

Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State

Minnesota Public Benefit Corporation / Annual Benefit Report

Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 304A



Read the instructions before completing this form

Must be filed by March 31

Filing Fee: \$55 for expedited service in-person or online, \$35 if submitted by mail

The Annual Benefit Report covers the 12 month period ending on December 31 of the previous year.

Notice: Failure to file this form by March 31 of this year will result in the revocation of the corporation's public benefit status without further notice from the Secretary of State, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 304A.301

1. File Number 117559680024

2. Corporate Name: (Required) Trade Center of the Americas GPBC

3. The public benefit corporation's board of directors has reviewed and approved this report.

4. In the field below, enter the information required by section 304A.301 subd. 2 or 3 for the period covered by this report, (see instructions for further information): Note: Use additional sheets if needed. (Required)

Please See Attachment -Report

For your information, the third party standard chosen for the certification of the report is
ECOTONE ANALYTICS GPC

5. I, the undersigned, certify that I am the chief executive officer of this public benefit corporation. I further certify that I have signed this document no more than 30 days before the document is delivered to the secretary of state for filing, and that this document is current when signed. I further certify that I have completed all required fields, and that the information in this document is true and correct and in compliance with the applicable chapter of Minnesota Statutes. I understand that by signing this document I am subject to the penalties of perjury as set forth in Section 609.48 as if I had signed this document under oath.

Silvia Ontaneda

Signature of Public Benefit Corporation's Chief Executive Officer

04/15/25

Date (Must be dated within 30 days before the report is delivered to the Secretary of State for Filing)

Email Address for Official Notices

Enter an email address to which the Secretary of State can forward official notices required by law and other notices:

silvia@tradecamericas.com

☐ Check here to have your email address excluded from requests for bulk data, to the extent allowed by Minnesota law.

List a name and daytime phone number of a person who can be contacted about this form:

Silvia Ontaneda

6514880412

Contact Name

Phone Number

Entities that own, lease, or have any financial interest in agricultural land or land capable of being farmed must register with the MN Dept. of Agriculture's Corporate Farm Program.

Does this entity own, lease, or have any financial interest in agricultural land or land capable of being farmed?

Yes ☐ No ☒

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**TRADE CENTER OF THE AMERICAS GPBC
ANNUAL BENEFIT REPORT FOR 2024**

Filed pursuant to Minnesota Statutes § 304A.301
Prepared for the Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State

I. General Public Benefit Purpose

The Trade Center of the Americas (TCA) is a Minnesota-registered General Public Benefit Corporation (GPBC) organized to foster inclusive economic growth through international trade and investment. The organization focuses on creating equitable trade and supply chain opportunities for women and minority-owned businesses in Latin America and the Upper Midwest of the United States. In accordance with our charter and statutory obligations, this report outlines the specific actions taken to further our public benefit mission.

II. Summary of Benefit Activities

The Trade Center of the Americas advanced its mission through several key initiatives centered on education, certification, and market access for underrepresented communities:

1. **Export Readiness and Supply Chain Development in Ecuador**
In collaboration with the WeFairTrade Academy—an educational initiative of TCA—the organization launched a targeted capacity-building project focused on dragon fruit and plantain producers in Ecuador. The project directly supported four rural communities, collectively impacting over 200 community members by delivering export readiness training and connecting producers to ethical supply chains and potential buyers.
2. **Implementation of the Ethical and Sustainable Certification**
TCA successfully developed and piloted an “Ethical and Sustainable Certification” to recognize producers and companies that adhere to principles of fair trade, environmental stewardship, human rights, and community impact. The certification is granted exclusively to WeFairTrade Academy participants who complete a 12-module training curriculum and pass a comprehensive vetting and compliance review. This initiative aims to differentiate vetted producers in the global marketplace and increase transparency in the supply chain.
3. **Strategic Partnerships and Market Expansion**
In pursuit of broader market inclusion, TCA established new partnerships with nonprofit and producer-led organizations in Ecuador and El Salvador. These collaborations are designed to support sustainable trade integration and provide exposure to the U.S. Midwest market. TCA continues to build cross-border alliances that promote ethical sourcing while opening up new commercial opportunities for small- and medium-sized enterprises led by women and minorities.
4. **Organizational Growth and Staffing**
To support increased programming and regional engagement, the Trade Center of the Americas expanded its team by hiring three bilingual professionals based in Latin America. These team members were recruited for their expertise and alignment with the organization’s commitment to sustainable, ethical business practices. This marked a milestone for TCA’s operational capacity and commitment to international impact through local leadership.

III. Challenges and Opportunities

While this was a year of measurable impact and organizational growth, challenges remain. Chief among them is the persistent lack of financial investment and institutional support for women-led companies in the field of trade and international development. Despite TCA's proven value-driven business model and successful programming, attracting long-term investors continues to be a barrier to scaling and sustaining operations.

Nevertheless, the Trade Center of the Americas has been recognized as a unique and mission-driven entity that effectively bridges Latin American producers with U.S. buyers on the basis of trust, transparency, and shared values. Opportunities for visibility and advocacy have grown, and the organization remains committed to strengthening its partnerships and pursuing public and private sector investment to advance its mission.

IV. Conclusion and Forward-Looking Statement

As a General Public Benefit Corporation, the Trade Center of the Americas remains steadfast in its commitment to inclusive, ethical, and sustainable economic development. We look forward to expanding our certification efforts, increasing community-based training, and deepening our supply chain integration in the coming year. We respectfully submit this report as part of our statutory obligation and in support of our application for reinstatement with the Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State.

Silvia Ontaneda

Report prepared by: Silvia Ontaneda, CEO, Trade Center of the Americas, GPBC



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OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE
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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Steve Simon'.

Steve Simon
Secretary of State