



2021

IMPACT REPORT

Sweetwater



Dear Sweetwater Community,

I'm thrilled to once again present our annual Impact Report on behalf of our entire team.

Music has the extraordinary power to bring comfort, hope, and inspiration to people everywhere. At Sweetwater, we're honored to support the artists and creators who make that possible. Their passion drives us to continuously raise the bar, ensuring they have the tools and support they need to share their gifts with the world. Their influence serves as a constant source of motivation for everything we do.

Beyond music, our impact extends to our employees, our partners, our communities, and the environment. For more than 40 years, we've remained deeply committed to making a meaningful difference in these areas. While we have much to celebrate this year, we know our journey is ongoing.

Just as creating great music is an ever-evolving process, we are always striving to expand our impact. Our leadership team and over 2,500 employees share an unwavering dedication to this mission. I'm incredibly grateful for their commitment and appreciate you taking the time to learn more about the difference we're making together.

Sincerely,

Mike Clem
CEO / President

Sweetwater

Our Mission

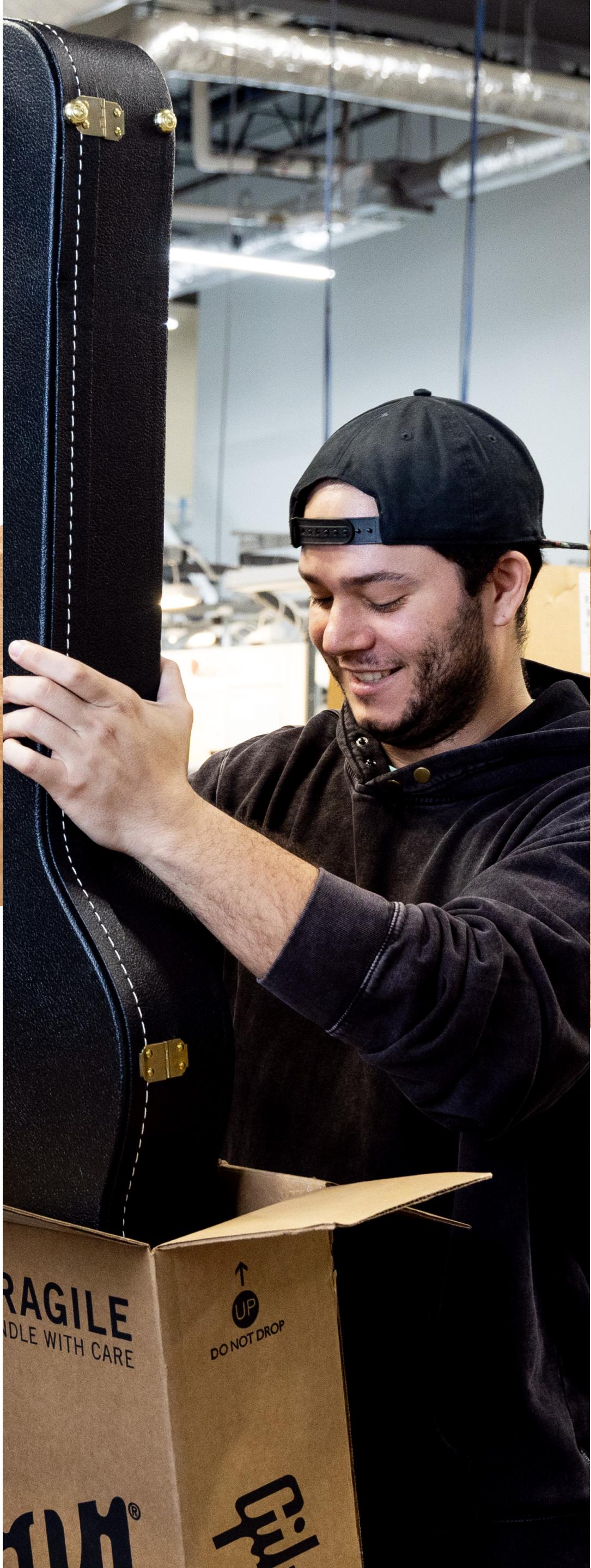
Our mission is simple — to always do the right thing. Whether for customers, our visitors, our fellow employees, or our business partners, our goal is always to exceed expectations and conduct ourselves with integrity, honesty, and respect for others.

Our heart for all those we serve starts in our own backyard and extends to communities all over the world.



2024 IMPACT REPORT: OUR ENVIRONMENT

Our dedication to serving others inspires us to thoughtfully manage our resources and minimize our environmental footprint. From reducing packaging waste to enhancing energy efficiency in our facilities, we continuously seek innovative ways to protect the planet and build a more sustainable future.



We Take Recycling Seriously

Our commitment to reducing and reusing materials led to a measurable decrease in overall waste, resulting in a lower total volume of cardboard and plastic needing to be recycled — demonstrating a true reduction at the source.



D'Addario play
back

In 2024, our Guitar Workshop recycled 250,706 strings through our partnership with D'Addario.

2,159 lbs.
of strings

In 2024, 93,000 feet of solar panels on our Fort Wayne Fulfillment Center generated almost

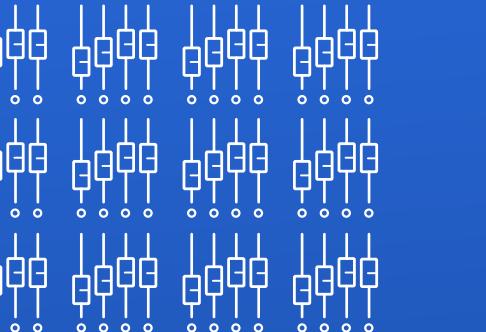
1.4 Million Kilowatt Hours of Electricity



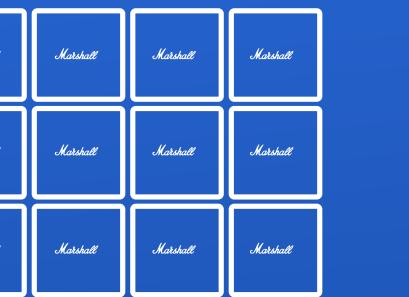
Powering **130** US homes
for a year



Saving the same amount
of carbon as planting over
16,000 trees

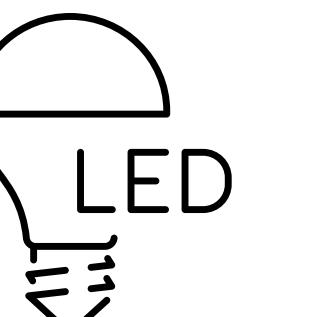


Powering **250** professional
recording studios for a year



Playing a Marshall stack
at full volume for
160 years

Our LED transition initiative has led to our Fort Wayne campus now being **80% LED powered** . . . and on our way to 100%.



80% **LED powered**





2024 IMPACT REPORT:

SUPPLY CHAIN RESPONSIBILITY

As a leader in the music retail industry, we believe it's our responsibility to partner with and inspire other companies to make a meaningful impact. True progress happens when we collaborate with those who share our commitment to people and to the planet. Doing the right thing isn't just a promise — it's a standard we uphold for ourselves and encourage across the music industry, shipping, manufacturing, and beyond.

Amplifying Positive Workplace Culture

In 2024, we partnered with vendors to discuss employer responsibility and employee wellbeing through a transparency-driven survey. These insights highlighted how businesses of all sizes prioritize employee care, reinforcing our shared commitment to people-centered workplaces.

Here is a sample of the data that emerged from the survey:

62%

Have implemented measures to ensure that the workplace is accessible to employees with disabilities.



26%

Offer training programs to enhance employees' understanding of inclusivity and diversity.

56%

Have specific statements and policies in place to support an inclusive work environment.

32%

Have initiatives or support systems in place to assist employees from diverse backgrounds.

SWEETWATER VENDOR RESOURCES

Thank you for your commitment to caring for your employees! Below you will find links to several resources that you may find helpful as you seek to implement or improve efforts within your organization. While we recognize that very large organizations may be able to devote significantly more resources to these areas, we believe the spirit and thinking behind them is open to all.

Your choice to vet and/or utilize these resources is completely up to you but we hope you find them helpful!

- **The Heart of Business: Leadership Principles for the Next Era of Capitalism** by Hubert Joly - <https://www.amazon.com/Heart-Business-Leadership-Principles-Capitalism/dp/1647820383>: provides an outline of how companies can better pursue a noble purpose, put people at the center of the business, create an environment where every employee can blossom, and treat profit as an outcome, not the goal
- **The Culture Code: The Secrets of Highly Successful Groups** by Daniel Coyle - <https://www.amazon.com/Culture-Code-Secrets-Highly-Successful/dp/0804176981>: a compelling read offering a roadmap for creating an environment where people are welcomed, innovation flourishes, problems get solved, and expectations are exceeded
- **Cultural Intelligence** - <https://culturaliq.com>: a competency based and globally recognized approach to helping individuals understand, appreciate, work and relate with people from all kinds of backgrounds

After reviewing the thoughtful responses and results, we created and shared a resource guide with helpful tips for navigating these areas. Additionally, we offered our Employee Wellbeing team as a thought partner in identifying new programs and initiatives.

Thank you Sweetwater for addressing this topic — we all need to do what we can to make the work environment and the world a better place!



2024 IMPACT REPORT: **OUR PEOPLE**

Our team members are at the heart of the Sweetwater Difference. By prioritizing their wellbeing and success, we create a ripple effect — empowering them to deliver exceptional service and drive positive impacts for everyone we serve. When our people thrive, our entire community benefits.

An Award-winning Culture

In 2024, we received 10 Comparably Awards, including being named as a Best Company for the areas of Culture, Happiness, and Work-Life Balance.



Comparably Awards are based on current employee sentiment feedback and are given to only the top 100 employers from among 70,000 companies.



Newsweek's
Greatest Workplaces
for Parents & Families



2024 North America
Inspiring Workplaces
Award — Top 100

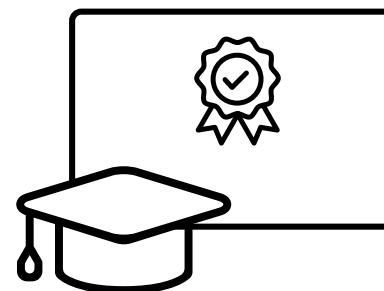
“People here are kind and care about one another. The work-life balance is good and the company understands that people have lives and families. The work is challenging but not grueling. The pay and benefits are fantastic.”

“Do the right thing” isn't hyperbole: it's who we are. I've never worked with a smarter, more passionate group of people and can't imagine any other company having what we have.

This is a culture built on trust, cooperation, and a desire to do it the right way — I believe we as employees operate with an implicit understanding the company has our back.

Investing in Growth: Empowering Employees at Every Stage

Sweetwater has an ongoing commitment to providing professional development opportunities for our employees, offering multiple programs such as the Food for Thought Lunch Series, the Manager Development Program, and Executive & Leadership Coaching through BetterUp to support growth at every career stage.



13%

Increase in YOY Management
Development Program Graduates



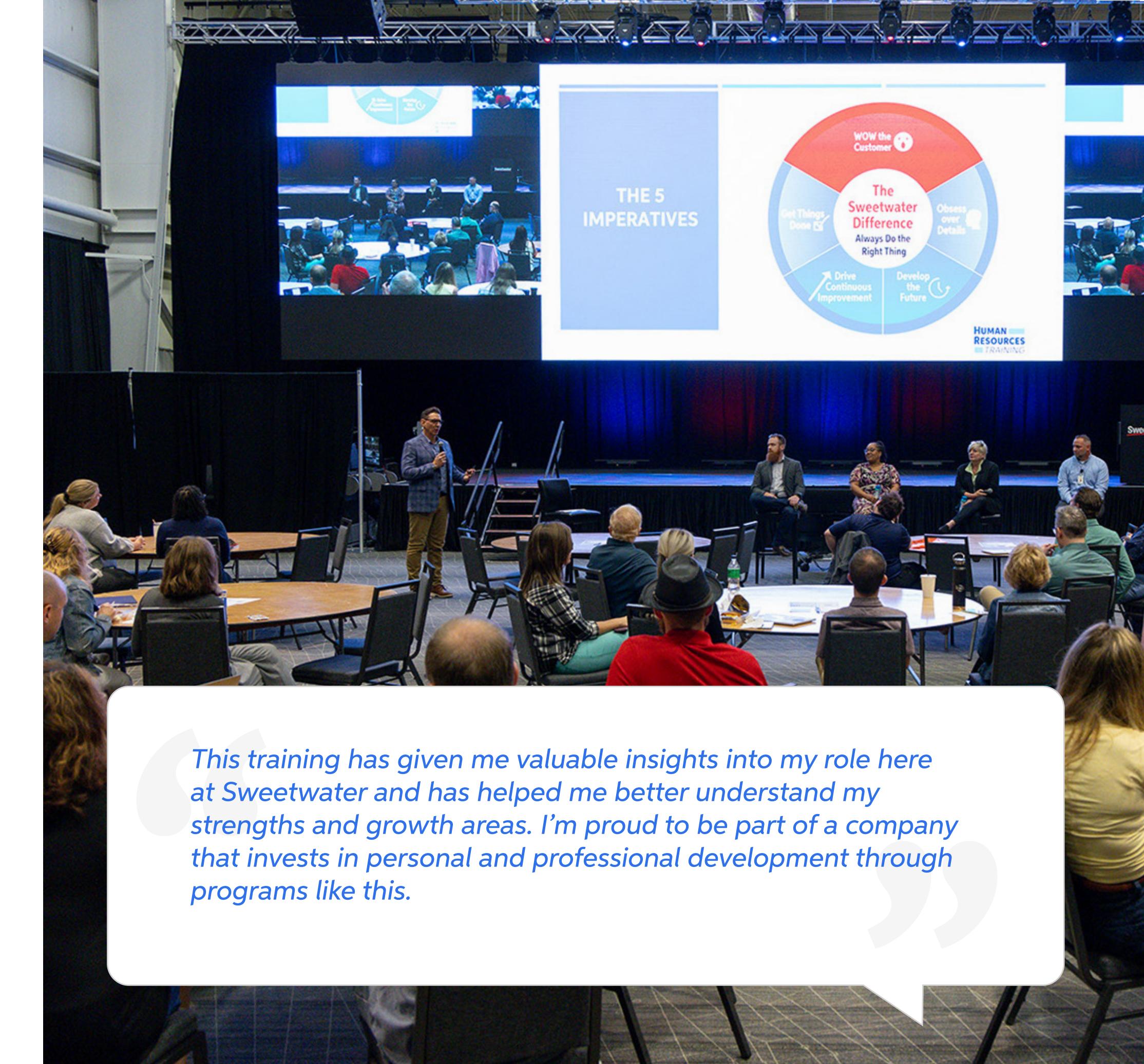
71%

Increase in YOY
Food for Thought Attendance



Women's Development Program

In 2024, we added the Women's Development Program to our STEP (Sweetwater Talent Enhancement Programs) portfolio. This program was created to support the increase of women in management and leadership positions at Sweetwater.



This training has given me valuable insights into my role here at Sweetwater and has helped me better understand my strengths and growth areas. I'm proud to be part of a company that invests in personal and professional development through programs like this.

Participating in this program has been an incredible experience! It equipped me with valuable skills and knowledge while connecting me to a network of inspiring women who share a passion for growth and leadership.

Employee Wellbeing and Social Events

In 2024, we hosted over 30 Wellbeing and Social events, including Family Zoo Day, Komets Hockey Night, Employee Event “Pop-ups,” Trick or Sweet, Valentine’s Day Lunch, the Thanksgiving Giveaway, Santa Lunch, our Holiday Celebration, and many more. These events fostered nearly 10,000 meaningful connections with employees and their families.



Sweetwater Sessions

To amplify employee voices, we launched “Sweetwater Sessions,” a series of CEO-led town halls where employees can submit questions in advance, fostering open dialogue and direct engagement with our executive leadership team throughout the year.

A photograph of two young people in a DJ booth. On the left, a young woman with short hair and a hoop earring is smiling. On the right, a young man wearing a dark hoodie with the word 'Joppolo' on it is wearing headphones and looking towards the camera. They are positioned in front of a DJ mixer and headphones. The background is blurred with colorful lights.

2024 IMPACT REPORT:

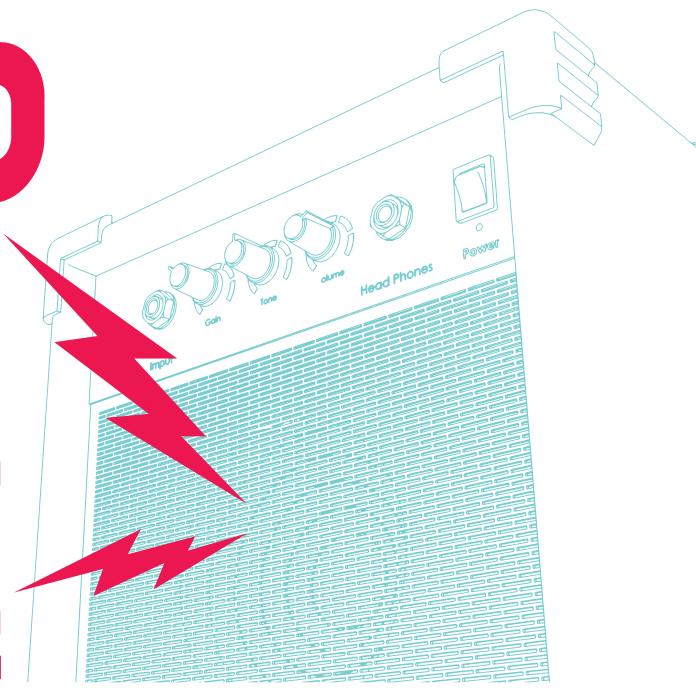
OUR COMMUNITY

Through partnerships with more than 200 organizations, we worked to create lasting change in communities near and far. For us, making a difference isn't just a goal — it's a fundamental part of who we are.

In 2024, we gave more than
\$985,000
in funding, gear, and volunteer
support to our partners.



TURN UP THE VOLUME



In 2024, we launched Turn Up the Volume, empowering our employees to directly influence our philanthropic giving by casting votes on key financial contributions, reinforcing our commitment to community impact and shared decision-making.



Save the Music Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering students, schools, and communities by providing access to music education, ensuring that every child can experience the transformative power of making music.



Women's Audio Mission is a San Francisco-based nonprofit and recording studio dedicated to advancing women in music, audio production, and creative technology through training, mentorship, and industry access.



Sweet Relief Musicians Fund provides vital financial assistance to musicians and music industry workers facing health, disability, or age-related challenges, helping them navigate difficult times with support and dignity.

FIRST PLACE

SECOND PLACE

THIRD PLACE



In concert with MusiCares Foundation, Sweetwater presented Mindful May, an inaugural clinic providing free mental and physical wellness services to music professionals held at the Grammy Museum in Los Angeles, California.



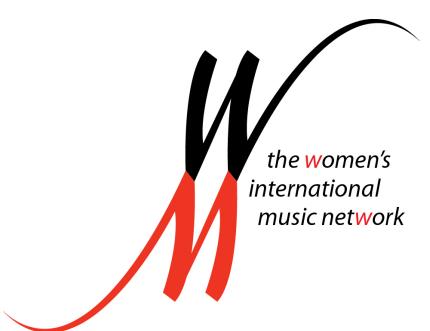
Sweetwater partnered with Save the Music Foundation to support the J Dilla Music Technology Grant, helping historically under-resourced public schools provide students with innovative tools and curricula to explore music creation, recording, and production.



Other Supported Organizations Include:



FORT WAYNE PHILHARMONIC
Andrew Constantine, Music Director



WE ARE MOVING THE NEEDLE

A person with long hair, seen from the back, stands in a field of tall grass at sunset. The person is holding a guitar. The background is a vast, golden field under a clear sky.

Sweetwater