

BENEVITY & SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER

WHAT IS BENEVITY?

- Benevity is one of the largest corporate charitable giving platforms in the world, facilitating billions of dollars in employee donations and matching gifts annually.
- 1792 Exchange has identified more than 250 major companies with Benevity portals, including more than 200 Fortune 1000 corporations.
- Because of its scale, Benevity's eligibility criteria function as de facto gatekeeping over corporate philanthropy for millions of American employees.

HOW BENEVITY USES THE SPLC HATE LIST

- Benevity uses the Southern Poverty Law Center's "Hate List" as a filter to determine which nonprofits are eligible to receive employee donations and corporate matching funds.
- Benevity's former CEO publicly acknowledged this use of the SPLC list. Several corporations have recently confirmed that SPLC designations continue to influence eligibility on the platform.
- The practical effect: employees at Fortune 1000 companies are blocked from directing charitable contributions to mainstream conservative, religious, and parental-rights organizations.
- At the same time, the SPLC itself has remained eligible on the Benevity platform.

Organizations on the SPLC Hate List blocked from Benevity include Focus on the Family, Family Research Council, Moms for Liberty, PragerU, Turning Point USA, ADF, and others.

THE FEDERAL INDICTMENT AGAINST THE SPLC

- On April 21, 2026, a federal grand jury indictment was unsealed in the Middle District of Alabama charging the SPLC with:
 - Six counts of wire fraud
 - Four counts of false statements to a federally insured bank
 - One count of conspiracy to commit concealment money laundering
- The indictment alleges that from 2014 through 2023, the SPLC secretly funneled more than \$3 million in donor funds to individuals associated with violent extremist organizations, the very groups it claimed to be fighting.
- To conceal these payments, the SPLC allegedly opened bank accounts under fictitious names including "Center Investigative Agency," "Fox Photography," and "Rare Books Warehouse."
- Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche stated that the SPLC was "manufacturing the extremism it purports to oppose."
- The indictment reflects probable cause findings by a federal grand jury and stands as a matter of public record.

HOW INSTITUTIONS HAVE RESPONDED

- Fidelity Charitable, Vanguard, and Schwab have moved to block donor-advised fund grants to SPLC following the indictment.
 - Fidelity went further: it now bans fund holders from donating to SPLC entirely.
- The FBI ended all formal ties with the SPLC in October 2025.
- Major corporations that have distanced themselves from SPLC include Google, Meta, and PayPal.
- Companies demonstrating leadership by disabling the SPLC filter in Benevity: Mastercard, Salesforce, and Texas Instruments.
- Companies that have sidestepped or downplayed engagement on this issue: Starbucks, Disney, and Amazon.

DECADES OF DOCUMENTED DYSFUNCTION

- Concerns about SPLC have been raised across the ideological spectrum for more than 30 years:
 - 1994: The SPLC's hometown paper, the Montgomery Advertiser, documented that the organization raised approximately \$62 million over a decade while spending only \$21 million on programs. No Black employee had ever held a senior management position in its 23-year history.
 - 2000: Ken Silverstein reported in Harper's Magazine that the SPLC spent twice as much on fundraising as on civil rights legal services, while sending donors a crisis appeal and holding more than \$60 million in reserves.
 - 2019: Following the firing of founder Morris Dees amid allegations of sexual harassment and racial discrimination, a former staffer described the organization in The New Yorker as "a highly profitable scam." An internal review was characterized by staff as a deliberate whitewash.
 - Politico described the SPLC as "more of a partisan progressive hit operation than a civil rights watchdog." Cornell Law professor William Jacobson noted that the SPLC uses its reputation "as a tool to bludgeon mainstream politically conservative opponents."
 - CharityWatch grades the SPLC an "F" because the organization has hoarded enough in reserves to operate for six full years without raising another dollar – a net fund balance of approximately \$767 million – while continuing to send donors urgent appeals for emergency cash.

CORPORATE DONORS TO THE SPLC (2020-2025)

- 1792 Exchange has identified over \$3.5 million in support from major corporate foundations and direct donations to the SPLC from 2020 to 2025.
- Eight companies or corporate foundations have given over six figures to the SPLC since 2020:
 - Raymond James Charitable Endowment Fund: \$752,000
 - Gilead Sciences Foundation: \$750,000
 - Pinterest: \$500,000
 - BNY Mellon Charitable Gift Fund: \$429,000
 - PayPal Charitable Giving Fund: \$310,000
 - T. Rowe Price Program for Charitable Giving: \$235,000
 - Allstate Foundation: \$125,000
 - TIAA: \$102,000
- Additional funding may flow through direct corporate gifts not in 990 reports, or through foundations that in turn donate to the SPLC.

THE VIOLENCE CONNECTION

- In 2012, a gunman entered the Family Research Council's Washington, D.C., headquarters intending to commit mass murder. He told investigators he chose his target after seeing it labeled on the SPLC's website.
- Turning Point USA was added to the SPLC Hate List in 2024 and featured in an SPLC Hatewatch newsletter the day before the assassination of its founder Charlie Kirk in 2025.
- No corporate philanthropy platform should lend legitimacy to an organization with this documented record.

THREE REQUESTS OF BENEVITY

- 1. Terminate** all use of the SPLC "Hate List" or any SPLC designation in determining nonprofit eligibility on the platform.
- 2. Issue a public statement** confirming this decision and committing to viewpoint-neutral eligibility criteria.
- 3. Restore eligibility** to organizations previously excluded solely on the basis of SPLC designations.

- A coalition of 15 organizations sent a letter in October 2025 calling on Benevity to publicly end its use of the SPLC's Hate List and Hate Map, adopt a viewpoint neutral process for nonprofit eligibility, and restore access to organizations unfairly excluded.
- In May 2026, 1792 Exchange sent a follow up letter to Benevity with the above requests. There continues to be no response. Silence from Benevity is not an option.

Bottom Line:

- Charitable giving programs should empower generosity, not enforce ideology.
 - Benevity's CEO Soraya Alexander has an opportunity to demonstrate that corporate philanthropy infrastructure will not serve as a tool of ideological gatekeeping.
 - Companies continuing to use Benevity while it relies on the SPLC should demand removal of the filter or reconsider the partnership should Benevity refuse.
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