

IDAHO BUSINESS REVIEW

Idaho Business News

IBR honors 21 companies as Best Places to Work in Idaho

Posted: Friday, April 17, 2009

More than 200 people filled the Stueckle Sky Center's Double R Ranch Club room at Boise State University April 16 to celebrate the second annual *Idaho Business Review's* "Best Places to Work in Idaho" awards.

Conducted in partnership with POPULUS, an Idaho-based strategic marketing research and consulting company, the 21 honored companies were nominated by their employees using statistical analysis.

"We're pleased with the number of participants who turned out for this year's event," said Sean Evans, Idaho Business Review publisher.

The top firm in the Large Employers category was financial-services firm Edward Jones. Company employees said the formula for success boils down to being local, convenient and welcoming. Founded in 1922, there are 90 branches in the state of Idaho with more than 200 employees. Scott Arnone is the financial adviser and regional leader.

The top firm in the Small Employers category was Thornton Oliver Keller, based in Boise. The firm was founded in 1991 with open communication ranked as its top priority. The firm today employs 70. Michael Ballantyne and Al Marino are the managing partners.

Others honored included:

In the Large Companies category (100 employees and higher):

Honorable mention –
BEAR LAKE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL – Located in Montpelier in the southeast corner of the state, this hospital opened its doors in 1912. The hospital has continued to grow and adapt over the years to where it is today. With 230-plus employees, it is led today by Rod Jackson, administrator and CEO.

Honorable mention –
BANK OF THE CASCADES, based in Bend, Ore., and with 12 branches in the Treasure Valley, puts an emphasis on loyalty and service. Its 132 employees bring a personal touch to banking. Mike Mooney is president for the Idaho Region.

Honorable mention –
T-MOBILE USA maintains high morale through a reward program with competitive wages and benefits as well as an outstanding work environment. Nate Stevens is the Idaho general manager.

Tied for fifth –
FIRST FEDERAL, based in Twin Falls, practices courtesy, dignity and consideration. Founded in 1916, the bank currently employs 200. It is led by President and CEO C. Alan Horner.

Tied for fifth –
WELLS FARGO has grown since its beginning in 1852 to become Idaho's largest bank in deposits, number of employees and more than 100 locations. Suzanne Ramos is Idaho Region president.

Tied for third –
BODYBUILDING.COM was started in 1999 as a sports Web site and has turned into a sports nutrition company based in Boise. With 193 employees, Ryan DeLuca, CEO/founder, and President Jeremy DeLuca work to build an open book environment.

Tied for third –
POTLACH #1 in Lewiston has grown from 12 employees to more than 106. With its 10 branches, it is driven to be responsive to members. It is led by President and CEO Chris Loseth.

Second place –
INTERMOUNTAIN COMMUNITY BANCORP in Sandpoint has been a model of financial integrity since the 1980s. With 15 locations, and 380 employees, it serves customers from the Panhandle to the Magic Valley. Curt Hecker is the chief operating officer for the company

In the Small Companies category (fewer than 100 employees):

Honorable mention –
PROJECT PATCH. The desire to help the leaders of tomorrow drove Tom and Bonnie Sanford to found Project Patch in 1984 in Garden Valley. Now, with more than 30 employees, the organization provides foster home services for at-risk teens. Gary Lynde is the administrator.

Honorable mention –
BUSINESS PSYCHOLOGY ASSOCIATES has provided an outlet for workers since 1983. The more than 60 employees who work in the office do a lot of fun things to keep morale up. Sarah Woodley is president.

Ranked 10th –
AMERITITLE has only been in Boise since 2000, but in the seven years it has been here it continues to grow, boasting more than 70 employees. The company provides superior service with commitment. Linda Stelle is president with Jack Thomas as vice president.

Ranked 9th –
WASHINGTON TRUST BANK, with locations in Boise, Meridian and Nampa, offers its workers a sense of pride, which translates to its

agency was established in 2005 and today employs 33. Pete Gombert is CEO.

Ranked 6th –
PERKINS COIE creates opportunities for its employees to grow. Founded in 1912, this law firm, located in Boise, has 25 employees. Robert Maynard is office managing partner.

Tied for 4th –
FISHER'S DOCUMENT SYSTEMS, in Boise, has always pushed its employees to be customer-focused. Founded in 1936, the company employs 55. Chris Taylor is CEO.

Tied for 4th –
HOLLINGSHEAD EYE CENTER says a job done should be a job well done. With offices in Boise and Nampa, the firm, founded in 1993, employs 27. Louis Pennow is the practice administrator and Mark Hollingshead is owner.

Ranked 3rd –
McMILLEN LLC helps workers find a balance with work and home. Founded in 2004 in Boise, the engineering firm now employs 29. Mort and Mara McMillen are the owners.

Ranked 2nd –
RINGERT LAW CHARTERED's philosophy is focused on mutual appreciation. With 24 employees, the firm was founded in 1926. Dan Steenson is president and Laura Burri is vice president.