



Best Practices from CARE Award Winners

The CARE Awards recognizes exemplary companies leveraging outstanding culture and employee engagement strategies to create the best places to work across the DC Metro Region. The following are examples of how CARE-ing companies are creating a supportive, inclusive, and enjoyable atmosphere where employees and businesses are poised to thrive.

Workplace & Culture

Positive workplace cultures attract talent, drive engagement, and impact employee productivity. A healthy work environment increases employee dedication to the company mission; collaboration around expectations, goals, and ethics; and a united workplace that fosters success and innovation.

- » Because they believe family comes first, **FranConnect** supports employees by offering a flexible, hybrid work environment to ensure that staff feel empowered to take care of themselves and their families.
- » **FlexProfessionals** does not track vacation, sick, or personal leave. Team members back each other up so that everyone can take time off without distraction.
- » **ENSCO** has been working to build connections among a decentralized team by hosting various in-person and virtual events to foster strong connections and lasting relationships between remote and hybrid employees that exist regardless of location.
- » **NRUCFC** established the CEO Excellence Award which allows any staff member to submit a nomination for this award. The CEO personally reviews nominations, and the CEO selects the winner to receive the prize – cash, coveted parking, and lunch with the CEO. This not only recognizes employees for their exceptional contributions but fosters a connection between the CEO and employees.
- » At **Eleccion**, every meeting is started by a “check-in”, where employees rank how they are feeling on a 0 to 10 scale. This allows them to be real and communicate where they are emotionally, physically, and spiritually before the interaction begins and allows everyone to be where they are that day as they come together. There is no judgment, only acceptance and understanding, in line with Eleccion’s core value of mutual respect.
- » **Fors Marsh** offers unlimited paid time off and encourages employees to take mental health days and recharge with vacation time, regardless of tenure, allowing them to put their wellbeing first.
- » **Highlight Technologies** is a 100% employee-owned company that uses internal focus groups to empower every employee-owner to collaborate on major decisions and invites employee-owners to actively support the growth of the business. Each employee-owner drives the success of the company.
- » **Evans Consulting** created a Core Competency Behavior Model, aligned with Evans’ core values, that looks at both company-wide success and success at the role level, and defined behaviors associated with certain skill levels for each competency. They then launched a training series for all employees, and trained managers in applying the competencies to support employee development. Employees are clear on expectations and with an accountability system in place, clients consistently receive exceptional customer experiences.
- » As part of their comprehensive onboarding program, **FMP Consulting** pairs each new employee with a trained “New Hire Ambassador”, who serves in a support role throughout the employee’s first year.



Employee Empowerment & Talent Development

Creating an environment where employees feel heard and see a path for growth is critical to success. This encourages employees to be the best versions of themselves, leading to increased individual performance, company efficiency, and employee engagement.



- » **NRECA** has recently developed employee-led affinity groups, including Black in America, LGBTQ+, Women in Power, and Working Parents, that support NRECA's efforts to foster an inclusive, diverse, and equitable workplace. They provide regular events that educate, build inclusion, and increase social collaboration – and spearhead NRECA's "Concern for Community" focus, leading community volunteer and fundraising efforts.
- » As a part of its DEI Commitment, **Apple Federal Credit Union** created Employee Resource Groups this past year to help achieve its vision of creating a workplace that values a diverse and inclusive environment.
- » **Dev Technology** fosters belonging through shared goals, open communication, and developing leaders at all levels of the organization. In partnership with employees across the organization, the HR team has developed career paths for each position in the organization that breaks down what it takes to be successful in the role, allowing for a transparent understanding of different roles and opportunities, and empowering employees to drive their own career trajectories.
- » **NetImpact Strategies Inc.** has an "Earn That Cert" program, where a full-time, in-house expert conducts training boot camps and creates study materials, including facilitating study groups and review sessions, to assist employees in obtaining industry certifications.
- » To encourage employees to pursue continuing education and training, **Comstock** offers a professional development reimbursement fund.

Employee Wellness

Investing in employee wellbeing encourages employees to be the best versions of themselves.

- » **Air Force Aid Society** runs an Employee Wellness Program that consists of reimbursing staff up to \$500 per year on gym equipment, Fitbit, apps, classes, etc.
- » **USTA/Mid-Atlantic Foundation** prioritizes the mental wellbeing and development of their team by providing paid premium subscriptions to CALM and professional therapy sessions through BetterHelp.
- » **B&A** took significant steps to elevate its employee wellness program through the addition of a new *Financial Wellness* facet focusing on improving employee financial wellbeing; refocusing on mental health in the workplace by offering a welcoming and supportive space through *Let's Connect Sessions* to discuss mental health issues; and offering *Skill-Up Sessions* to offer workplace development topics to provide employees with the tools they need to excel in their workplace.

Community Engagement

CARE Award winners give back to their communities and provide opportunities for employees to do the same.

- » **Consumer Technology Association** matches staff charitable contributions up to \$500 and provides 7 hours paid leave for volunteering annually.
- » **Custom Ink** makes a surprise donation for every order they receive for a charitable cause/event.
- » **Hyatt Regency Tysons Corner Center** has a strong focus on diversity, notably through their philanthropic giving and commitment to purchasing from diverse vendors. In 2022, they partnered with a number of local Black-owned businesses and doubled their diverse spending goal.
- » **Business Benefits Group** includes friends, families, and clients in their giving opportunities whenever possible to help foster and build community while making a greater impact to the organization they are supporting.
- » **Worldgate, LLC** provides employees with 16 hours of paid volunteering and provides each employee with a charitable gift card so they may donate annually to a charity of their choice.



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