

NORTHWEST HERALD
McHENRY COUNTY
TOP WORKPLACES
READERS' CHOICE AWARDS 2021



WINNERS' SECTION | JANUARY 29, 2022

Top Workplaces Co-Sponsors

**NORTHWEST
HERALD**
Part of the **SHAW LOCAL** News Network

 **McHENRY COUNTY**
Economic Development Corporation
A Public Private Partnership

Congratulations to our 2021 Top Workplaces winners

McHenry County Economic Development Corporation is proud to co-sponsor the 2021 Top Workplaces Readers' Choice Awards. We are fortunate to have so many exceptional businesses who stand out to the readers of the Northwest Herald, and we salute them all.

These past two years have been difficult and challenging – and just as many of us dealt with the obstacles facing us, so did our business community. We want to celebrate and thank these Readers' Choice Award winners as well as ALL of the businesses in McHenry County as they played a critical role in helping us jump through the hurdles of the pandemic.

MCEDC has been fortunate to work directly with businesses, both large and small, for over 30 years. We are proud of how innovative, responsive, reactive and collaborative they are as evidenced by the way they answered the ever-changing

challenges created by Covid. They repurposed production lines, made PPEs, communicated via zoom, created work from home capabilities, built protective screens, bought lunches from struggling restaurants, and worked hard to address needs and solve some of the challenges we all faced. Our business community stepped up and made a difference.

As we look ahead to our recovery and rebound in 2022, we know that McHenry County's strengths are in our diversity of businesses, skilled workforce, strong educational community, and in the outstanding leaders who can work together for the good of the whole. The life blood of a community - our businesses - provide jobs, make products or parts of products that we use every day, pay taxes, support our charities, and make our county thrive. With the high quality of the McHenry County's business community,

we see an economy that will continue to grow in businesses, employees, and GDP.

We hope you will join MCEDC in congratulating the Top Workplaces Readers' Choice Awards nominees and winners by supporting these businesses and by recognizing our entire business community for their vital contributions to our quality of life here in McHenry County.

– Jim McConoughey,
President



Congratulations
to McHenry
County's
Top Places
to Work!



As the voice of business and employees... McHenry County Economic Development Corporation (MCEDC) played an important role during the past two years by actively assisting hundreds of businesses navigate the maze of government rules, access funding programs and work through safety protocols for retailers, commercial businesses, and manufacturers.

MCEDC works directly to impact and grow our economy

- Engaging community leaders to develop and execute plans for a robust, resilient and inclusive economy.
- Collaborating with industry, local leaders and community stakeholders to find solutions to the challenges of today as well as tomorrow.
- Marketing McHenry County to attract new companies to add to the economy by creating jobs.
- Driving technology to grow industries of today, tomorrow and into our future.
- Working with community partners to plan and promote better roads, utilities and access to the Internet.
- Helping existing businesses expand and grow.
- Coordinating with the educational community to assure our future workforce has the skills necessary for success.
- Providing entrepreneurs with resources, customers, connections and mentors to develop their vision.

**We are creating a dynamic, strategic, responsive
and innovative economic development ecosystem
in McHenry County**

Call us to see how you can be part of the progress!

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bcu



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EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

2021 McHenry County Top Workplaces Readers' Choice Awards

WINNERS



BUSINESS-TO-BUSINESS COMPANY

Top

Dreiske Moving & Storage

One of the Top

First Institute
JA Frate

.....

COMPANY THAT GIVES BACK TO THE COMMUNITY

Top

Baird & Warner Real Estate

One of the Top

First Institute
Dreiske Moving & Storage

.....

EDUCATION

Top

First Institute

One of the Top

Crystal Lake South High School
Huntley Community School District 158

.....

FAMILY-OWNED BUSINESS

Top

First Institute

One of the Top

Dreiske Moving & Storage
Arvidson Pools & Spas

FINANCIAL INSTITUTION/SERVICE

Top

Home State Bank

One of the Top

BCU
American Community Bank & Trust

.....

FOOD SERVICE

Top

Napoli Pizza Place

One of the Top

Buddyz Pizzeria
Fire Bar & Grill
Moontime Smokin' Que

.....

HEALTHCARE COMPANY/FACILITY

Top

Pioneer Center for Human Services

One of the Top

Valley Hi Nursing & Rehabilitation
Clarendale of Algonquin

.....

INDUSTRIAL COMPANY/WAREHOUSE

Top

JA Frate

One of the Top

TC Industries
General Kinematics

LARGE EMPLOYER (100+ EMPLOYEES)

Top
JA Frate

One of the Top
Baird & Warner Real Estate
Pioneer Center for Human Services

.....

MANUFACTURING/PRODUCTION COMPANY

Top
XACT Wire EDM Corporation

One of the Top
TC Industries
Thumbies, Inc.

MUNICIPALITY

Top
City of Crystal Lake

One of the Top
City of Woodstock
City of McHenry

.....

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION

Top
Pioneer Center for Human Services

One of the Top
Helping Paws Animal Shelter
Turning Point, Inc.



Thanks to our staff and the McHenry County community for voting Pioneer Center as the:

- **BEST non-profit organization**
- **BEST Healthcare company/facility**
- **BEST workplace for people with special needs**
 - **BEST personal services**
 - **BEST professional services**
- **One of the BEST large employers**
- **One of the BEST workplaces for seniors**
- **One of the BEST workplaces for veterans**

Pioneer Center for Human Services provides programs for people with Developmental Disabilities, Behavioral Health Services and Homeless Shelter needs to the community. If you are interested in a career at Pioneer Center or would like to make a donation, please visit our website at:

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PERSONAL SERVICES

Top

Pioneer Center for Human Services

One of the Top

First Institute Massage Therapy
Valley Hi Nursing & Rehabilitation

.....

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Top

Pioneer Center for Human Services

One of the Top

Baird & Warner Real Estate
Dreiske Moving & Storage

RETAIL COMPANY

Top

Arvidson Pools & Spas
Gary Lang Auto Group

One of the Top

Studio D Jewelers

.....

SMALL EMPLOYER (UNDER 100 EMPLOYEES)

Top

First Institute

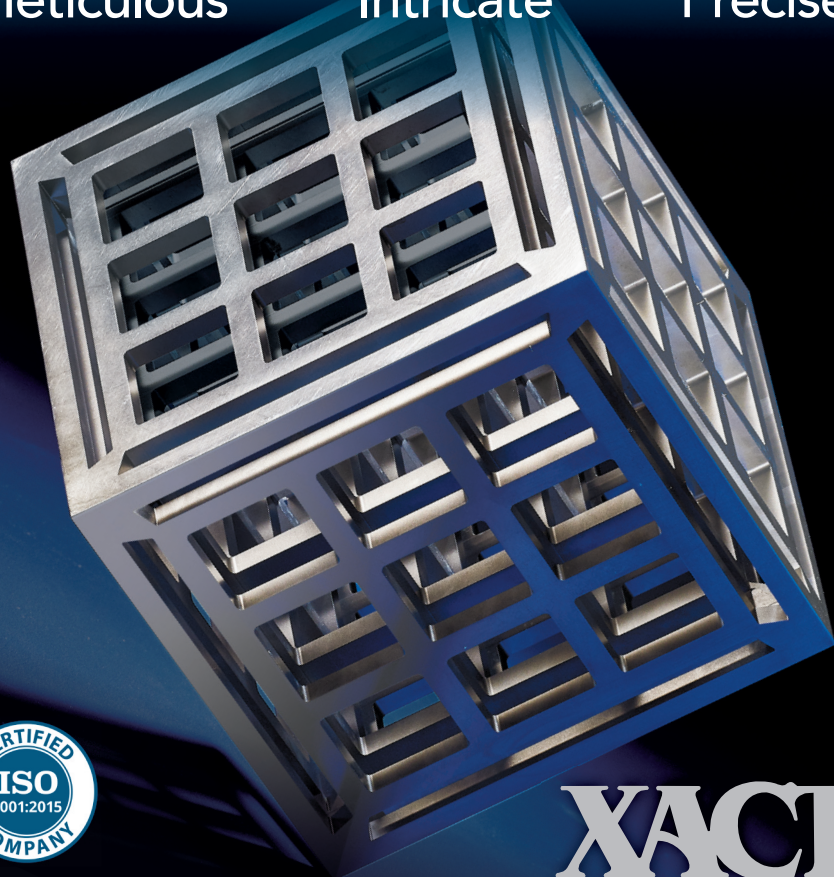
One of the Top

Dreiske Moving & Storage
XACT Wire EDM Corporation

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A Special Thanks to
Our Incredible Team,
and to those who voted for us:

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WORKPLACE FOR PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Top

Pioneer Center for Human Services

One of the Top

Woodstock Recreation Center
Valley Hi Nursing & Rehabilitation

.....

WORKPLACE FOR SENIORS

Top

Woodstock Opera House

One of the Top

Arvidson Pools & Spas
Pioneer Center for Human Services

WORKPLACE FOR VETERANS

Top

Veterans Path to Hope

One of the Top

Baird & Warner Real Estate
Pioneer Center for Human Services

Thank you!

Thanks to everyone who nominated and voted for
McHenry County businesses in this year's Top Workplaces Awards.
And thanks, also, to our advertisers and co-sponsor.

McHenry County TOP Workplaces Awards - 2021

Thank You for Voting us:

- TOP Workplace: Financial Institution/Service



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Keeping employees safe in the workplace

The COVID-19 pandemic has taught the world many things, including the need to prioritize public health. Business owners must put the health and safety of their employees first. Data shows the most common causes of workplace injuries include overexertion and bodily reaction, falls, slips, and trips. When implementing safety precautions comes with a high price tag or is met with resistance by workers, it is up to business owners to dig deep and put protection over profit. Various strategies can help business owners as they navigate a post-pandemic landscape that may require a new approach to employee safety.

Recognize the threat of potential safety issues. Accidents will happen regardless of how much business owners try to prevent them. But prevention efforts still greatly reduce the risk of accident and injury. Make a list of more common dangers (falls or injuries from equipment) and less common ones (fires or criminal perpetrators). Once the list is compiled, develop a plan to reduce the risk of accidents on both lists.

Perform risk assessments. Conduct a risk assessment on your own or hire a third party to

review the business and make recommendations. Note potential hazards and what must be done to remedy them.

Create a custom health and safety policy. Make a safety plan a key part of the employee handbook. Employees should be well versed in existing and newly adopted safety protocols and what's expected of them in case of emergency.

Be mindful of requirements. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration's OSHA Act includes statutory requirements. Some of these include providing OSHA training, keeping records of work-related illnesses and accidents and providing personal protective equipment. Properly maintaining tools and equipment is another requirement.

Utilize safety equipment and label hazards. Anti-slip mats on floors, properly locked cabinets for combustibles and other chemicals, warning signs and labeling in hazardous zones, and guards or kill switches on heavy machinery can greatly reduce the risk of employee injury.

Provide safety training. Routinely assess employees to ensure compliance and install a

reward system to commend those who make safety a priority.

Perform safety drills. Ensure employees know how to react quickly in emergency situations by routinely going over protocols, including emergency evacuation drills. Consult with law enforcement professionals if guidance is needed.

Safety should be a goal for any business owner. Providing resources, maintaining equipment, conducting safety assessments, and educating employees can make a real difference in reducing injuries.



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Top Workplace

- Retail Company

One of the Top Workplaces

- Family-Owned Business
- Workplace for Seniors



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VOTED TOP WORKPLACE:

- Education
- Family-Owned Business
- Small Employer (under 100 Employees)

VOTED ONE OF THE TOP WORKPLACES:

- Business-to-Business Company
- Company that Gives Back to the Community
- Personal Services

NORTHWEST HERALD
McHENRY COUNTY
TOP WORKPLACES
READERS' CHOICE AWARDS 2021

**THANK
YOU TO
ALL WHO
VOTED
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7 ways to be a good volunteer

Volunteering is a fun and rewarding endeavor. It is a great way to strengthen communities and support good causes. Millions of people across globe serve as volunteers, which is a testament to just how rewarding being a volunteer can be. Understanding how to be a good volunteer is the first step toward making the experience enjoyable and effective.

1. EDUCATE YOURSELF ABOUT AN ORGANIZATION. Research volunteer organizations' missions and goals before you get involved. Understanding their process can make you more effective right out of the gate. Furthermore, directors will appreciate that you took the initiative to learn more about the organization before you signed up.

2. BRING YOUR ENTHUSIASM AND ENERGY. Enthusiasm and energy for the cause may motivate others to take action. Being high energy also may make you more fun to be around, which your fellow volunteers will appreciate.

3. BE HONEST ABOUT YOUR INTERESTS. The more interested you are in an activity, the more likely you are to continue doing it. That goes for anything,

including volunteering. Be honest about what you want to get out of volunteering and seek opportunities that help you achieve those goals.

4. BE DEPENDABLE. As a volunteer, you should arrive when you say you will, stay the duration of time you promised and perform the tasks you agreed to perform. People will be relying on you, so it's important to honor your commitment.

5. BE PREPARED TO BE FLEXIBLE. Volunteers often must take on many different roles, and a willingness to jump in on any task and help is a hallmark of great volunteers.

6. EMBRACE YOUR CREATIVITY.

Thinking outside of the box is a strength in a volunteer. It means you can examine a situation from all sides and offer innovative solutions.

7. BE SELFLESS. Above all, giving time to a cause you believe in is all about putting others before yourself. Figure out what you can give rather than what you can get.

WHEN LOOKING TO VOLUNTEER, CONSIDER THESE TWO IMPORTANT FACTORS

• How much time can you give?

One way to narrow down your volunteering opportunities is to consider how much time you have to give back. If your schedule is often hectic, it may be hard to honor a commitment to frequent volunteering.

• What are your interests?

Adults committed to giving back to their communities should consider their own interests when looking for volunteering opportunities. An opportunity that incorporates existing interests and benefits the local community is a successful formula for many long-time volunteers.





Characteristics of effective mentors

Mentors play invaluable roles in the lives of millions of young people across the globe. The most successful mentors tend to have certain characteristics that lend themselves to this significant yet rewarding challenge.

Enthusiasm. Enthusiasm is essential when mentoring young people. Young people will quickly realize if a mentor is enthusiastic or simply going through the motions. In the latter instance, mentors can quickly alienate the people they're trying to help if they appear disinterested or give the impression that they're there because they have to be and not because they want to be. No one has to become a mentor, so professionals who lack the enthusiasm necessary to be a successful mentor can look for other ways to lend a hand.

Listening skills. Though it's not uncommon for mentors to give advice, it's also imperative that mentors learn to listen to the people they're trying to help. The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association notes that a willingness to serve as a

sounding board is one of the many characteristics displayed by excellent mentors. Though mentors can share their own perspective, it's important that they listen to what their mentees have to say.



Availability/accessibility. A successful mentor has enough time to make the mentor-mentee relationship worthwhile for both parties. Professionals with especially hectic schedules may not be as available or accessible as they need to be to become successful mentors. Professionals

who are flexible and able to routinely meet with their mentees can utilize that accessibility to build strong relationships.

Nonjudgmental. The AHSA notes that an ability to listen without judging is also a characteristic of an excellent mentor. Mentees may be reluctant to open up if they think their mentor is judging, and that reluctance could make it difficult for the relationship to be successful.

Diversity of experience. Successful mentors tend to have a diversity of experiences or a recognition of the value of such diversity. A diversity of experience increases the likelihood that mentors can relate to whatever situations their mentees are in. That can be a useful attribute that mentors use to build strong bonds with their mentees.

Mentoring is a great way to give back. Though no two mentors are the same, successful mentors often share the same qualities.



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in McHenry County.



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Best Top Places to Work!**



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HOW TO RECRUIT AND RETAIN QUALITY EMPLOYEES

Great employees are the backbone of successful businesses. Savvy business owners recognize the important role workers play in helping a business meet its goals, and recruiting and retaining such employees is a high priority for the world's most successful firms.

Forbes magazine puts the potential cost of a single bad hire between \$25,000 and \$50,000. New employees are investments and due diligence should be used to find the right ones. Recruiting top talent may require thinking creatively, and it almost always requires significant effort on the part of the business doing the hiring.

WRITE A WELL-CRAFTED JOB AD

The job advertisement is the first thing job seekers will see, and it will be the initial tool to help whittle down the applicant pool. Use clear job titles that explain the job and be concise; avoid buzzwords like "rock star" or "ninja."

Candidates tend to skim job descriptions, so avoid wordy phrasing and confusing job roles. Break down responsibilities into job duties, and be sure to mention specific make-or-break skills applicants will need to have. While you still may get some unqualified individuals to apply, you may weed out others with specifics of the job.

ESTABLISH A LIST OF TRAITS YOU WANT NEW EMPLOYEES TO POSSESS

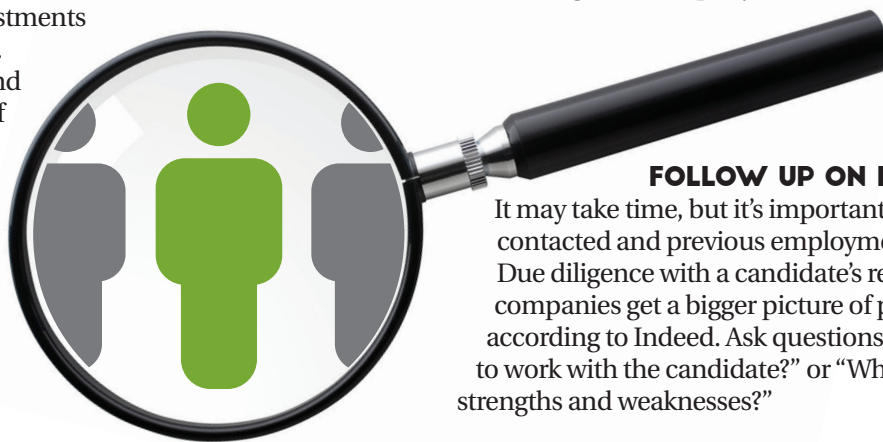
An applicant's skills, education and experience are important. However, this should not be the only factor to consider when mulling a potential hire. Seek employees who have the potential for growth and can get along with colleagues and existing and new clients.

USE VARIOUS JOB BOARDS TO ADVERTISE

Many popular job boards, such as Indeed, Monster, LinkedIn, and Glassdoor, offer free advertising for job posters. They are good places to start because they generate lots of traffic. Social media also can work much in the same way as free job boards, according to Workable, a recruitment software company. If you don't find success with free job boards, you may need to go elsewhere.

ATTEND JOB FAIRS AND UTILIZE INTERNS

Building a community connection through local job fairs, networking with alumni organizations, and relationships with universities, trade schools and colleges can provide constant resources for new talent. Applicants may feel more comfortable working for a company that has outreach in the local area.



FOLLOW UP ON REFERENCES

It may take time, but it's important that references are contacted and previous employment is confirmed. Due diligence with a candidate's references ensures companies get a bigger picture of potential hires, according to Indeed. Ask questions like "What is it like to work with the candidate?" or "What are their biggest strengths and weaknesses?"

Finding quality talent is an important task that's vital to the success of businesses big and small.

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McHenry's
TOP
WORKPLACE

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Auto Group

20
21

"I would like to personally thank and give credit to all the great people that work at the Gary Lang Auto Group. Their love for our customers and their dedication to treat everyone like family is the secret to our success. The top workplace is driven by the top employees."

Thank You,
Gary Lang



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