



IMPACT

GUIDE

knotty
llc

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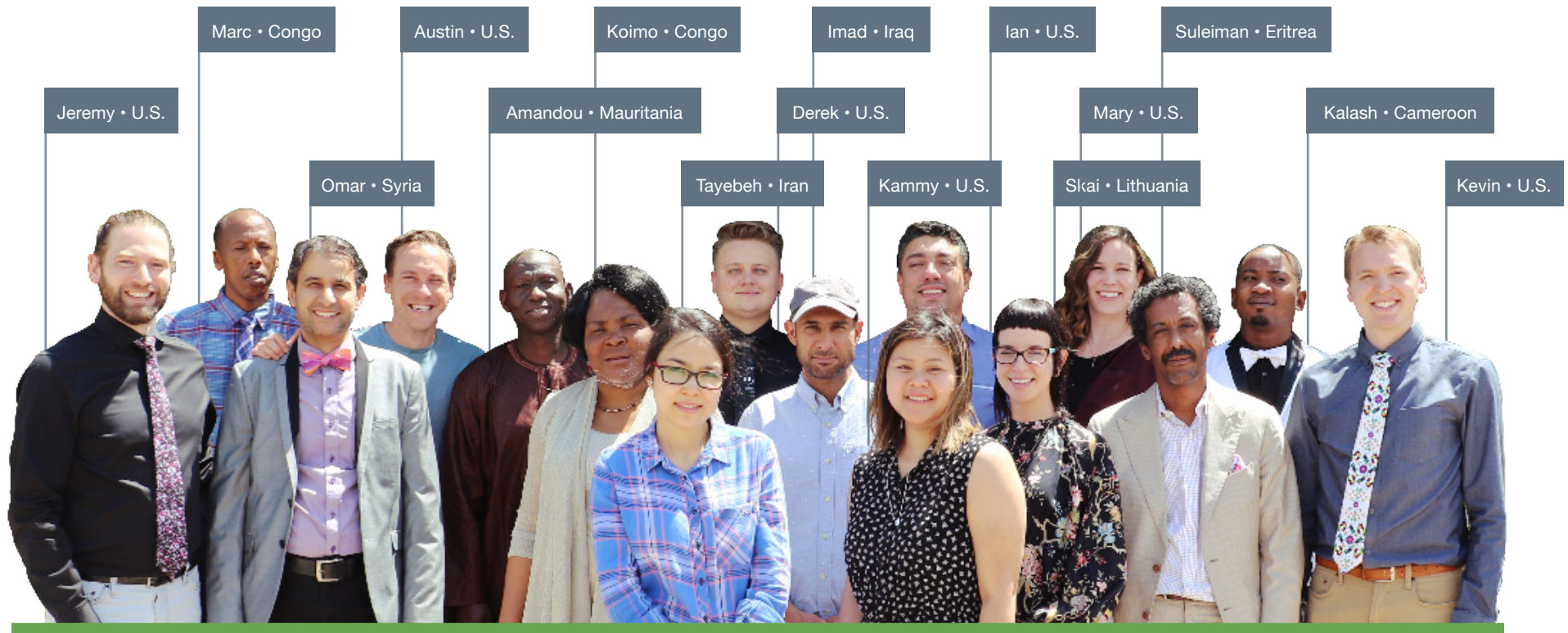
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MAKERS

on a



MISSION



WHO WE ARE

“We have today 40 million forcibly displaced people and 20 million refugees, the greatest number of uprooted people since the Second World War.”¹

Global migration crises are likely to worsen over the coming decades with an estimated 200 million environmental migrants alone by 2050. Rising global temperatures causing melting ice-caps and rising sea levels pose threats to coastal populations while others inland will also be impacted due to increasing desertification and dwindling freshwater sources. Additionally, the UN forecasts the population of the world to rise from 7.7 billion people to 10 billion by 2056, likely increasing conflicts over resources, causing further exacerbation of the refugee and migration crisis facing the world.

Simply put; we care about others and we honor the dignity of humans.

Meet our talented team of creators and makers committed to improving the lives of refugees and changing the way in which apparel is made.

That’s what makes us who we are.

We can’t ignore those 20 million refugees who have been forced from their homes and are unlikely to ever be able to return. Refugees desperately need our help reestablishing safe and productive lives.

At Knotty Tie, we know that refugees are not a burden; in fact, refugees have an abundance of skills that are in short supply in our community. Their abilities have a positive affect on our economy and community, economic or otherwise.

¹ William Lacy Swing, Director General of the International Organisation for Migration

We set out to create

goals and metrics

*to improve on the impactful
work we have accomplished*

since we started.

IMPACT REPORTING AND METHODOLOGY

We started developing our impact reporting structure with research of various frameworks and certifications in addition to looking at the best practices of leading social enterprises. Additionally, we conducted several interviews with employees to better understand the impact areas they care about most: refugee development and the environment. Based on our initial research we decided to focus on using the B Impact Assessment (BIA), United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs), and IRIS as our primary inspirations to develop our own unique framework at Knotty Tie Co.

We used the BIA to be better understand our impact on our employees, community, customers, and environment.

Next, we aligned our impact areas to the UN SDGs #3 - Good Health and Wellbeing, #4 - Quality Education, #8 - Decent Work and Economic Growth, and #12 - Responsible Consumption and Production. Finally, we developed goals and metrics within each of our impact areas based on IRIS performance metrics.

These impact areas, goals, metrics, and corresponding methodology were designed with our mission and values in mind: to develop and improve the lives of our employees and their families, and to benefit our community and environment. With the foundation of a new impact reporting framework in place, we will constantly revisit and improve upon our goals and metrics to scale our impact in 2019 and beyond.



Determine

Engage with stakeholders to determine what Knotty Tie Co. cares most about



Plan

Create metrics to benchmark performance and then set goals to improve impact



Communicate

Communicate impact to stakeholders and build brand awareness

Our primary focus

at Knotty Tie

*is to provide dignified,
skills-based employment*

for refugees.



REFUGEE DEVELOPMENT

Global crises, all of them manmade, create refugees — individuals and families forced from their home due to violence and persecution. Refugees leave everything behind in their pursuit of safety and sanctuary. Some, after a long and intense process, find themselves rebuilding their lives through refugee resettlement. Refugees may arrive with limited English skills, a high degree of trauma, or lack of transferable work skills.

With this in mind, we strive to provide staff with employment opportunities that match their skills and benefits that match their needs. Thus we provide reimbursement for English and college-level coursework, flexible work arrangements, transportation stipends, and full healthcare benefits. Additionally, we take pride in providing fair wages that have a multiplicative

impact on the local economy. According to the Colorado Department of Human Services, for every \$1 a refugee earns \$25.49 is generated throughout the economy.*

We are committed to assisting our refugee staff and their families by listening to them and understanding their stories and aspirations. Therefore, we have developed company goals along with metrics to track how well we are serving them.

* CDHS Economic and Fiscal Impact of Refugees in CO Report:
drive.google.com/file/d/1F2Wt0NvSei2nIwH-PC7nTr6MPRbqcxm9/view

TRAINING & EDUCATION

While we often start with basic sewing skills, we want refugee staff to learn valuable skills beyond sewing so they can ultimately merit higher pay, take on more challenging roles within the organization, and experience faster growth in their careers. We know each refugee staff member has incredibly unique skills and experiences. Each has unique personal and professional goals. So, we take a highly individualized approach to helping them succeed.



Learning English

Refugees' success in the workforce is largely attributable to their English language proficiency. We reimburse for english classes and help navigate community resources.



Skills Training

We set aside time each week for training refugee staff to advance their sewing, graphic design, manufacturing, technology and management skills.



College Assistance

We want refugees to get degrees — and we all know just how costly that can be. That's why we provide bonuses for staff who complete college courses.

EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION

Our refugee employees are an integral part of our company and are treated like the dignified humans they are. We pay not what the market dictates, but what we deem is a living wage and what we believe is needed to achieve economic self-sufficiency. This way refugees are able to provide for themselves and their families, and to invest in a bright future for themselves and their children, all while minimizing the need for public assistance.



\$15 Minimum Wage

Minimum wage is not a livable wage, especially in Denver. This is why we've raised our standards to keep up with the actual needs of our employees.



Employee Ownership

Ownership of the company should be shared, and is shared by our founders, investors, and employees — who receive stock options regardless of position.



Flexible Schedules

Flexible scheduling maximizes earnings potential for our refugee staff by helping those attending school or raising a family to still be able to work full-time hours.

EMPLOYEE HEALTH & WELLNESS

We believe that it is essential for all persons to have access to affordable health care. A company should also take an interest in the health and well-being of its employees by actively promoting balanced and healthy lifestyles. We offer generous benefits to support all of our staff and do our part in maintaining a healthy life-work balance.



Health Benefits

Employer sponsored health, dental and vision insurance available for all employees with the majority of the cost subsidized by our company.



Fitness & Transit Benefits

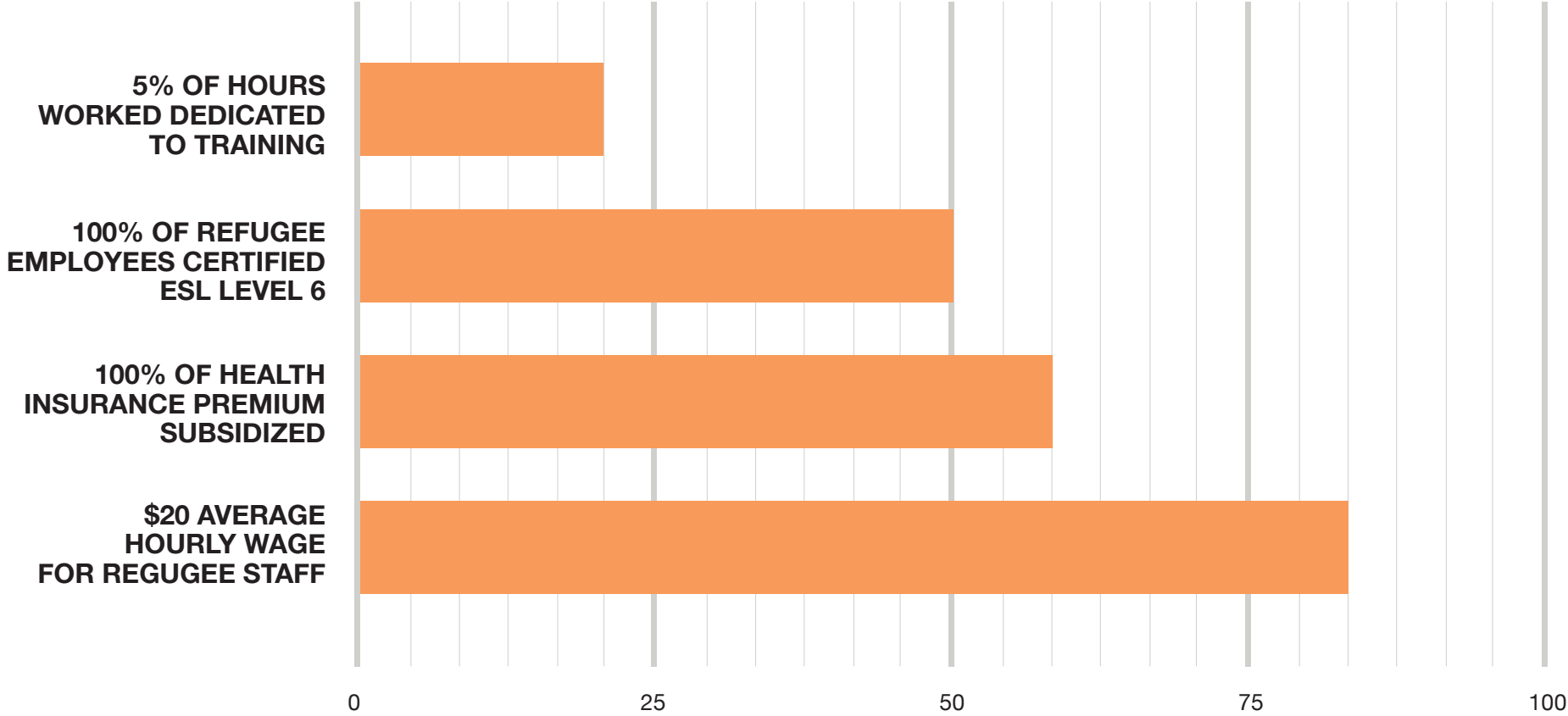
We reimburse our employees for their monthly fitness class or membership expenses, as well as reimburse any public transit expenses, like bus or rail passes.



Paid Time Off

We provide 18 days paid time off and 7 paid company holidays for all employees each year. Also, we have paid bereavement leave for life's unfortunate circumstances.

Percentage of Progress Made Toward Set Goals



Meet Marc



“IT IS WONDERFUL TO HAVE A JOB WHERE I CAN LEARN ENGLISH, USE MY PROFESSIONAL SKILLS, AND PROVIDE FOR MY FAMILY.”

Living as a Congolese refugee in Rwanda for 18 years, Marc understands global racial discrimination and injustice on a deeply personal level. Evicted from the DRC, Marc and his family took refuge in Rwanda, where they worked hard to create a new home. Marc attended a year long program, where he learned to sew, and used his new talents to provide for his family as well as teach others. Becoming president of the refugee camp, Marc managed volunteers, donations, and relationships with the Rwandan government. To his surprise, his family was among the first group of refugees from the camp to be granted access to America. While learning a new culture and

country was difficult, Marc sought out jobs where he could use his sewing skills, but to no avail. The only jobs available for recently resettled refugees were unfulfilling, unpredictable, and menial. “I didn’t think it was possible to find a job doing what I love and using my skills, but I found Knotty Tie Co. and I am so thankful everyday. It is wonderful to have a job where I can learn english, use my professional skills, and provide for my family. I am able to show my children that they have a promising future and can do many things in America.”

Meet Omar



Omar is from Hama, Syria. When Syria broke out in war, the government started throwing civilians in jail without cause. After 8 months of living in fear of being thrown in jail at any moment, Omar fled Syria. He and his family found safety at a refugee camp in Jordan. At first Jordan welcomed Syrian refugees, but as more and more Syrians were displaced by the war, Jordan grew reluctant to accept more refugees. Omar lived in the refugee camp for 5 years before he was granted asylum in America. On February 13th, 2017, Omar and his family started their new life in Colorado. His wife, his 2-year-old son, and his 3-year-old daughter accompanied him to their new home. Before he moved to America he didn't know if he would like it here, but now he says he likes Americans even more than his people of Syria. He has felt very welcome here, and he likes his coworkers a lot. His goal is to build a bright future for his family in Denver. In order to make this happen, he first plans to become fluent in English, and later hopes to attend fashion design school. His brother and mother are back in Syria and he misses them every day, and hopes that some day they will be able to join him in America.

Meet Tayebbeh



Tayebbeh was born in Iran, but moved to Turkey with her family when she was 21 in search of a better life. She found Turkey to be a very beautiful place, and found its people very helpful and kind. In Turkey, Tayebbeh started working for a company sewing curtains and quickly picked up the skill. Her native language is Farsi, but languages come naturally to Tayebbeh - it took her only 3 months to learn Turkish! Tayebbeh moved to America in 2015 with her family: her mom, dad, sister, and two brothers. Upon arriving in America she took a food safety class at The University of Denver in order to learn English - because of this she knows all sorts of strange English words involving food-borne illnesses. The African Community Center helped Tayebbeh find a job at Knotty Tie Co. using her extensive knowledge of sewing. She likes working at Knotty Tie because everyone is kind and teaches her new skills. Tayebbeh has big plans for the coming year — she has started attending a local community college and is working to become a graphic designer. She has a knack for picking things up quickly and is excelling in her classes. Tayebbeh has never before lived in a country where dogs were treated as pets, and she looks forward to becoming a pet owner!

Meet Imad



Leaving his home and family in Iraq was a difficult step for Imad, as he took political asylum in Jordan for 10 years before resettling in America. “The president was a big problem, he made our lives very difficult. There was no safety, and life was always dangerous.” As a boy, his father taught him to sew, and Imad has worked in Iraq, Jordan, and now America as a sewer, determined to cultivate and advance his professional skills. While moving across the world on his own has been a difficult transition, Imad has skillfully found ways to both stay connected with his family back home and work toward a promising future for himself here in America. Some of the biggest challenges he has faced have been learning English and finding meaningful sustainable employment, which is why he sought out Rachel Cox at the ACC We Made This Program to receive an assessment and certification. “I sewed two jackets for Rachel that she liked so much. She gave me a good recommendation to Knotty Tie Co. and I love my job here,” Imad says. He is grateful to have found employment where he feels empowered to learn, grow, and use his professional skills. Imad’s craftsmanship keeps us in awe, and he is both a welcome breath of fresh air and example of hard work to our team. He aspires to learning English and is currently working toward that goal with weekly classes, as well as listening to English programs while he is sewing. “I think it is not easy to find a good job that also encourages me to pursue my personal goals and education, and I have found that here at Knotty Tie,” Imad says.

Meet Kalash



Forced to flee as a teenager, Kalash has experienced many difficulties on his journey to the United States. Facing persecution in his home country of Cameroon, Kalash embarked on a 3-year journey before finding safety in the United States. He initially sought asylum in Nigeria but only found more danger created by rogue rebel groups throughout the country. While attempting to cross the border to Niger, local rebels robbed him of his documents and belongings and left him with nothing. He then had to unwillingly illegally enter Niger in order to get to the border of Algeria. He again was forced to illegally enter there before finally being able to get to Morocco in late 2017. Here with the help of the Human Rights Campaign he was able to start building his new life. He lived in Morocco for nearly 2 years, employed in a call center and working to find a way to get to the United States. His dream finally came true in December of 2018. Shortly after arriving in Denver, Kalash started working at Knotty Tie Co. and has been an amazing addition to the team. He is working 2 jobs for a period of time in order to save enough money to be able to start school in 2020 and improve his English skills. He has not determined what he wants to study once he enters college, but he plans on attending as soon as possible. Kalash has many chapters of an exciting biography left to write.

Meet Koimo



Koimo was born and raised in Kisangani, a large city in the North East of the Congo. Forced to flee her home in late 2000 because of the ongoing war, Koimo was able to find safety in neighboring Uganda. Needing to provide for her family in an unfamiliar place, Koimo took it upon herself to learn how to sew. She became an expert in sewing traditional African women's dresses and sold them locally in her community. She also self taught herself to style women's hair as an additional source of income. In early 2012, Koimo and her 2 sons were selected to relocate to the United States. After arriving here and having trouble finding work in a field she had developed skills in, she was forced to settle for other employment. Since joining the Knotty Tie Co. team Koimo has been able to work in a trade where she has experience in and she is taking the opportunity to become an even more proficient seamstress. Koimo has already completed 3 levels of ESL schooling at a local community college and has a desire to continue her education progress. While living in Congo, Koimo held a position as an accountant for a small company and wants to explore the possibility of returning to a similar position in the U.S. First, she plans on returning to school to get a CNA license to allow her to further her professional advancement.

Amandou



Growing up in Mauritania, Africa, Amandou Sy was subject to an oppressive government who created an ethnic conflict that threatened him and his family's lives. In 1989, a near war with bordering Senegal created a refugee crisis that forced thousands of Mauritanian people to relocate to the neighboring country. This exodus to Senegal was orchestrated by his own government in order to fulfill their race based agenda. Taking this hardship in stride, Amandou happily resettled in a safer environment and found the love of his life there. His wife's family was also suffering from the same hardships as his in their native country. In Senegal, Amandou learned how to sew and worked for a small company cutting and sewing traditional African men's clothing. Amandou and his family lived in Senegal for nearly 20 years before getting an opportunity to move to the United States. Initially relocated to Kansas City, Amandou found a job sewing American flags and worked there for 6 years. As a recent transplant to Denver he found Knotty Tie Co. and has been an excellent fit. He is happy to have found a position that pays well, suits his skill set, and allows him to provide for him and his 8 children. Amandou attends English classes at night and wants to perfect his English language skills so that he can continue to expand his career possibilities.

Meet Suleiman



Forced into military service by the authoritarian Eritrean government, Suleiman carried out his duties in order to protect his life and family's safety. During a border conflict with Ethiopia in 2000, Suleiman was captured by opposition forces and sentenced to a military camp in Ethiopia. After 3 harsh years of imprisonment, UNICEF was able to help facilitate the release of the prisoners from the camp. Suleiman was left stateless, his family still living in a country in which he could not return, he was forced to make Ethiopia his new home. Needing a skill that could help him earn money, Suleiman began to perfect his sewing craftsmanship. Learning to sew mens' shirts and pants allowed him to survive in his new country. In 2005, Suleiman was selected for refugee resettlement in the United States. He was initially relocated to Michigan but stayed only briefly before moving to Colorado. With his skill set, Suleiman was able to find work as a tailor in high-end department stores making adjustments to mens' suits. Since joining Knotty Tie Co., Suleiman has been able to help mentor our less experienced staff and provide tremendous work ethic that inspires those around him. Suleiman hopes to reunite with his wife and children in the future and is working to help provide for his family that is dispersed across the globe.

Meet Hibo



Growing up in Somalia in the midst of continuous conflict and danger was not easy for Hibo, the eldest in a large family. "There was no peace, never any peace at home," she says. "I love my country, but it is also very difficult to live there." Bravely accepting the opportunity to take asylum in America, and leaving her family in Somalia behind, Hibo takes on each new day here with grace and positivity. Having always dreamt of becoming a designer and seamstress, Hibo is grateful for her job at Knotty Tie Co. where she has learned to sew, the first step, in what we're sure will be a successful career for this feisty 22 year old. "At Knotty Tie, I find peace. And a place with freedom to learn, to laugh, and to grow where you want to," Hibo says. She is also learning English and hopes to attend college one day to pursue her dream of becoming a designer. "I want to try and learn each new thing. It is always hard at first, but then after practice, it becomes easy." Wise advice for us all!

Our secondary focus

is to address

the harmful effects

caused by manufacturing

in the fashion industry.





ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) textiles in municipal solid waste (MSW) amounts to 16 million tons each year, with 10.5 million tons sent to landfills and only 2.5 million tons recycled. Furthermore, the fashion industry contributes 10% of global greenhouse gas emissions due to its long supply chains and energy-intensive production.*

Our mission is to lead the industry toward more eco-friendly manufacturing processes, renewable energy use, better practices in recycling and diversion of materials, and greater environmental awareness.

We are devoted to reducing emissions and waste while making one-of-a-kind products on any schedule. We have developed goals and metrics to monitor and manage our environmental impacts over time in hopes that we may pave the way for other apparel manufacturers.

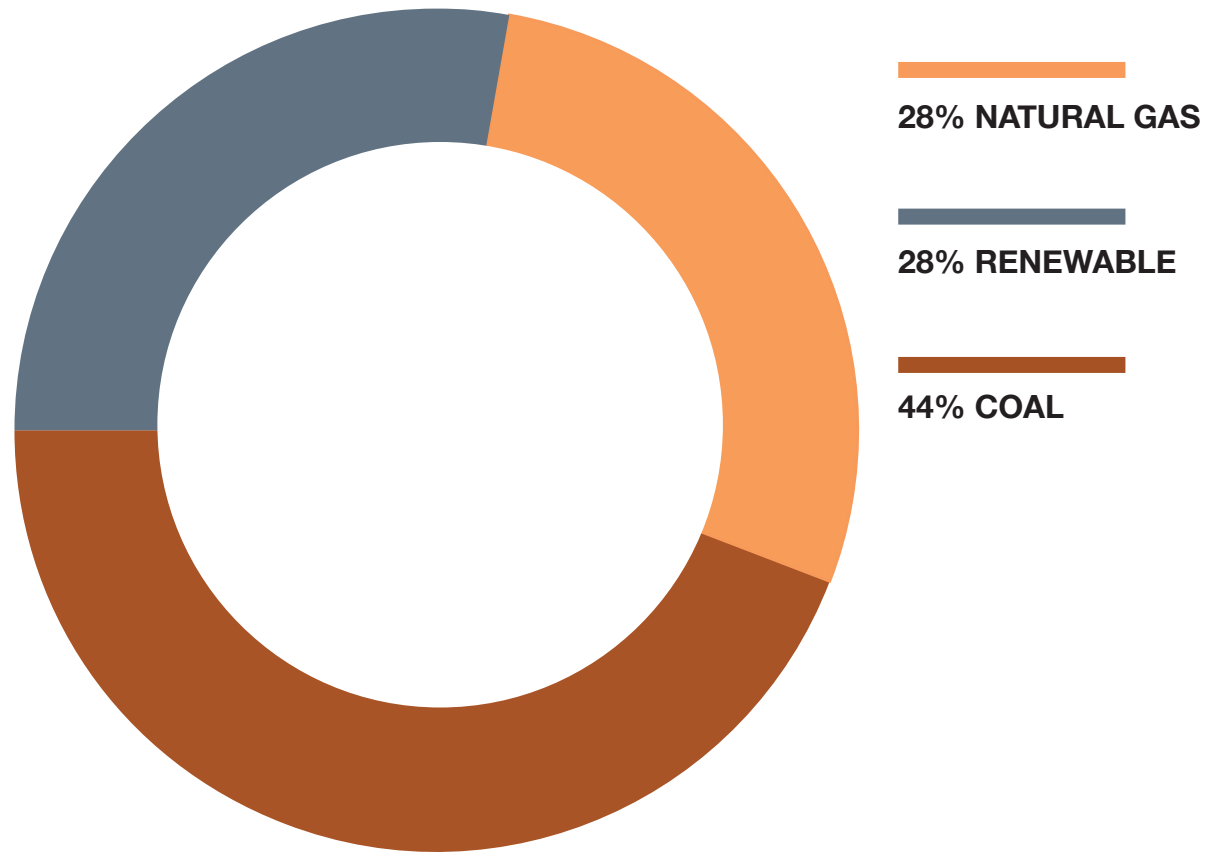
* United States Environmental Protection Agency epa.gov/facts-and-figures-about-materials-waste-and-recycling/textiles-material-specific-data

RENEWABLE ENERGY

We as consumers, manufacturers, and brands must take action to reduce harmful environmental consequences of our activities, and must promote a more sustainable fashion industry. The fashion industry heavily contributes to greenhouse gas emissions. Whether from the supply chain to the production facility itself, energy is required to move goods and power machines. We support development of sustainable energy sources and as a result choose to pay a premium to power our manufacturing facilities with wind.

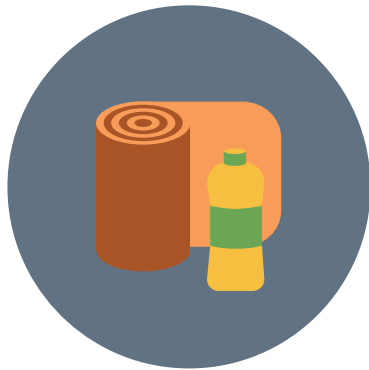
AVERAGE MIX OF RESOURCES POWERING COLORADO (2017)

In 2017, the average mix of resources supplying Public Service Company of Colorado included: coal (44%), natural gas (28%), wind (23%), other renewables (2%), and solar (3%). *Source: Xcel Energy, 2017*



WASTE REDUCTION & RECYCLING

Through the sourcing decisions we make for the materials in our products, and by choosing to work with other eco-friendly suppliers, we strive to maximize diversion of waste from landfills that otherwise can be repurposed.



Use Recycled Plastic Waste

We pay a premium to source custom woven fabrics that are made from recycled plastics (PET). Certified by Global Recycling Standard (GRS).



Recycle Our Paper Waste

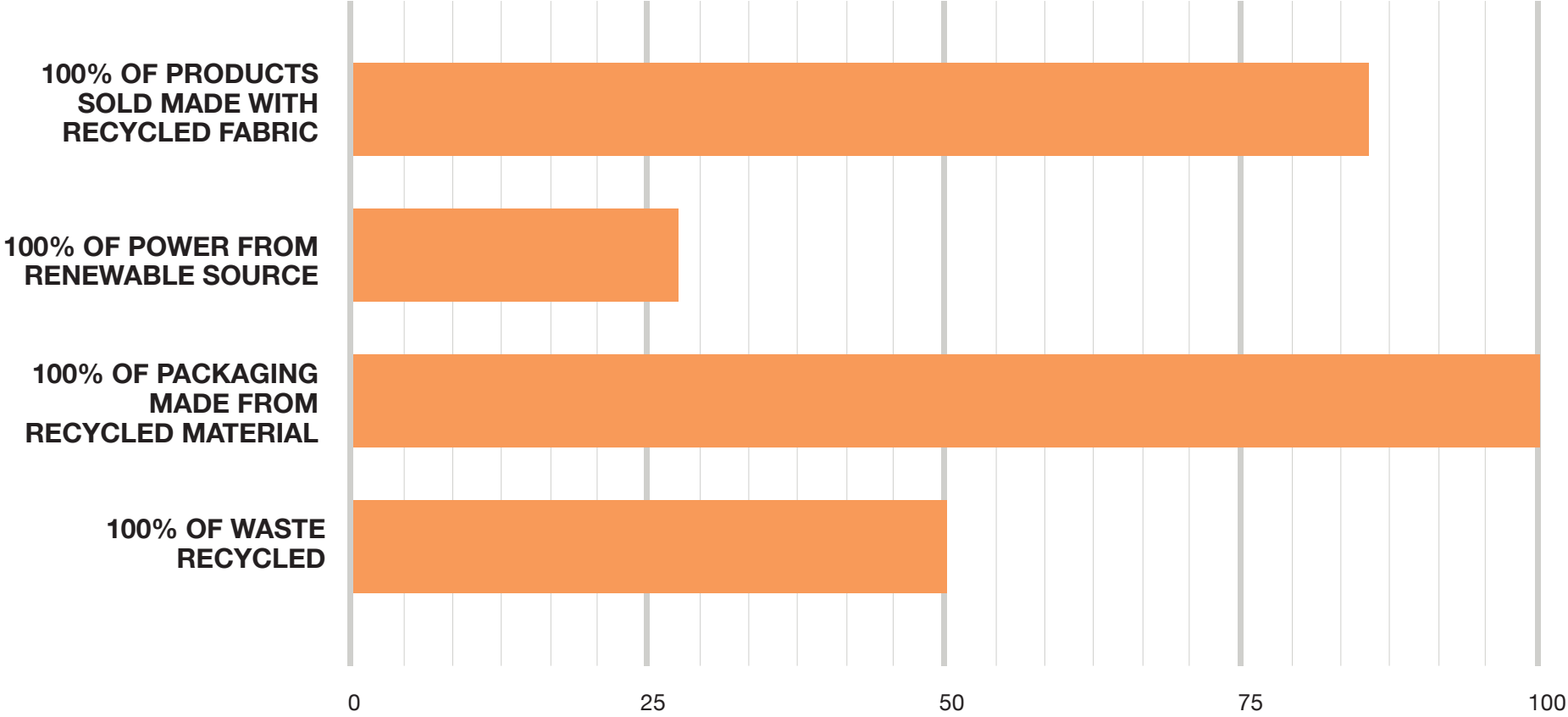
All packaging is compostable or recyclable, made from recycled industrial paper waste and printed using vegetable inks. The factory making our packaging is also wind powered.



Nearly Zero Water Waste

Our sublimation printing and production processes require minimal water and are circulating in a closed loop, creating little to no water waste.

Percentage of Progress Made Toward Set Goals



**THE
END**

of the beginning of our journey

WE'RE CONSTANTLY WORKING TO IMPROVE
AS A COMPANY AND GROW OUR IMPACT. WILL YOU HELP
US SPREAD THE WORD AND SHARE THE WORK WE DO?

Ideas, feedback, questions? Looking forward to hearing from you!
Please email team@knottyie.com.

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