



Fellowship Community Culture Makes Four-Year Recipient of Top Workplaces

The Integrated Spiritual Culture and People Focus at Fellowship Community Leads to Company Satisfaction for Both Residents and Employees



The name [Fellowship Community](#) alludes to a strong network for its residents. However, it describes much more for its 359 staff members. For a fourth consecutive year, Fellowship Community was named on the [The Morning Call Top Workplaces](#) list. This recognition comes from a workplace culture focused on appreciation, employee engagement, and a strong relationship with the community.

Fellowship Community uses the [Energage Survey](#) to measure organizational health, pinpoint areas for improvement, and highlight its strengths. This allows the leadership team to assess, focus, and lead resources to give their residents the best care services possible.

“We recognize our employees are our best resource for keeping residents at the center of all we do,” says Kelly Gould, vice president of marketing and development at Fellowship Community. This direction to the staff members engages them in a deep purpose.





“Our employees know that the residents are why they are here,” says Donna Conley, Chief Operating Officer.

The Foundation Starts with Appreciation

Leaders at Fellowship Community recognize the changing workforce. They adapt in order to “attract talent, retain their best staff, and get the best out of people.” And this starts with appreciation for their employees. Some appreciation activities Fellowship Community created include employee award nominations, newsletter recognition, and employee perks.

Whether a fellow coworker nominates someone as exemplifying Fellowship Community’s core values or showcasing a recently married staff member in their newsletter, the organization strives for new ways to increase camaraderie.

Employee appreciation can be as simple as dropping off a muffin. “Every month, the Employee Appreciation Committee comes around and might drop off a little treat for each member of our staff,” says Gould. “They may receive something as simple as a muffin, but it’s a constant reminder that Fellowship Community appreciates our employees and their dedication to going the extra mile for our residents.”

They have created additional employee appreciation such as:

- Raffle drawings to local events like baseball games, theater productions, concerts, and gift cards.
- Holiday and Nursing Home Week gifts & luncheons
- Safe Halloween for employee families
- Country fair with crafts, country food, and a petting zoo

"We're proactive about coming up with things to let employees know they are appreciated," says Conley.



Continued Employee Engagement

Conley and Gould understand employee engagement is critical to an energetic and effective workforce. Take professional development, for instance. If employees are interested in continued education, Fellowship Community supports it. "We educate. We train. We send them outside the organization so they can network with other similar organizations," explains Conley. They developed a Presidential Scholarship Program to financially support ongoing education efforts that will directly benefit resident care and quality of life.

"My manager helps me learn and grow."

Fellowship Community scored +15% above the Healthcare industry benchmark, an 8% improvement over 2015.

Source: 2016 [Energage Survey](#)

The survey revealed their employees valued the education as much as the leadership did. "We are very, very focused on education. We feel it contributes to the professional development of our employees and ultimately to the quality of resident care," Conley says. "I was pleasantly surprised that they honored education as being one of our strengths."

Alongside formal education, Fellowship Community developed more personalized education through a mentorship program. This pairs new employees with existing employees to familiarize them with the company culture. And they take it seriously. Not only does the mentee new hire receive a benefit, but Fellowship Community also adds value for the mentor in a salary increase for the role. This has increased employee retention and created a strong dynamic among employees.

As the organization continues to scale, employee connection is a driver for activities. The president and [CEO, Robert Zentz](#), meets each new hire. This relationship focus adds a



special touch to their culture. Conley joined the organization 20 years ago, when there were just 90 employees. Now with over 350 employees, Fellowship Community is overcoming the challenges to strengthen the organization. “Even though we’ve grown bigger, there’s still an element of family here,” says Conley. “It takes a lot of work to keep that up.”

Organization Improvements Through Community

Employees are proud to work at Fellowship Community, not just because of appreciation and engagement, but also because the organization contributes to the community. Fellowship Community “engages the staff and residents with each other” through celebrations such as [National Nursing Home Week](#).

They host combined festivities to include everyone at this continuing care facility. This inclusiveness extends to their part-time staff. Approximately 30 percent of employees are over age 70, many of whom live at Fellowship Community. The friendships built between these residents and staff adds to this community feel.

As a faith-based organization, giving back to the residents and community has increased commitment and satisfaction among employees. “Last year alone, we gave \$2.5 million in charitable care,” says Gould. They have participated in additional nonprofit organization activities, including a local [Walk to End Alzheimer’s](#). These acts of giving have increased employee commitment and belief in the company vision and mission.

Energage Survey Yields Continued Improvements

In conducting this survey, Fellowship Community continues to reap benefits with employee moral. They are not only focused, but also driven to improve the work community, education, and appreciation for its staff and residents. Organization leaders like Conley and Gould know the commitment they need to recruit and retain quality employees. They are excited to continue these efforts to improve what is yet to come.

“I’m proud of what we’ve accomplished and what we do here at Fellowship Community,” says Conley. “It motivates me to keep doing the best we can.”