-relief chair massages
  - On-site dental exams and cleanings
  - On-site eye exams
  - Free flu clinics
  - Complimentary on-site spin classes
  - Yoga classes
  - Mobile mammograms
  - Express manicures for stress relief

Employee assistance programs (EAP) are also available, offering Team Partners and members of their households free telephone and face-to-face assessments and counseling sessions for a variety of personal issues. The EAP can also assist with child and elder care services, education, pet care, legal issues, and more.

Our 14,000-plus Team Partners bring their very best to work every day, and an inclusive culture has been created, developed, and sustained that fosters a family-like atmosphere of contentment and pride. This culture cannot be copied by our competitors and offers UniFirst a competitive advantage in the market.
UniFirst adheres to all U.S. generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) when preparing its financial statements.

Through internal audits, we regularly review and evaluate our disclosure controls and procedures to confirm their effectiveness. Our audit procedures also help ensure that material company information required to be disclosed is recorded, processed, summarized, and reported within the time periods specified in Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) rules and forms, and that such information is accumulated and communicated to management as appropriate to allow for timely decisions regarding required disclosures. We continue to review our disclosure controls and procedures, and our internal control over financial reporting, and may from time to time make changes aimed at enhancing their effectiveness and to ensure that our systems continually evolve with our business. These procedures, financial statements, and internal controls over financial reporting are audited annually by an independent third party.

We make available, free of charge, our most recent Proxy Statement, Annual Report on Form 10-K, quarterly reports on Form 10-Q, and current reports on Form 8-K, including exhibits and any amendments to those reports. These reports are maintained and available on the Investors page of our corporate websites (UniFirst.com/UniFirst.ca). Interested parties may also request a copy of our filings, including exhibits, by contacting our Investor Relations group.

**UniFirst has been profitable and increased revenues every year since 1936.**

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<th>Net Income (in millions)</th>
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It is the policy of UniFirst Corporation to comply with the law and to conduct its affairs in keeping with high moral, legal, and ethical standards. We will continue to conduct our business with integrity in relation to customers, suppliers, competitors, and all others with whom we deal, including our employee Team Partners. All Team Partners, officers, and directors are expected to perform their duties honestly, responsibly and diligently, and in full compliance with our Statement of Corporate Policy and Code of Business Conduct and Ethics (Statement), which is available to the public.

Our Statement is issued to reaffirm our policy in all areas, including compliance with laws, environmental matters, antitrust regulations, conflicts of interest, political contributions, payments to government officials or others, giving or receiving gifts, proper accounting, the use of inside information, confidentiality, fair dealing, and protection and proper use of company assets. The Statement is therefore an expression of our views on some of the most significant aspects of business ethics and legal compliance. However, no code of conduct can address every situation. Rather, we must rely in large measure on the integrity and good judgment of our employees to observe the highest standards of business and personal ethics in the discharge of their assigned duties and responsibilities. We hope that this Statement will provide guidance to our officers, directors, managers, and other staff at our various locations in dealing with the difficult and often unique issues which may arise in the day-to-day conduct of our business. We also encourage all of our Team Partners, as well as any third party, to anonymously report concerns about suspected unethical or illegal conduct affecting our operations to the company’s management or through UniFirst’s Compliance and Ethics Hotline.

UniFirst’s Corporate Governance Guidelines, also available to the public, set forth the ethical rules by which the company’s Board of Directors manage the business and affairs of the company, acting on behalf of the stockholders. The Board, in connection with the Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee, will review and amend these guidelines from time to time as it deems necessary and appropriate. The Board has delegated to the officers of UniFirst the authority and responsibility for managing the company’s daily affairs, but retains the responsibility for monitoring and overseeing management in this activity. In discharging their responsibilities, the directors shall exercise their business judgment to act in what they reasonably believe to be in the best interests of the company and its shareholders. No director represents the interest of any particular constituency, other than the stockholders as a whole.

We must rely on the integrity and good judgment of our employees to observe the highest standards of business and personal ethics …
UniFirst believes that our people are our most valuable asset and is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all of our 14,000-plus Team Partners, contractors, visitors, and the public. In fact, UniFirst considers safety so important that the company created a UniFirst Safety Vision specific to maintaining Team Partner safety on the job and at home. This vision also includes a simple and straightforward “Be smart. Be S.A.F.E. Be UniFirst” slogan and acronym that has been incorporated into many of the company’s corporate communications.

These commitments can only be met through the awareness and cooperation of all UniFirst staff at all levels, emphasizing and communicating individual responsibilities and best practices for health and safety.

UniFirst pledges to help ensure that the necessary resources are available to secure a safe and productive environment. This, in turn, results in a positive culture for both our Team Partners and the company. We expect everyone’s full participation in our ongoing safety efforts and require all Team Partners to immediately report to their managers any unsafe (or potentially unsafe) work conditions.

Regular and continued safety training is a key component to achieving companywide safety goals. In the last year, UniFirst Team Partners spent in excess of 25,000 hours actively participating in formal safety training.

We strive for 100% compliance in safety training and embrace an overarching “safety first” mentality within our family culture at UniFirst—one that is focused on the impact that safety in general has on our Team Partners’ everyday lives: life safety, not just workplace safety. We know the life and work experiences of our Team Partners often overlap and we must offer our Team Partners ongoing safety information and education they can use in both areas. It is our belief that this approach, increasing the visibility of safety as a whole and creating direct personal relevance, translates into more proactive participation by our Team Partners as it relates to safety practices and procedures.

As part of this approach, UniFirst maintains a company safety program entitled “Partners in Safety” at all plant and branch operations. The intent of this program is to engage both management and operational staff in UniFirst’s improved culture of safety through a quarterly award incentive program focusing on positive reinforcement for exhibiting safe work behaviors and achieving measurable safety goals. Management is also encouraged to recognize individuals on the spot when an outstanding safety commitment is displayed by a Team Partner and identified as exemplary behavior for others to follow.

UniFirst Safety Vision

We are committed to achieving our vision of creating, fostering, and consistently promoting safe environments for our employee Team Partners by encouraging them to be S.A.F.E.

- **Support** safe work and home environments.
- **Advocate** at home, at work, and at the customer site.
- **Foster** a workplace safety culture with shared beliefs, practices, and attitudes.
- **Educate** themselves on how to live a safe lifestyle at work and at home.

Support • Advocate • Foster • Educate

To help keep safety top of mind at UniFirst, we recently surveyed our employee Team Partners and asked, “What does safety mean to you?” and, “Who do you stay safe for?” Here is what a few had to say.

“To me, safety means going home the way we came to work.”

“I stay safe for my family who I help provide for, and for my coworkers and customers who I work with on a daily basis.”

“Safety means doing your job in a manner in which you or anyone around you is not put at any risk of injury or illness.”

“Safety means looking out for one another and making sure everybody stays safe.”
Safety (continued)

For this important safety initiative, the company also established safety awards at the gold, silver, and bronze levels to recognize efforts and accomplishments related to work safety and demonstrate UniFirst’s commitment to providing a safe work environment for all Team Partners. The corporate office annually reviews all locations’ safety performances against established benchmarks related to such topics as: number of recordable injuries; location safety audits; route driver performance reviews; safety training completions; successful OSHA inspections; and employee CPR/AED certification to determine which level of awards have been earned.

Our safety initiatives also encourage individual locations to build strong relationships with outside emergency agencies, such as fire departments and public safety departments, through regular drills and community education opportunities.

Safety Award Winners

During this past year, UniFirst awarded its Gold Safety Award to three locations, Clarksburg, WV, Springfield, MO (not shown), and Greenwood, MS, for their efforts and accomplishments related to promoting and maintaining safe work environments. This is the third Gold award for Clarksburg and the first for Springfield and Greenwood.

UniFirst Partners in Safety Survey Results

93% of UniFirst Team Partners believe UniFirst makes safety a priority.

99% of UniFirst Team Partners say that safety is one of their personal priorities.

91% of UniFirst Team Partners feel their direct supervisor/manager sets a strong safety example to follow.

92% of UniFirst Team Partners are comfortable reporting an incident to their supervisor/manager.

88% of UniFirst Team Partners believe there is effective communication about a specific safety topic discussed at their location.

91% of UniFirst Team Partners believe their safety committee is effective in identifying and correcting issues in their location.
Facility Audits

No comprehensive safety program would be complete without facility audits at our hundreds of locations. We regularly conduct and document comprehensive Level 3 safety audits and procedures to help ensure all of our facilities meet or exceed OSHA requirements. Built in to these audits is the ability to electronically provide feedback and updates as locations work to correct any potential issues identified by the safety auditor.

In addition, UniFirst also conducts maintenance and infrared audits. Maintenance audits examine equipment such as boilers, hot water systems, water softeners, air compressors, and heat reclaimers. These audits identify maintenance or operational issues that need to be addressed by the plant’s maintenance team to keep the equipment operating efficiently and safely for a long period of time. Infrared audits are used to identify problems with equipment. Using an infrared camera to photograph equipment, we’re able to identify temperature differences, helping to find things like an electrical circuit breaker that is overheating or a piece of the steam distribution system that is blocked. These audits are crucial in our efforts to identify hotspots that can lead to accidents and rectify any issues before anyone’s safety is compromised.

Fleet Safety

Our approach to safety must also extend to the fleet of more than 3,000 vehicles that service UniFirst’s 300,000-plus business customers. In addition to the job skills required for the position, a UniFirst vehicle operator (UVO) must meet specific qualifications and pass appropriate background checks to operate a UniFirst commercial motor vehicle (CMV). UniFirst’s UVO hiring qualification standards and procedures have been developed to achieve several goals, including the primary goal of hiring the best and most qualified individuals for these positions. These goals are:

- To meet or exceed all Department of Transportation (DOT) and Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSR) concerning driver qualifications.
- To select UVOs who share UniFirst’s values and goals of operating in a safe, legal, and professional manner.
- To select UVOs who can provide the highest level of customer service and satisfaction to achieve our goal of earning “Customers for Life.”

UniFirst requires all UVOs to complete road test training and successfully pass an examination prior to driving any CMVs on company routes (documentation of the road test examination form, with the UVO skill in each operation type, is rated and recorded). UVOs are then evaluated on a quarterly basis, in addition to being annually road tested and coached. UniFirst also mandates safe work and driving practices at all times, and prohibits UVOs from using handheld mobile devices while driving a CMV.

UniFirst’s fleet of vehicles are designed with the safety of our UVOs in mind. Each truck is equipped with skid plates on the walkways inside the vehicle, as well as safety rails to prevent slips and falls while walking in the truck and stepping in and out of the route vehicle. Many trucks are equipped with features to aid the UVO with loading and unloading, including lift gates and built-in ramps. Further, the cockpit of each service vehicle is ergonomically designed for the driver so everything necessary to operate the vehicle can be reached not only safely, but comfortably, improving the safety, health, and productivity of our drivers.

“We are a family of workers who support and take care of each other, which is the most wonderful thing.”
UniFirst remains committed to innovative approaches toward our systems and service offerings with the underlying belief that our ability to follow advances in science and technology can only mean greater benefits for our customers, our Team Partners, and our company.

We incorporate the latest technologies and innovative software systems in our facilities and production processes in order to continually deliver industry-leading results and, whenever possible, we design proprietary systems or re-engineer others to more specifically meet our unique business needs. For example, because we are in a unique position to self-manufacture the majority of our customer products, including garments and floor mats, we’re not only able to create tailored products that meet customers’ specific needs, but we’re also able to capitalize on latest-generation manufacturing planning systems that employ optimizing software that allows us to maximize every inch of fabric and textiles during our production processes, thereby dramatically reducing waste.

UniFirst developed a centralized, web-based application to record and track, in real time, systems performance, energy consumption, equipment utilization, and labor activity at all plants. Born out of the need to bring “islands” of data together in order to better utilize production metrics, UniFirst Production Monitoring (UPM) includes interfaces to all automated production systems, as well as our energy management application, time and attendance/payroll applications, and our computerized maintenance management system (CMMS). UPM presents information in both dashboard and report form, including detailed system and plant summary data, that is accessible at any time by both corporate and plant decision makers. Now our corporate headquarters has the ability to utilize the same detailed plant-specific data that is available on the hundreds of local production floors. UPM has allowed us to realize many benefits, including: improved system performance, equating to a higher rate of throughput; improved equipment utilization, resulting in less energy consumption; rapid identification of process flow issues, allowing for real-time adjustments to equipment and labor; and an increase in overall productivity.

At the core of our skills training program for all UniFirst Team Partners is a video conferencing network that connects our more than 250 UniFirst locations in the U.S. and Canada, significantly reducing the need for travel companywide and helping reduce our carbon footprint. We’ve also developed an extensive print, audio, and...
online video training library, which allows our various teams to learn at their own pace, on their own schedule.

And our Owensboro, KY, distribution center is not only the centralized hub for all our customer orders, but it is also at the center of UniFirst’s latest innovation in systems and services. This order fulfillment and distribution center receives and delivers about 20 million garments annually using shipping and inventory software systems developed and serviced in-house, allowing us to optimize service and delivery. Our proprietary warehouse management system helps the company work toward a paperless environment, eliminating 75% of the paper used in the distribution center’s warehouse. State-of-the-art conveyance systems have mitigated the need for heavy equipment, allowing these to run on smaller, more efficient motors. Plus, we have made a multi-million-dollar investment to implement advanced automation and latest-generation robotic item-picking systems. These save natural resources by minimizing waste while improving accuracy, delivery speed, and customer satisfaction, allowing UniFirst to meet the future needs of our customers and nimbly respond to customer demand.

Finally, to optimize operations at our customer call center located in Owensboro, UniFirst implemented a knowledge-based information management system called Ask IRIS (Informational Resources Instantaneously Supplied), customized in-house by a UniFirst customer service representative. Ask IRIS had an immediate impact on improving overall customer satisfaction. Both telephone and email response rates increased to 99.2% since implementing the system. Call-handling times have been reduced by an average of 16 seconds, and with an incoming call volume of about 5,000 per month, this saved the team more than 21 hours of call-handling time monthly. This allows UniFirst customer service representatives the ability to provide exceptional customer service and results in thousands of satisfied customers. It also earned the Owensboro operation its second Stevie Award® in just three years for customer service.

The Owensboro customer service team proudly display their Stevie Award earned for developing “Ask IRIS,” a knowledge-based information management system used to dramatically improve telephone and email response rates.

**SPOTLIGHT ON INNOVATION IN SYSTEMS AND SERVICES**

**Advanced Automation**

UniFirst is committed to implementing the latest equipment and technologies throughout the company. This includes our centralized Owensboro, KY, distribution center, where you’ll find our highly automated robotic item-picking system that simplifies and improves accuracy of customer order fulfillment. The robotic picker system helps to seamlessly fulfill customer orders and ensures the right garments and products will reach the right customer location, locker, and individual wearer on a consistent, reliable, and timely basis.
At UniFirst, we believe in protecting the environment. That’s why we continually focus on sustainability and strive to become a “greener,” more environmentally friendly company in all aspects of our operations.

Whether it’s the precise uniform processing procedures we follow to help ensure resource conservation and environmental protection, the thoughtful energy-saving practices we use at our more than 250 facilities, the careful fleet maintenance and driving procedures we have in place, the manner in which our ancillary services and products are designed and manufactured, or the uniform and facility services options we provide our customers to help them meet their sustainability goals, everything we do consistently takes environmental sustainability into consideration.

**Products and Services**

While UniFirst is committed to continuing our many recycling efforts and pursuing additional opportunities, the nature of our core business—managed uniform rental programs—has also helped us maintain environmental stewardship throughout the years. Compared to purchasing, renting items such as uniforms, workwear, floor mats, shop towels, or wipers saves energy and decreases natural resource consumption. Our rental products are made to last longer than store-bought alternatives, and our service programs effectively maintain customer clothing and textiles to maximize useful life. Rental items are “reused” far more often and longer than purchased items, thereby reducing overall raw textile usage and resulting in less waste added to landfills and incinerators.

When we refurbish and transform pre-worn customer apparel into like-new offerings for garment replacements, we are, in effect, recycling. And when wear and tear finally take their toll and the professional image of our customers could become compromised, we look to donate appropriate clothing items to needy organizations in the U.S. and abroad—in effect, giving them a “second life.”

And, by hygienically laundering products for our customers, we are able to assist with the overarching environmental efforts of individuals and small businesses. Because of our affiliation with an expanded network of environmental programs, laundry byproducts are managed through wastewater treatment programs at UniFirst plants that follow environmentally safe disposal, recycling, and reuse—programs that individuals would not be able to participate in through everyday home laundering. In other words, by collecting, processing, and properly disposing of our business customers’ waste and subsequent byproducts through channels they are unable to access, we are able to increase the overall level of environmental participation of everyday product users. Our company manufactures the majority of the shirts and pants we use in our rental service programs. And when partnering with product suppliers, whether it ultimately involves the manufacture of our apparel or any of our other products, we continually seek to identify and purchase environmentally preferable materials. We’ve also computerized our textile-cutting systems to assure...
minimal waste of fabric at all times, with modular assembly construction processes that maximize efficiencies and the overall use of resources.

Annually, UniFirst purchases close to 50 million clothes hangers. Nearly all of our millions of rental uniforms in service and housed at our facilities are kept on individual wire hangers, each made of 0.08 pounds of galvanized steel. This amounts to about 4 million pounds of steel used in UniFirst hangers each year. However, we’re committed to purchasing recycled materials whenever possible, which allows us to recognize a 35% recycled material rate specific to our hangers. This means UniFirst is responsible for the use of approximately 1.4 million pounds of recycled steel annually through hanger purchasing efforts alone. But we don’t stop there. To help prevent hangers from being tossed into waste bins, we also promote hanger recycling programs at each of our customer locations, resulting in an estimated 50% recycle/reuse rate.

Finally, our laundering service facilities, uniform manufacturing operations, and our centralized distribution center have earned ISO 9001 certifications. With ISO-certified quality management systems, we ensure consistent high-quality products and services for our customers, and make certain all of our processes are operating as efficiently as possible, aiding resource conservation.

Ramping Up Recycling Efforts

Since publishing our first CSR Report, UniFirst has continued investigating new ways to recycle and reuse materials from our garment and floor mat manufacturing operations and our out-of-service uniforms, targeting programs that can convert these materials into reusable components, which can then be used to manufacture or supply new garments and/or products. Since we manufacture our own floor mats, UniFirst has complete control over materials and production methods, and utilizes environmentally friendly practices throughout the manufacturing process. For example, partially recycled components are used to produce many of our floor mat styles; a portion of the rubber waste resulting from the manufacturing process is reintroduced into uncured rubber compounds used to make non-carpeted mats; and other rubber waste is recycled into non-related products such as automotive brake shoes, rubber bumpers, etc. Meanwhile, waste carpet-top trimmings are reprocessed at a facility where they’re packed and sold for use in products such as new carpet backing, carpet padding, and industrial rubber components.

Pictured (L to R): UniFirst–Nashua, NH Team Partners Greg Mazares, general manager, and Chris Kantargis, production manager, stand with a denim drop-off box at their location.
recycled for other textile products. Lastly, whenever possible, we reuse older mats that are aesthetically acceptable and fully functional in our rental programs.

UniFirst manufacturing operations recycle more than 1.5 million pounds of fabric scraps per year, which are then baled and sold to textile recycling companies for reuse, with proceeds donated to various programs for the elderly. We also recycle used and broken zippers, with more than 6,000 pounds of scrap metal recycled. Proceeds from this effort are donated to a children’s shelter and used at the local level for small equipment upgrades in various facilities.

To date, our manufacturing group has recycled about 100,000 pounds of cardboard, which is converted into construction materials. Wood pallets are also donated to UniFirst employees to be used for home improvement projects, with over 600 pallets donated in just one year. Plus, Team Partners in our manufacturing group collect plastic bottle caps for Agua Pura del Valle, a bottled water supplier, who then donates money to Hospital General de Ciudad Valles, in Ciudad Valles, Mexico, for a campaign that supports cancer patients; for each 1,000 caps donated, a cancer patient receives a free chemotherapy treatment.

UniFirst’s manufacturing operations in Nicaragua work with the Better Work program, a collaboration between the United Nations International Labor Organization and the International Finance Corporation, the lending and advising arm of the World Bank Group. This joint venture brings together all levels of the garment industry with the goal of improving work conditions, protecting labor rights for workers, and boosting the competitiveness of the apparel business. UniFirst and Better Work share a vision for a global garment industry that lifts millions of people out of poverty by providing work, empowering women, driving competition, and promoting inclusive economic growth.

Our company’s centralized distribution center in Owensboro, KY, uniquely built to efficiently receive, store, and ship customized garments to our customers anywhere in North America, also plays a part in our overall environmental efforts. As the host site for nearly all incoming and outgoing products, the distribution center utilizes large numbers of cardboard boxes, as well as wooden pallets. From this facility alone on an annual basis, over 2 million pounds of cardboard is recycled, and we recycle, reclaim, or repurpose over 14,000 wooden pallets.

On the local level, UniFirst’s 250-plus facilities throughout the U.S. and Canada all strive to be good corporate citizens through involvement with their own community recycling efforts. For example, our Nashua, NH, location partners with the Blue Jeans Go Green™ program, which collects denim across the country and upcycles it into UltraTouch™ denim insulation. By recycling worn denim into denim insulation, the Blue Jeans Go Green program keeps textile waste out of landfills and helps with building efforts in communities around the country, including Habitat for Humanity. To date, UniFirst has donated over 30,000 pounds of cotton denim since the program’s inception in 2016.

**Ancillary Products**

UniFirst offers a wide variety of environmentally friendly floorcare and restroom/hygiene service programs. The products at the core of these programs have been designed with environmental sustainability in mind. And when they are included as part of a fully managed service program, some of these products can help our customers earn LEED* points that qualify them for environmental certification by the U.S. Green Building Council.

* Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, a national benchmark for the design, construction, and operation of high-performance green buildings.

**UniFirst’s distribution center in Owensboro, KY, recycles**

2 million pounds of cardboard on an annual basis.
Facilities and Fleet

UniFirst has more than 250 locations throughout the world and over 3,000 vehicles in our fleet, making attention to energy-efficient and environmentally friendly practices a top priority.

The UniFirst fleet of customer delivery and support vehicles is a vital area where we operate with a large measure of sustainability best practices. UniFirst consistently tries to reduce its carbon footprint through the use of route planning and optimization software. Using advanced industry algorithms and custom routing passes, we’re able to recognize daily reductions in miles driven and routing time while gaining vehicle capacity. At the same time, we see dramatic improvements in driver management and customer service levels. The UniFirst fleet currently services more than 300,000 customer locations and travels over 69 million miles each year. Since implementing this initiative, we’ve recognized an 8% increase in fleet efficiency, traveling almost one mile less between each stop, saving over 227,000 miles every week (nearly 12 million miles annually), as well as roughly 1.7 million gallons of fuel! And at 20 pounds of CO₂ per gallon of gas, we’re producing nearly 34 million less pounds of CO₂ each year.

And with fuel conservation and environmental sustainability in mind, we’ve also tested and/or incorporated hybrid and alternative fuel-

Route planning and optimization software has saved roughly 1.7 million gallons of fuel annually which produces nearly 34 million less pounds of CO₂ each year.
operated vehicles in select markets. In fact, one UniFirst location’s entire fleet currently runs on propane. These “green” delivery vehicles are being used in some of our more densely populated servicing areas in order to strike the highest balance between carbon and emission reductions and delivery efficiency. Further, all UniFirst fleet vehicles are governed and are equipped with Allison transmissions and idle shut-off software to reduce fuel consumption.

In the end, all of our efforts create overall reductions in wear and tear, fuel use, and maintenance resulting in bottom-line benefits for the environment and our customers.

Environmental Stewardship in Our Facilities

UniFirst was one of the first in the uniform and textile services industry to re-engineer all of its operations to become a “greener” and more environmentally friendly company. We were also one of the first members of the EPA’s Green Lights and ENERGY STAR® programs, which combine business strategies with environmental protection and energy conservation at all corporate facilities. And every UniFirst laundry production facility uses computerized processing equipment to maximize fuel and energy efficiencies while minimizing waste.

UniFirst is a long-standing member of the Laundry Environmental Stewardship Program (LaundryESP®), an industry-wide initiative with a singular focus to protect the environment. As a result of re-engineering all routine operational practices, UniFirst (and our industry) achieved and continues to maintain considerable reductions in water and energy usage.*

1. Water use: 33% reduction
2. Energy use: 27% reduction
3. CO₂ emissions: 24% reduction

On an ongoing basis, UniFirst provides recommendations to all of our plants regarding process and system operation through our Energy Best Practices communications, outlining step-by-step procedures for our Team Partners to follow in order to support the conservation of energy. Areas included are startup and shutdown procedures, building and general conservation, and equipment maintenance and production, and involve practices ranging anywhere from staggering major equipment startups each day and checking lint collectors hourly, to installing motion-sensor lights and insulating piping. They may seem like little things, but across hundreds of locations, they certainly add up to sound conservation practices.

Our overarching approach to environmental awareness as it concerns our facilities is to implement continued upgrades to existing locations whenever possible or to start from scratch upon new construction. For example, lighting makes up 20% of a building’s electricity usage. At UniFirst, we upgraded the lighting at most facilities with LED or T5 options, which offer greater energy efficiency and longer life. In the case of newly built plants, we make every effort to maximize natural lighting in our building designs to reduce the need for electric-based lighting. We also install skylights when possible to further reduce energy consumption while increasing the amount of natural light in the workplace.

And when UniFirst gains a new facility through an acquisition, we assess all operational systems in place and convert any oversized or inefficient equipment to improve performance. This includes upgrading boilers with energy-efficient burners to maximize combustion efficiency while minimizing the release of emissions. We also employ the practice of spot-cooling workstations in our large facilities where standard air conditioning is considered ineffective, expensive and, therefore, wasteful.

Even our Information Technologies (IT) group joins our environmental efforts. Taking advantage of the rapid changes technology presents helps keep UniFirst’s IT sustainability efforts on track. While our continued growth has required greater computing capacity, UniFirst has successfully decreased our overall footprint by decreasing the number of corporate physical servers from roughly 120 to 60 and using 2,200 virtual systems. As a result, we’ve seen a reduction in energy use of approximately 50% over the last five years, and our uninterruptible power supplies (UPS) have gone from carrying the

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* All data verified by Laundry ESP and Collier Shannon Scott, Environomics of Bethesda, Maryland, and Georgetown Economics (D.C.).
maximum possible load to roughly 40% over that same time period. Enabling a virtual environment also provides the ability to maintain systems without increasing server costs.

Additionally, our IT department is incorporating flash memory versus spinning discs wherever feasible. Flash memory chips store data and use less power to retain that data, all while booting faster, launching applications faster, and delivering faster overall performance that requires less power and less cooling.

Equipment
UniFirst runs an ongoing program to replace all industrial washers located in our laundry facilities that have reached 20 years of age. As the washers are removed, they’re replaced with units that contain high-efficiency motors and utilize copper wiring and currents half the size of the former washers, allowing for far less heat loss and greater efficiency. In addition, all garment presses are on the same 20-year schedule for replacement.

But our used equipment is not merely deposited in the nearest landfill. UniFirst works with the equipment manufacturers, sending the older equipment back to be rebuilt for use or to have the steel and other materials recycled, greatly reducing waste and offering new life to old materials.

We also strive for maximum efficiency as it relates to our industrial dryers. Employing coaxial ducts, a “duct within a duct,” hot moisture-laden dryer exhaust air is carried out of the plant through a center duct to the lint filter while the surrounding outer duct carries fresh outside make-up air directly to the dryer. It is much more efficient to bring in fresh, dry, and even cold outside air and heat it in the dryer rather than use warm, moist air from inside the plant. An added benefit is that the fresh outside air greatly expands when it is heated to the proper temperature, which results in faster drying. As a result of this process, dryer energy consumption can be reduced by 5–10%. Improved dryer operation results in shorter cycle times, which reduce electrical consumption.

And nearly all UniFirst processing facilities employ wastewater heat reclaimers, which recover heat from wastewater, transferring it to incoming clean, fresh water destined for tempered or hot water systems. These systems work to reduce fuel consumption and lessen the steam requirements to generate hot or tempered water, giving us better water temperature control and cutting down on discharge wastewater temperature.

Laundering Process
UniFirst strives to stay up to date with the latest innovations in laundering, conducting early testing of innovative industrial laundry detergents that will allow for effective cleaning and sanitization at wash temperatures as low as 120° F, rather than the current standard of 160°. These detergents have the potential to save thousands of dollars in energy costs from not having to heat the water to extremely high temperatures. The impact is exponential when considering the millions of garments we process each week and the effects that reduced wash time and temperature averages have with respect to water and energy consumption.

Currently, our laundering process entails carefully sorting clothing or other textiles and placing them in specially designed slings that are marked with garment type and soil level. They are then weighed and sent to designated washers that have been pre-programmed—based on the laundering requirements of the load—to use exacting amounts of cleaning agents, water, and precise temperatures and times to maximize processing efficiencies and to prevent waste.
All UniFirst laundry detergents are 100% “green” and environmentally friendly; they are biodegradable and made from renewable resources that are free of phosphates and other chemicals that could be harmful to the environment; and they are specially formulated for maximum soil removal with minimal abrasiveness to avoid fiber deterioration that could lead to premature fabric waste. We also utilize peroxide bleach for specified wash formulas because chlorine bleach, when combined with other chemicals, can create non biodegradable byproducts. UniFirst has also set a goal to reduce the amount of water used to clean customer garments and other products in our laundry plants from an average of about 1.8 gallons of water per pound of processed textiles to 1.25 gallons. We currently process approximately 700 million pounds of textiles annually. So, if we can achieve this goal, we could further reduce related water consumption by 385 million gallons per year!

Wastewater Efforts

We also take extraordinary care with all the byproducts produced by our laundry operations. At all UniFirst processing locations, a wastewater pretreatment program is employed to minimize any pollutant discharges to local wastewater systems. UniFirst partners with local municipal programs to further environmental and energy conservation efforts that benefit the communities in which we serve. For example, the wastewater byproducts (sludge solids) from UniFirst–Albany, NY, are shipped to a nearby waste-to-energy facility, which provides dependable, environmentally safe disposal of solid waste while generating clean, renewable electricity for the local utility.

In Chicago, we currently use filtered/recycled water in our laundering systems. Water recycling systems pump the process wastewater stream through a shaker screen, where lint and any solids are removed. From there, the stream is pumped to a micro-filtration system that filters the wastewater down to a 0.1 micron level. Currently, 25% of all the process water in our Chicago plant is recycled, with a goal of achieving 50% usage of recycled water. Due to the program’s success, we are now planning to expand this program in other UniFirst locations.

Additionally, select UniFirst plants are utilizing cleaned/treated wastewater in the initial wash stage of our floor mat and wiper laundering process. Because there are numerous steps and rinses to laundering these items, the initial rinse is a perfect place to reuse some of the cleaned water since items are especially soiled in this stage. Approximately 15% of the water in these plants is reused.

Our ongoing investments in water reuse, wastewater treatment, and emissions monitoring technologies also help assure that everything we return to the environment is compliant with local, state, and federal regulations and is clean, safe, and non-polluting.

Energy Management

UniFirst utilizes EnergyCAP, a powerful energy management software, to pay invoices and track usages and costs for all plants and branches, leading to greatly improved energy utilization. This software affords us the ability to compare location-to-location energy and water usage to identify any over-use. EnergyCAP also has additional capabilities including: identifying building control problems, inefficient facilities, and spot leaks; and tracking and reporting greenhouse gas emissions and green energy credits.

And, as we began to track a wider range of utility data in consistent categories, we were able to devote attention to unusual variations in cost in certain areas. For example, sewer surcharges were targeted using a custom report to ensure correct appropriation of costs. With the ability to break it down to this level, we know how to better treat waste and streamline our treatment operations. The cleaner we make our wastewater, the lower our surcharges. And that’s a win-win.
Ongoing investments help assure that everything we return to the environment is non-polluting.

Additionally, we partner with Tradition Energy, full-service energy management consultants, to assist with obtaining third-party energy suppliers for our locations in states that are deregulated, and with demand-response initiatives and solar energy opportunities. Through this partnership, UniFirst locations are also able to contract with suppliers that are Green-e® certified for energy use where portions of the energy supply are derived from wind. Currently, about 25 percent of our locations are powered by Green-e certified utility companies, with plans for this number to grow annually.

Environmental Recognition
UniFirst is a proud member of the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), the Canada Green Building Council (CaGBC), and Laundry Environmental Stewardship Program (LaundryESP®). UniFirst is also an ENERGY STAR® and Green Lights Business Partner and offers Green Seal® and ECOLOGO® certified products.

Our company continues to be honored by communities throughout North America for our environmental efforts, including:

- The Mecklenburg County Land Use and Environmental Services Agency named UniFirst’s Charlotte, NC, location Sustainable Manufacturer of the Year. The award is part of its “Wipe Out Waste” program for companies that have demonstrated a commitment to building a stronger community through waste reduction and recycling measures.

- The Hampton Roads, Virginia, Sanitation Department and the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality honored UniFirst with the Pollution Prevention (P2) Award for outstanding multimedia (air, land, and water) efforts that focus on reduction of waste (or its toxicity) at the source, rather than traditional treatment, control, and disposal.

- The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utility Department awarded silver to UniFirst in its Environmental Excellence Awards for environmental stewardship for exhibiting a proactive and innovative approach to protecting water quality. This award has been presented to UniFirst, uninterrupted, for nearly a decade.

- The Metro Wastewater Reclamation District, the wastewater treatment authority for much of metropolitan Denver and parts of northern Colorado, presented UniFirst with a Gold Award for perfect compliance with their industrial wastewater discharge permits for an entire calendar year.

- The Missouri Water Environmental Association (MWEA) awarded UniFirst a Gold Award for following strict environmental and water regulations and safety guidelines. UniFirst has won this award 12 times and is the only uniform laundry facility in the Springfield, MO, area to achieve this distinction.

- Exelon Corporation, one of the United States’ largest nuclear providers, presented UniFirst with its Environmental Leadership Award, citing our “lengthy record of (processes and) services that are environmentally responsible, safe, and of superior quality.”

- Utility companies in Texas presented UniFirst with gold awards for water safety and environmentally friendly treatment processes. These are just a few of the many types of environmental awards and recognitions UniFirst receives every year.
Diversity and Employee Initiatives

At UniFirst, we believe that our success depends on our ability to embrace diversity companywide and realize the benefits of a diverse workforce that include a greater variety of solutions to problems, a broader collection of skills and experiences, and an array of viewpoints to consider. Not to mention, more diverse Team Partners mean a better understanding of our diverse customers’ needs. We are committed to practicing affirmative action in the hiring, promotion, transfer, and training of all Team Partners.

As an affirmative action employer, we readily comply with all rules and regulations related to good faith efforts in our outreach. We partner with Monster, America’s Job Exchange, and others to reach diverse candidates in targeted career centers and professional diversity network communities. We also maintain required online affirmative action training courses for all line managers, which help provide a clear understanding of UniFirst’s affirmative action policies.

Additionally, UniFirst was recognized for the second consecutive year as a 2020 Women on Boards Winning Company. Winning companies champion board diversity by having 20% or more of their board seats held by women. The 2020 Women on Boards Gender Diversity Index of Fortune 1000 companies showed that 17.9% of corporate directors were women. UniFirst is proud to say that women currently make up 29% of those who have a seat on our board.

UniFirst named a winning company for board diversity.
Supplier Diversity

UniFirst is a full-service provider of textile rental services, with the majority of our rental products manufactured directly by UniFirst. While possessing our own manufacturing process presents fewer opportunities for the participation of subcontractors, UniFirst actively works with minority and women’s business enterprises (MWBE) that are able to supply customer products that we do not directly manufacture. This opens the door to new partnership opportunities and encourages the continued growth in confidence and skills of MWBE vendors. Whenever possible, UniFirst works with new vendors we identify as having MWBE certification potential, encouraging them to pursue federal-level certification and guiding them through the process as needed. UniFirst also tracks and continually reviews all of its supplier diversity spends.

Here at UniFirst, we welcome the opportunity to have our honored veterans apply their skills for our customers’ benefit.

Veteran Engagement

UniFirst actively reaches out to military veterans at nearly all staff recruitment drives. We recognize that today’s transitioning military veterans are highly skilled, disciplined, and adaptable to change. Many studies have identified the numerous transferable skills possessed by veterans: teamwork, critical thinking, problem solving, work ethic, integrity, and leadership to name a few. And here at UniFirst, we welcome the opportunity to have our honored veterans apply these skills for our customers’ benefit. Today, many of our most successful Team Partners, including managers, are proud veterans.

Educational Assistance

At UniFirst, we appreciate the value of education and recognize the importance of encouraging the leaders of tomorrow to develop their professional skills and expand their educational foundations through continued academic enrichment. In addition, we fully appreciate the financial burden that academic pursuits can place on individuals. As such, we offer tuition reimbursement and have established two scholarship programs to assist our Team Partners and their children in their educational endeavors.

Tuition Aid

In order to encourage full-time Team Partners who wish to further their educations and progress in their job knowledge, UniFirst provides partial reimbursement for tuition and books upon successful completion of job-related courses in a bachelor’s or master’s degree program. In recent years, UniFirst has given over $1 million in educational assistance to our Team Partners in the U.S. and Canada.

UniFirst is Proud to Partner with Andretti Autosport’s “Military to Motorsports” Program

UniFirst has joined forces with Military to Motorsports, a staff recruitment program that focuses on hiring the most qualified military veterans to join Andretti Autosport and its partners. The program was developed by racing legend Michael Andretti (pictured below), the leader of Andretti Autosport along with retired Navy veteran and Andretti Autosport chassis owner, David Tilton. Their mission is aimed at giving back to our nation’s Armed Services with quality employment opportunities.
Diversity and Employee Initiatives (continued)

Aldo Croatti Scholarship Program

The Aldo Croatti Scholarship, named for UniFirst’s founder, was established to encourage and assist the children of UniFirst Team Partners in their academic pursuits. Each year, we award 12 scholarships to students who are enrolled or enrolling in full-time undergraduate studies at an accredited two- or four-year college or vocational/technical school. To date, we’ve granted 179 scholarships totaling more than $358,000 since its inception in 2004.

Ronald D. Croatti Scholarship Program

To further expand UniFirst’s dedication to academic and professional enrichment, we established an additional scholarship program specifically for UniFirst Team Partners. The Ronald D. Croatti Scholarship, named for our former President and CEO who passed away in 2017, offers financial assistance to full-time Team Partners who enroll in full-time or part-time undergraduate or graduate study at an accredited two- or four-year college or vocational/technical school for an entire academic year. These Team Partners are recommended by their supervisors for continuing education in one of three areas: information technology (IT), sales leadership, or business administration/leadership. Each year, we distribute nearly $50,000, with awards ranging from $1,000 to $5,000. To date, we’ve granted 34 scholarships totaling more than $129,000 since its inception in 2015.

Management Development Program

UniFirst was chosen as a recipient of the Leadership 500 Excellence Awards for outstanding achievements and innovation in leadership development and programs. These awards salute the world’s top leadership practitioners and programs, as well as highlight their roles in developing their most important asset—their people.

Spotlight On Employee Initiatives

“It’s such a great honor to receive the Aldo Croatti Scholarship from UniFirst,” says Chau Xuan of Lexington, MA, one of the 2018 scholarship recipients. “I’m really proud that UniFirst recognized my academic achievements and thankful for the scholarship money that will help offset the costs of attending college.”

Our UniFirst Management Institute (UMI) is a leadership development program that supports the career progression of the top high-potential leaders within the company. It provides targeted, individualized professional development through a blended training solution that includes a series of four week-long workshops offering forums with key leadership, business simulations, and competency assessments. Outside the workshops, participants utilize virtual meetings, action learning, job shadows, social networking, and reading assignments designed to accelerate participants to the next career level. Overall, about one-third of all UMI participants have been promoted from the positions they held during their UMI attendance, with several reaching executive leadership levels. UMI graduates are consistently the first candidates considered for new leadership positions as they become available at UniFirst.

Ongoing Investment in Training

We recognize that in order to continue to deliver the best service possible and provide the most customized fit for each current or potential customer, we need to keep our Team Partners well
educated regarding UniFirst’s latest products and services. Additionally, we believe it is crucial to address areas that are pivotal to the professional growth of our Team Partners, including skills, management, sales, compliance, safety, and health training.

As part of our commitment to talent development, we heavily invest in ongoing training for all UniFirst Team Partners. With two departments dedicated to on-the-job training programs and an estimated annual spend of over $13 million, we believe that there is no substitute for a knowledgeable team.

And our staff-training commitment has been nationally recognized. UniFirst was awarded two Stevie Awards®, “the world’s top honors for customer service, contact center, business development, and sales professionals.” The first award was for our Account Management Education (AME) program, which teaches strategies and tools necessary to proactively build relationships with customers. The second award was for a new program, Phone Skills Coaching Tool, used to engage sales managers in automated prompt and response appointment-setting attempts by telephone. We consistently evaluate and update ongoing training programs and create new ones to help our Team Partners grow personally and to allow them to provide exceptional customer service—a hallmark of our company.

UniFirst Develops Innovative Recruiting Program

UniFirst developed a unique, award-winning management development program in 2018 called LEAP (Leadership, Education, and Performance) specifically designed to attract, hire, and retain talented Team Partners at the managerial level and place them on a fast-track career path. LEAP includes 18 months of training, rotating through different UniFirst locations and departments, and builds a foundation for a results-driven leadership career. Five leadership competencies make up the program’s learning tracks (critical thinking, people development, business management, emotional intelligence, and ethical leadership), all offered through a blend of operational knowledge and experience in the industrial laundry business and strategic thinking, sound leadership skills, and personal/professional growth. For the pilot program, UniFirst hired a group of 15 LEAP associates who, at the time of this publication, are all being trained on the job within the areas of sales, service, production, and location management. The program has been so successful to date that UniFirst is continuing it throughout 2019 and beyond.

Free On-site English Classes

UniFirst received a 2018 Business Leadership Award from English for New Bostonians. The award recognizes UniFirst’s support of workplace English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes, administered by ESL Cambridge, for its Team Partners. English for New Bostonians creates opportunities for immigrants to learn English and pursue their economic, educational, and civic goals. UniFirst currently offers free weekly ESOL classes after work for the diverse work force at its Dorchester and Springfield, MA, locations. The program, implemented two years ago, has been such an overwhelming success in helping these employees succeed in the workplace that it is now included in the company’s local benefits package. UniFirst is also in the midst of expanding this program to other locations across North America.

“UniFirst makes it easy for me to attend [ESOL] class right here after work. I can then go home at a normal time to be with my family. It has really helped me succeed in work and in life here in the U.S.,” says Angela Spinola, UniFirst production Team Partner.
Each year UniFirst and its employee Team Partners donate money, goods, and volunteer hours to numerous deserving causes and initiatives.

From donating money and items to area residents affected by Hurricanes Michael and Harvey, to providing safety gear to a security company customer working to safeguard businesses during the California wildfires, UniFirst Team Partners mobilize precisely when needed most in the communities in which they live and serve. They also regularly support programs like our own “Thanks from Home” initiative for U.S. soldiers serving abroad, which packages and sends much-needed and hard-to-get supplies, such as snack foods, games, toiletries, and clothing donated by UniFirst employee Team Partners.

Our initial CSR Report was instrumental in not only inciting additional local-level support from UniFirst Team Partners, but it also brought to light important overarching social and environmental issues that inspired our corporate executives to do even more. UniFirst, led by our executive vice president, Cynthia Croatti, formed a corporate taskforce to focus solely on social responsibility efforts, current and future. She and her team have led a passionate charge to identify and partner with charities that best reflect our company values. As a result of these efforts, UniFirst initially partnered with Raising a Reader, a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping families develop, practice, and maintain literacy habits that are critical for a child’s success in school and in life. Next, we joined forces with ESL Cambridge, an English language coaching and consulting service, to provide free English classes to non-English speaking employee Team Partners. As mentioned, UniFirst was also recognized for this philanthropic effort, receiving a Business Leadership Award from English for New Bostonians.

In addition to Raising a Reader and ESL, below is just a sampling of the many national organizations UniFirst, its locations, and its employee Team Partners currently support:

- American Cancer Society
- The American Lung Association
- Boys & Girls Clubs of America
- Make-A-Wish
- March of Dimes
- The Red Cross
- Salvation Army
- Special Olympics
- St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital
- United Way
- YMCA/YWCA

As a whole, UniFirst annually contributes to well over 200 different philanthropic organizations on a national and local level. Additionally, through our years of community involvement, UniFirst has developed close relationships with particular organizations with which we remain actively engaged.

**Backpacks for Nicaragua**

During a recent trip to UniFirst’s Nicaraguan manufacturing facility, our executive team discovered the financial challenges our Nicaraguan Team Partners face when providing required school supplies for their children. Upon returning to the U.S., corporate Team Partners in Wilmington, MA, mobilized to help ease the financial burden by organizing a campaign to purchase, assemble, and donate backpacks and school supplies to our Nicaraguan family. Team Partners spent the day before Thanksgiving stuffing backpacks with wish-list items including notebooks, pencils, markers, rulers, and more. The items were then hand-delivered to more than 500 families in Nicaragua by UniFirst president and CEO Steven Sintros and executive vice president Cynthia Croatti just in time for Nicaragua’s new school year.
UniFirst Donates Computers, Monitors, and Telephones to Helping Hands Jamaica

UniFirst donated computers, monitors, and telephones to the Helping Hands Jamaica Foundation, an organization dedicated to improving the lives of the next generation of Jamaicans and their communities by creating a world-class education system through investment in infrastructure, resource materials, and expertise. UniFirst also supplied customer Kisko Freezies with coveralls to outfit volunteers who went to Jamaica to help build new schools throughout the rural countryside. The equipment that UniFirst donated was distributed across these schools.

UniFirst Believes in Second Chances

For the past several years, UniFirst–Oklahoma City, OK, has partnered with Red Rock, a state-run halfway house, to give formerly incarcerated individuals a second chance in life with employment opportunities that otherwise may have been difficult for them to get. Through the years, UniFirst has successfully employed dozens of formerly incarcerated workers with temporary jobs, many of which led to permanent positions.

UniFirst Donates Polos to Denison High School Robotics Team

When UniFirst heard the Denison High School robotics team from Denison, TX, were seeking donations from the community to purchase new team jerseys, UniFirst stepped up to the plate to outfit the entire team. The company donated new polo shirts to all students and instructors so they could look their best throughout their competition season.

Beantown Blankets and Giving Back

During the holiday season, UniFirst chose to give corporate Team Partners a present that also helped benefit those less fortunate. The company purchased hundreds of handcrafted lined blankets from Beantown Blankets, a company based in Middleton, MA, that donates one blanket to a homeless shelter for every blanket that is purchased. UniFirst’s support allowed Beantown Blankets to donate several hundred blankets to three Boston-area shelters during the cold winter months.
SPOTLIGHT ON CITIZENSHIP

Plant a Tree in Memory
As a way to offer condolences and support to our corporate Team Partners who have lost a loved one and to help contribute to the world in a meaningful way, UniFirst participates in a forward-thinking program called A Living Tribute. The organization plants a tree, or a grove of trees, in the White Mountain National Forest of New Hampshire, in the name of recently lost loved ones. Additionally, the bereaved receive a personalized commemorative certificate notifying them of the gift and the associated tree planting. This program helps our Team Partners through difficult times and supports ongoing reforestation efforts.

Raising a Reader
UniFirst partners with Raising A Reader MA, an evidence-based early literacy program that helps families of young children (birth through age six) develop, practice, and maintain habits of reading together at home. The first of its kind, the program provides UniFirst Team Partners access to books that they can take home to read to their children and help instill a passion for reading. Participation in this program underscores the importance of early literacy in laying the foundation for a lifetime of learning.

Natural Disaster Relief Efforts
In recent years, many people in Texas, Florida, and California were impacted by devastating natural disasters. UniFirst quickly stepped up to help those affected, including members of our UniFirst Family.

To help Team Partners in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey, the company organized, collected, and shipped thousands of needed items, along with a corporate donation of $34,000 in Costco gift cards. An online fundraising campaign also allowed Team Partners to donate directly to the American Red Cross. Similarly, after Hurricane Michael, Team Partners coordinated a companywide relief effort, collecting and distributing several thousand donated items, along with a corporate donation sent directly to affected Team Partners.

And during the 2018 California wildfires, the company donated Flame Resistant (FR) jackets, vests, and coveralls to G4S Security, a UniFirst business customer responsible for guarding an area command post for Pacific Gas and Electric Company.

UniFirst Sponsors College Success Foundation
UniFirst has donated $25,000 annually to the College Success Foundation and sponsored their annual awards event held in Washington, DC. The foundation provides a unique integrated system of support and scholarships to inspire underserved, low-income students to finish high school, graduate from college, and succeed in life.

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In Our Words

“Knowing that your coworkers and company are there for you makes for an awesome work environment.”

Ben W., Lexington, SC

“It felt good to work for a company that was so quick and willing to help a customer in need.”

Nicholas K., St. George, UT

“After the compassion shown to my family by UniFirst, they now have an employee for life.”

Chad T., Cincinnati, OH

“It is such a great feeling coming to work every day where everyone is smiling, friendly, and willing to help however and wherever they can.”

Debra O., Garden City, KS

“I didn’t know that businesses like this still existed any more in the corporate world.”

Delores M., Charlotte, NC

“I feel so fortunate to work for such an amazing company that makes me feel appreciated. The closeness, unity, and family-like feel I get each day while at work is unbelievable.”

Rachel M., Wilmington, MA

“Through good times and bad, we always stand together and come to the aid of anyone in our UniFirst Family.”

Clint B., Jackson, MS

“I haven’t worked anywhere like this where there are so many charitable acts and donations to help the people and our community.”

Laurie S., St. Louis, MO
Forestry Stewardship Council (FSC) certified paper was used to ensure that wood for this project material was harvested in accordance with environmentally conscious standards from responsibly managed forests.

The UniFirst Corporate Social Responsibility brochure was printed on recycled paper stock using vegetable-based inks with low VOCs.

CONTACT US:
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