

Wuxly Movement

Founded in 2013, Wuxly Movement designs and manufactures parkas in an environmentally conscious and sustainable manner. Wuxly's brand mantra is "Live Warm", which highlights the firm's goal of spreading warmth and kindness to all living beings and the planet.

Headquarters	Rear Unit X, 884 Queen Street W, Toronto, Ontario, M6J 1G3
Year Established	2013
NAICS	315289 - All other cut and sew clothing manufacturing
Employees	-
Major Expansions	2016
Exports	US, EU
Parent Company	N/A
Other Locations	N/A

The roots of Wuxly Movement are classically Canadian—the outdoor maker got its start because of cold weather. Wuxly, which designs and manufactures parkas in an environmentally conscious and sustainable manner, was founded in 2013 when then CFL linebacker James Yurichuk signed as a free agent with the Toronto Argonauts after playing four seasons with the B.C. Lions. Yurichuk, Wuxly's chief executive officer, couldn't find a high-quality, animal-friendly parka for his Brazil-born partner, Daniela. So he made his own.

Yurichuk enlisted the help of his friend Anthony Debartolo, a master tailor who helped design the first parka, using an alternative to goose-down insulation. From those beginnings in 2013 in Yurichuk's basement, Wuxly launched a Kickstarter campaign and raised about \$90,000, which allowed the company to begin scaling up. Wuxly participated in the Joe Fresh Fashion Zone at Ryerson University in Toronto before moving to its current location near Trinity Bellwoods Park, west of downtown Toronto.

The insulation in Wuxly's parkas is called PrimaLoft Gold and is manufactured from 55 percent post-consumer recycled material. This insulation provides superior warmth-to-weight, is more breathable than down insulation and its water resistance means it outperforms down fabric when wet. The company offers an eco-conscious shipping option for customers who purchase online. When the eco-conscious shipping option is selected, Wuxly partners with Cloverly to offset the carbon emissions created throughout the shipping process.

All Wuxly's research and development is done in Toronto while parkas are manufactured in Toronto, Calgary and Winnipeg. Yurichuk acknowledges that although manufacturing in Canada makes the company

less competitive with global rivals, Canadian quality helps compensate. He plans to continue making parkas in Canada while expanding research and development to come up with new methods that will make the company's processes more efficient, helping compete on price.

The company's rapid growth stems in part from Wuxly developing a wholesale operation that complements its direct sales to consumers on-line and in-person. Initially, Wuxly only generated in-person sales by attending trade and customer shows, participating in more than 50 events a year. These events showcased the company's story, allowed customers to experience the quality and gave them the option to purchase a parka immediately. The company is capable of appealing to various segments of consumers at these events, including those who are environmentally conscious, appreciate a quality product, enjoy being fashionable, prefer the Canadian brand or understand the advanced technology in Wuxly parkas.

Wuxly's brand mantra is "Live Warm".

To Wuxly, "Live Warm" means spreading warmth, kindness and respect to all living beings and the planet. Growing brand recognition has enabled Wuxly to sell a greater proportion of its parkas directly to consumers on-line and in-person from a showroom at its Toronto headquarters. A partnership with sporting goods retailer, SportChek, has led to 600 percent growth in wholesale deliveries. A network of sales representatives is now expanding Wuxly's wholesale partnerships and trying to capitalize on new sales opportunities. Given that exports have grown to 35 percent of sales from 20 percent, Yurichuk is confident the company will continue to grow in global markets.

Rather than being involved in only one aspect of the business, employees at Wuxly are responsible for a range of tasks as the firm continues to scale, including marketing, administration, sales, business development and research and development. The positive workplace environment, exciting period of growth and proximity to the fashion core in downtown Toronto make it easy for Wuxly to attract and retain talent. As the company continues to grow, Yurichuk doesn't anticipate any difficulties finding employees to scale-up operations and ensure that his business can meet greater demand. Yurichuk also recognizes the importance of collaborating with educational institutions, partnering with a number of universities and colleges, including Ryerson, Queens University in Kingston and George Brown College in Toronto.

Yurichuk understands the value that government programs and organizations can offer a Canadian business if properly utilized. The company has reached out to Export Development Canada, the Business Council of Canada and the Business Development Bank of Canada. Additionally, Wuxly is actively involved with the Next Generation Manufacturing Canada (NGEN) supercluster. The NGEN supercluster is an organization that offers membership to Canadian-based manufacturing firms, government agencies, industry groups and educational institutions that recognize the value of collaborating to drive advanced manufacturing growth in Canada. After signing up for a free membership, firms benefit from having access to various services and funding opportunities. Wuxly is currently looking for other companies that are willing to collaborate on a project that could be eligible to apply for NGEN funding.

One of Wuxly's major goals is to be active in the local community as it grows. One way it gives back to the community is through its "Live Warm Trade Up Program". People can trade in their parkas and receive a credit toward a new Wuxly product. Coats that are traded in are donated to homeless shelters across



Canada. If there is any fur trim on the collected outerwear, it is redistributed to animal rehabilitation centres where the fur is used to comfort orphaned or injured animals. Wuxly has an extensive list of partner organizations involved in such programs, including Youth in Transition, Humane Canada, (the country's federation of humane societies) Second Harvest and Brands for Canada.

Yurichuk believes embracing innovation will help the Canadian fashion industry expand. Upon reaching his goal of becoming a leader in the industry, he hopes to share Wuxly's journey and success with other firms in the fashion sector that strive to be more environmentally conscious, to help them refrain from making any mistakes along their journey to responsible manufacturing.