IT PROS THRIVE in workplaces where projects are challenging and the learning never ends.

27th ANNUAL REPORT

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2020

BEST PLACES TO WORK *in* IT

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[COVER STORY]

Best Places to Work in IT

5 Continuous learning is a hallmark of top employers:
Investment in employee development is a common theme among the outstanding organizations on this year's list.

BY BETH STACKPOLE

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BEST PLACES TO WORK *in* IT

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27th ANNUAL REPORT

CONTINUOUS LEARNING is a *hallmark* of top companies on this year's list.

[BY BETH STACKPOLE]

AT CENTRAL MINNESOTA CREDIT UNION, IT employees sounded the call to make training and career development part of their daily routine when CIO Neal Kaderabek first took the reins more than a year ago as part of an enterprise digital transformation push.

What makes a great IT employer?

Abundant benefits, rewarding work and team spirit, for starters.

Our annual Best Places to Work in IT listing showcases organizations that invest in their employees through top-notch training and career development programs.

The credit union, ranked the #2 small organization on the 2020 Best Places to Work in IT list, was cited No. 4 overall in career development and No. 8 in training. CMCU offers reimbursement for college classes and IT certifications, subscriptions to online technical training as well as shadowing opportunities to expose incoming IT staffers to how other parts of the credit union operate.

IT staff first made the case for more time for training when Kaderabek's opening shot was to ask them about what stood in their way for staying motivated. With the credit union about to power through a series of critical technology deployments, including standing up a new call system and contact center and rolling out CRM and data analytics, the time was ripe to beef up training. However, Kaderabek was committed to doing so with

> **In creating transparency,** employees can see where the opportunity is for **training and education**.
>
> **— NEAL KADERABEK,**
> CIO, CMCU

one caveat: Employees needed to self-direct their own training and development as opposed to relying on managers to assign specific courses or formalize long-term career pathways.

"The opportunity for education is huge, but we're letting people run their own careers," he explains. "My job is to make sure to advance the organization on its strategy, but in creating transparency, employees can see where the opportunity is for training and education."

Employee development a common denominator

Regardless of size, most of the highest-ranked players on this year's list are allocating substantial dollars to employee development and training. Some of the larger players—for example, Ultimate Software, this year's No. 1 large company—are earmarking several-million-dollar bud-

gets to their employees' personal and professional development. The investments are far ranging, from formal college reimbursement and paid technical certifications to ready access to self-service learning platforms, specialized innovation centers, internships, mentorships, and partnerships with universities.

Among the companies favored as top places to work in IT, the investment in development and training appears to be a win-win for employees and their employers. IT staffers participating in the Best Places survey said the ability to stay current on the latest technologies and fill in the gaps in their technical, leadership and soft skill profiles makes them more marketable while greatly elevating job satisfaction. At the same time, a well-

94%

of employees said they would stay longer at a company if it invested in their career

Source: LinkedIn survey on talent management, 2018

architected career development and training program helps nurture a positive IT culture built around advancement and continuous learning—both essential for success in today's highly competitive, digital-driven markets.

While the workforce seems to favor employers bullish on training and talent development, dollars spent in these areas are turning into a sound investment for companies across all industry sectors. With so much riding on digital transformation, the emphasis on career development and employee enrichment has become a crucial tool for developing and retaining a solid talent bench capable of meeting core business objectives, survey participants said.

In a 2018 LinkedIn survey on talent management, 94 percent

IT workers at FINRA: (front, left to right) Ian Clar, Daniel Monteiro, Shoby Varghese, Arun Loitongbam; (back, left to right) Akanksha Luthra, Rene Arellano, Apul Mishra and Samir Lipovaca.

of responding employees said they would stay longer at a company if it invested in their career.

Moreover, the LinkedIn survey revealed employees don't maximize participation in continuous learning programs mostly because they aren't af-

forded the time or they are not readily accessible. Employers that carved out opportunity and provided ready access to learning initiatives were generally viewed as preferred workplaces that are committed to their employees' best interests.

Top 10

COMPANIES [BENEFITS]

Best of the best » Highlighting organizations that excel in five areas of human resources: **benefits**, career development, diversity, retention and training.

1	Genentech
2	Ultimate Software
3	Mitre
4	Zimmer Biomet
5	VMware
6	Humana
7	Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina
8	Navy Federal Credit Union
9	Owens Corning
10	Central Minnesota Credit Union (CMCU)

From the company perspective, training for soft skills and the identification of industry trends to prevent internal skill gaps were the top priorities for businesses as they grapple with the short shelf life of skills while aiming to attract the best talent to achieve core business objectives, the LinkedIn survey found.

Living on the edge

The Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA)'s mission to monitor fraud among brokerage firms and exchange markets is predicated on deep knowledge of open source big data technologies and scalable cloud platforms, which means IT employees must consistently remain on the cutting edge. The private, self-regulatory organization, lauded on this year's list as the #1 best place to work in IT among midsize companies, made a choice early on to build its own set of technologies,

underscoring the need to nurture and develop its workforce of more than 1,200 IT employees and contractors to be continuous learners and self-starters.

"We developed expertise and in-house training for hundreds of employees to be able to figure this out themselves," says Steve

> If you look at our **technology management team**, it's absolutely **grown from within** as opposed to acquiring from outside.
>
> — **STEVE RANDICH,** EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT AND CIO, FINRA

Randich, FINRA's executive vice president and CIO. FINRA tapped engineering expertise at its partners, leading cloud software providers like Hortonworks, Amazon and Cloudera, to come in and train its IT staff. Randich and Rubyna Zito, the

firm's vice president, technology operations and services, also launched a number of initiatives to raise FINRA's technology profile so it could more easily attract and retain high-caliber talent.

In addition to an online training platform, FINRA IT employees are encouraged to participate in Createathon, an annual two-and-a-half-day event designed to promote cross-departmental collaboration and innovation via a set of specific challenges. Still, the biggest boon to promoting on-the-job learning is continued exposure

for IT staffers to novel and interesting projects, Randich says.

"Rather than spend millions of dollars educating people with formal training to work on a portfolio of boring, traditional IT work, we give them the tools, quality of work, and culture that promotes learning on the job," he explains. The focus on internal upskilling and self-reliance has also created a pipeline of future leaders. "If you look at our technology management team, it's absolutely grown from within as opposed to acquiring from outside," Randich says. "It is in keeping with our 'do it yourself' culture."

Learning never ends

Sailaja Yellaturu considers herself a lifelong learner. That's why she's a huge proponent of ZEN, an online collaborative learning platform launched for employees by her firm Zebra Technologies.

Yellaturu takes advantage of ZEN (Zebra Educational Network) training whenever possible, expanding her management and leadership credentials with courses like "Learning to be assertive," "Communicating with empathy," and "Body language for leaders." She's burnished her technical chops through company-sponsored innovation workshops on emerging technologies like chatbots and robotic process automation (RPA). She's even experimented with some of the numerous diversity and inclusion programs Zebra offers, all with an eye towards enriching her personal development and shaping her IT career path.

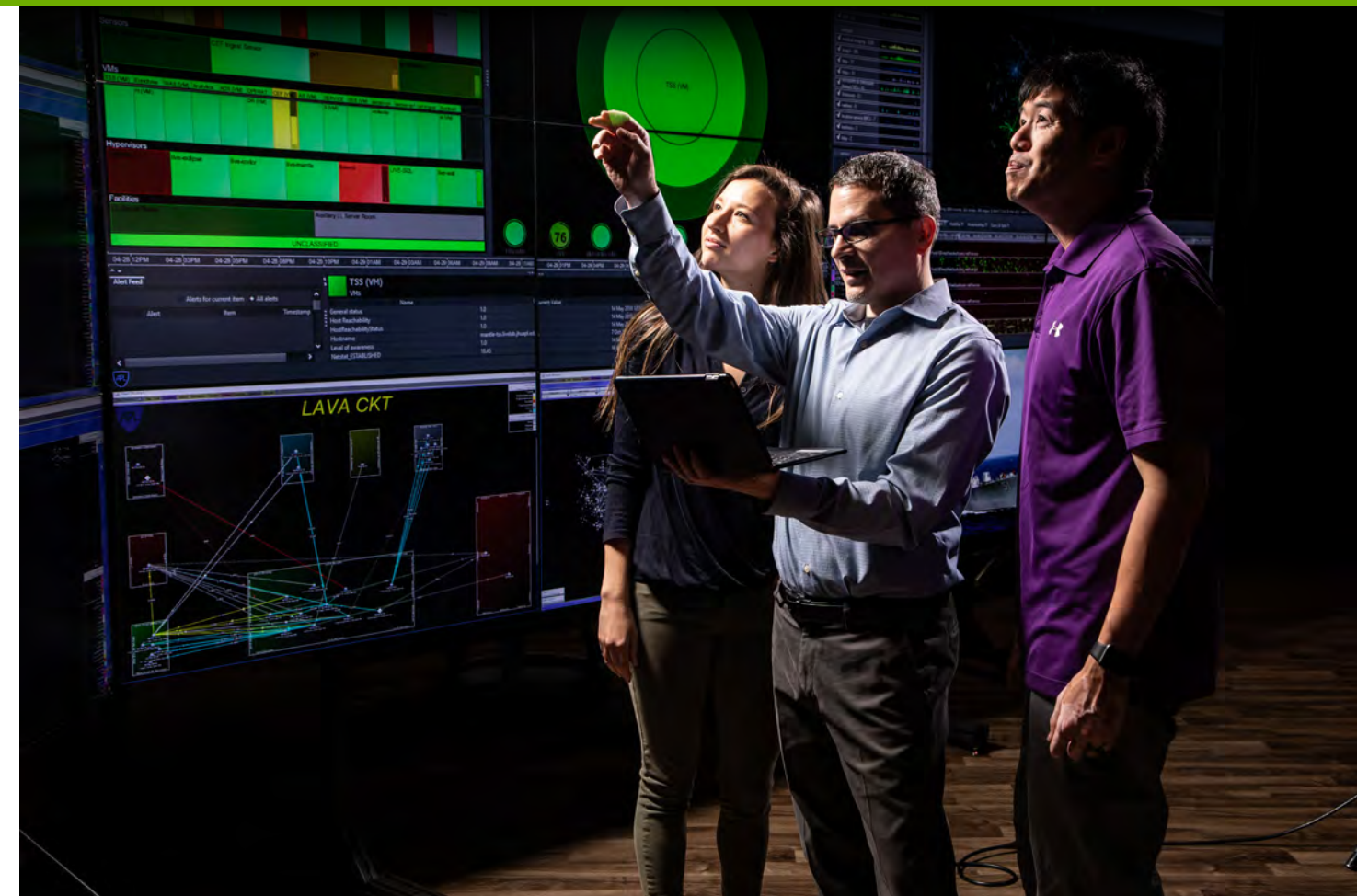"Since taking these courses, I have already noticed a difference in many areas of my leadership, including my ability to lead and motivate my team members as well as display confidence in my decision-making and my own self-confidence as a leader," says Yellaturu, who was recently promoted to senior manager, IT. "I truly believe the skills I learned from the courses on ZEN played a role in earning my promotion. The opportunities for personal development are really endless."

Zebra Technologies' focus on career development and training helped earn it the #3 spot among midsize companies on the 2020 Best Places to Work in IT list.

Zebra, which manufacturers data capture and automatic identification solutions for businesses, maintains close to $325,000 for its training budget for 183 IT employees. "There is generally a belief at Zebra that an empha-
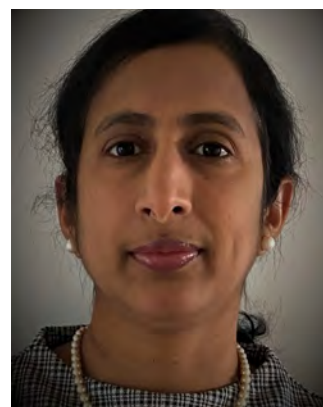
Sailaja Yellaturu, senior manager, IT, Zebra Technologies

sis on training and development will foster employee engagement and that engaged employees will drive company performance," says Deepak Kaul, Zebra's CIO. "Investing in talent enhances our global brand."

Continuous learning cultures rule

Johns Hopkins University's Applied Physics Laboratory (APL), ranked No. 11 among large firms and second overall for both training and career development, is

Top 10

COMPANIES [CAREER DEVELOPMENT]

Best of the best ≫ Highlighting organizations that excel in five areas of human resources: benefits, **career development**, diversity, retention and training.

1	Konstruktor Service
2	Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory
3	Owens Corning
4	Central Minnesota Credit Union (CMCU)
5	PPG
6	University of Notre Dame
7	Holman Enterprises
8	Ultimate Software
9	Health Catalyst
10	Enova International

> **The culture of mentoring** has been in APL's lifeblood since the beginning.
>
> **— JUDITH FRENCH,**
> CHIEF IT STRATEGIST, APL

committed to the cause partly because its work—solving some of the nation's most critical challenges in security, military readiness, and space exploration—demands a culture dedicated to continuous learning and cutting-edge technologies, according to Catherine Colangelo, IT communications and project manager for the lab's innovation program.

The lab's $1.4 million training budget, which fuels development and enrichment for 398 IT

employees, includes opportunities to take and teach classes at Johns Hopkins University as well as participation in programs to train the next generation of IT professionals. To the latter point, APL's IT staff actively take part in mentoring high school students and volunteering in outreach efforts like "Girls Who Code" and the FIRST Robotics leagues.

"The culture of mentoring has been in APL's lifeblood since the beginning," says Judith French, chief IT strategist working directly for the CIO. "Employees have lots of opportunity to work with others to build their career, and staff members and supervisors help them find the right mentors."

One of the more important ways APL encourages lifelong learning and discovery is through a program that lets workers continue their formal education through part-time study at JHU at no cost to the

Members of Erickson Living's technology team: (front row, left to right) Shhalu Mittal, Sedric Boddie, Andy Lee, Danielle Junker and Jeremy Bair; (standing in back, left to right) Nicole Rites, Charmaine Nokuri and Adam McMillen.

employees. Once approved by a manager, employees can take graduate-level coursework in areas like AI and cybersecurity. "Training and development is not considered a benefit here—it's part of the culture and ingrained from the very beginning," Col-

angelo says. "It's not necessarily something we contemplate adding, because it's there every day for every staff member."

For its part, Erickson Living, the #13 large company on this year's Best Places to Work in IT list, is taking a three-pronged

approach to develop and train IT employees not on any specific set of technologies, but rather to be versatile enough to pivot and learn any new competency, says Hans Keller, CIO at the company, which manages senior living communities.

The employee transformation initiative, backed by a $365,000 training budget, focuses on three key areas: Curiosity, competence, and community. The curiosity component encourages the 145 IT team members to spend two hours a month on flexible learning, targeted personal development (such as coaching or mentorship), and team-directed learning. There is also unlimited access provided for Udemy for Business, an online learning platform with courses on job skills along with more personal enrichment like stress management skills and nutrition. The competency pillar stresses the

creation of an individual development plan, and the community portion emphasizes team building and engagement with the broader populace.

Erickson's philosophy is keyed to developing the employee, not on building a portfolio of enterprise IT skills. The reason for this strategy is that while jobs are safe, roles are not, Keller explains. Consider what happens when employees on a server team, trained and developed with knowledge of server technology, are suddenly directed to shift work focus to running external applications in the cloud.

"From a readiness perspective, everyone needs to be in a mindset to be able to morph," Keller says. "It's about how to position everyone to be change ready. IT has historically loved being the implementors of change for other people. They haven't been open to saying how we change ourselves."

> "
> Part of my role as IT head is to **support** *and* **strengthen** a **talented workforce.**
>
> — **MARTIN SPAENE,**
> VICE PRESIDENT,
> U.S. INFORMATICS,
> GENENTECH

Tactics and training initiatives

Many larger companies ranked on the *Insider Pro* and *Computerworld* Best Places to Work in IT list are leveraging their sizeable training budgets to fund a similar multi-pronged approach to employee development. Consider Genentech, a biotech company now a subsidiary of Roche Group, which landed the #3 large-company spot on this year's list. Genentech allocates over $5,000 per IT employee (there are 454) annually on training and career development in addition to up to $10,000 for college reimbursement and continuing education, while offering 10 training days per year. Driven by the new era of personalized medicine, there is an expanded remit for the IT organization, which in turn necessitates a focus on continuous learning so employees are adequately prepared for new

Top 10

COMPANIES [**DIVERSITY**]

Best of the best » Highlighting organizations that excel in five areas of human resources: benefits, career development, **diversity**, retention and training.

1	Erickson Living
2	Axxess
3	Cedars-Sinai
4	Kaiser Permanente
5	Jet Propulsion Laboratory
6	Children's Hospital of Philadelphia
7	Fannie Mae
8	Planned Systems International
9	Sharp HealthCare
10	Ultimate Software

career pathways, says Martin Spaene, Genentech's vice president, U.S. Informatics and South San Francisco site IT head.

"Part of my role as IT head is to support and strengthen a talented workforce and ensure they have access to career development opportunity in different areas," says Spaene. "We need to provide the educational training, experience, and exposure so they have opportunity to be part of the bigger picture."

A signature plank in Genentech's learning strategy is Accel-

> **Technology expertise is a given.** Where we want employees to advance is how to apply technology to specific use cases instead of starting with the technology.
>
> **— MARTIN SPAENE,** VICE PRESIDENT, U.S. INFORMATICS, GENENTECH

erate IT, a development program created and run in partnership with Carnegie Mellon University. Twice a year, 30 applicants are selected to participate in the four-month program where they work as part of cross-functional teams to solve real business problems. The work, some of which takes place on-site at CMU, requires an additional 20 percent to 30 percent commitment beyond an employee's normal workload, Spaene says.

In addition, Genentech's Personal Excellence Program concentrates on development of the whole individual, including soft skills and teaching employees self-awareness and emotional intelligence. For one-on-one development, the One IT Mentoring initiative takes advantage of the company's global network to connect employees from different teams, sites, and backgrounds.

Throughout each leg of the training and development initiatives, the focal point is not technology, but rather on how to apply technology to tackle specific business problems. "It's not only about the *way*, it's about the *how*—how we deliver at the end of the day for our customers and patients and how we engage to do our daily work," Spaene says. "Technology expertise is a given. Where

Gabriela Enriquez, chief HR officer, Accelirate

we want employees to advance is how to apply technology to specific use cases instead of starting with the technology."
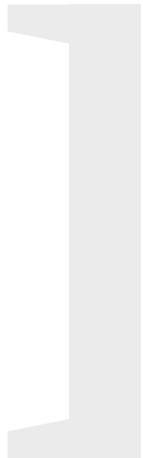
At Accelirate, a business process and IT consultancy specializing in robotics process automation (RPA), ongoing IT training and development is essential given that business strategy is tied to an emerging technology with a relatively limited pool of talent to draw from. Ranked as the #12 small company on the 2020 Best Places to Work in IT list, Accelirate has constructed a learning initiative that allows workers to develop at their own pace—an approach consistent with its culture built around self-direction, not micromanagement, explains Gabriela Enriquez, Accelirate's chief HR officer.

Given that most incoming employees lack in-depth knowledge of automation technology, Accelirate ramps people up through a comprehensive program Enriquez likens to bootcamp training. "The seniors from the outside in [automation] are juniors in our realm," she claims, explaining that participants run through real-world case study examples designed to test their foundational knowledge. "By not micromanaging and instead assigning tasks and having employees deliver, we ensure they are self-driven and have the passion and drive to do what we do," she maintains.

The training doesn't stop after the initial bootcamp. Accelirate's 135 IT employees are encouraged to regularly make use of the firm's learning management system, where courses can be assigned covering areas such as machine learning, agile methodologies, and Six Sigma. "We are constant-

International Paper IT employees collaborate via telepresence: (foreground, left to right) Kris Hartmann, Deepa Nair, Raghu Singh, Amy Leung, Charles Holt, Lynne Bethel; (on the screen, left to right) Don Harris, Lyndsey Fryoux and Katie Richmer.

ly looking at what the requirements are for each role and continuously challenging employees and adding knowledge," she says.

A multi-year rotational program, Collegiate Onboarding and Rotational Experience (CORE), is central to the skills training and development program at International Paper, ranked #10 large company on the Best Places list. Employees participating in the program go through rotational assignments every 18 to 24 months for their first five years, the key differen-

tiator being they get an immersive experience in the business, not a glorified tour of different departments before they embark work on real projects, notes Eric Weber, business HR manager at International Paper.

In addition to CORE, the firm has an IT university, a virtual curriculum of university-level courses, and a Talent Development Council, which offers management training and helps mid-level IT employees identify and achieve actionable career goals. The overarching theme of the firm's programs is to instill self-motivation and cultivate continuous development so the IT team is well equipped to deal with the current challenge, whether that's digital transformation or navigating business in the face of a global pandemic, says Bob Wenker, the firm's vice president and CIO.

"Our talent development programs are practical, useful,

Top 10

COMPANIES [**RETENTION**]

Best of the best ≫ Highlighting organizations that excel in five areas of human resources: benefits, career development, diversity, **retention** and training.

1	Konstruktor Service
2	OneStream Software
3	Accelirate
4	Health Catalyst
5	Ultimate Software
6	Cloud for Good
7	Central Minnesota Credit Union (CMCU)
8	Axon
9	Owens Corning
10	Plante Moran

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FROM IDG

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August 18, 19, 25 and 26

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and they're inclined towards moving the ball forward," Wenker says. "That's what works for our IT team."

What works for Dataprise, the #14-ranked small company on the Best Places to Work in IT list, is relying on internships to school the next generation of IT

professionals, as well as prioritizing the development of soft skills and leadership credentials over a focus on technical capabilities. The combination of the IT service management company's internship program and formal job shadow program has been successful in creating a composite IT professional with strong technical chops, but who is also able to forge a connection to the clients through a keen understanding of the business. "You can always train the technical piece, but you can't train the personalities," says Scott Gordon, Dataprise president.

Since creating its internship program, which relies on a local community college as a feeder, Dataprise has brought on 100 percent of the interns coming through as full-time employees. "We find the energy level of people coming in through the program is fresh, and they have an

open mind, which makes it easier to teach and coach," he says.

At Zebra, the talent management and career development strategy is also predicated on finding and keeping IT professionals who are versatile and avid learners. Five years ago, the firm made a point to hire IT staffers who were experts in a particular skill or fluent on a certain platform, but today the mission is to hire, nurture, and retain people who are poised to pivot and jump into multiple initiatives.

"In IT, more relevant skills have a short shelf life so if you focus on an obsolete list of

skills, the high potential workers will walk out the door," Kaul says. With Zebra's approach, employees are sticking around and the work of IT is never better, he claims. "These programs have benefitted us in terms of quality of delivery," he says. "Of 150 recent projects, we didn't
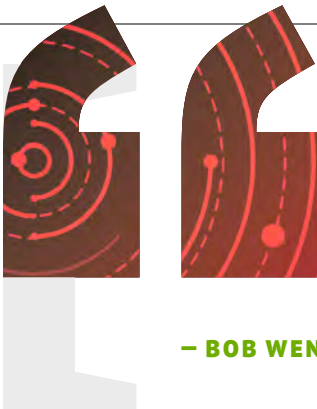
> **"**Our talent development **programs** are practical, useful, and they're inclined towards moving the ball forward.
>
> — **BOB WENKER,** VICE PRESIDENT AND CIO, INTERNATIONAL PAPER

have one that was a big failure or blew a budget. That's because our skills are current and people really care." ◆
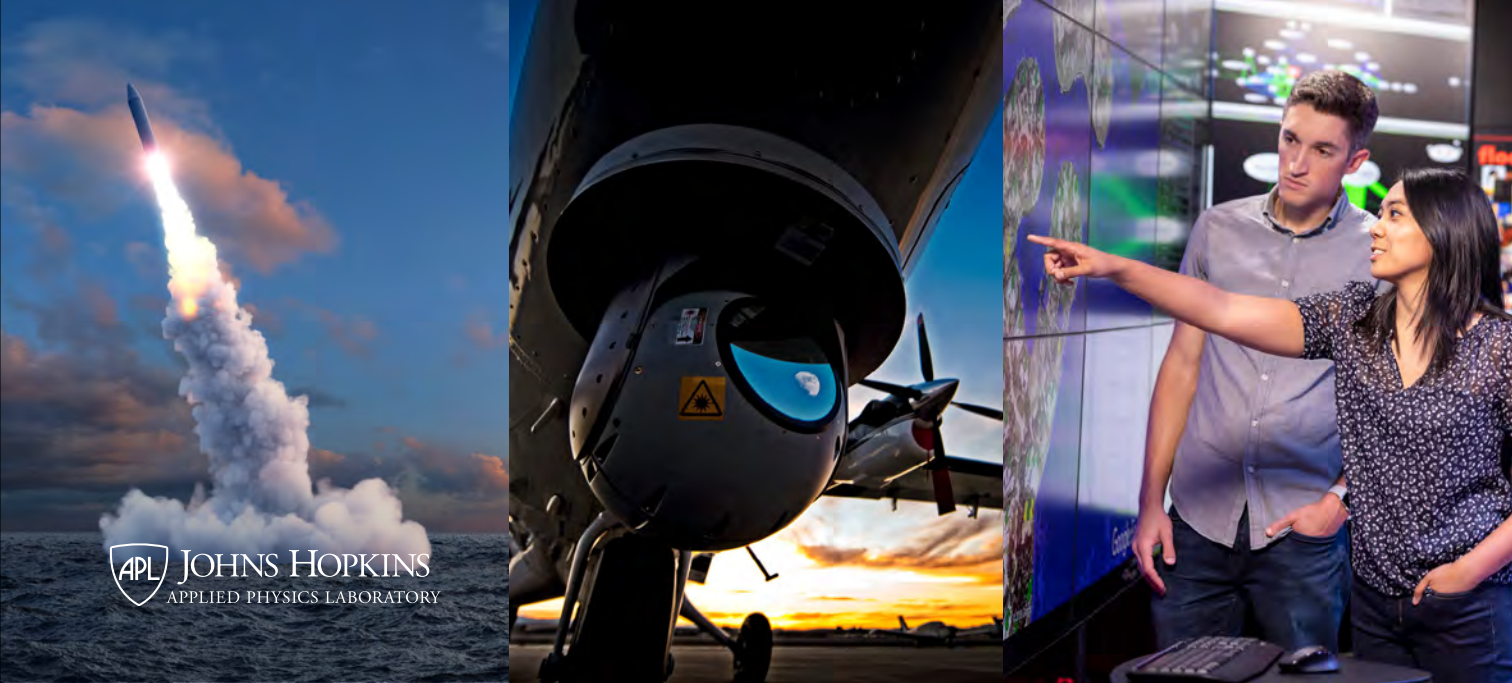
BETH STACKPOLE *is a veteran reporter who has covered the intersection of business and technology issues for more than 20 years.*

Top 10

COMPANIES [**TRAINING**]

Best of the best » Highlighting organizations that excel in five areas of human resources: benefits, career development, diversity, retention and **training**.

1	BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York
2	Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory
3	NCAA
4	Planned Systems International
5	Cloud for Good
6	University of Notre Dame
7	MetroStar Systems
8	Central Minnesota Credit Union (CMCU)
9	KnowBe4
10	OneStream Software

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2020 100 BEST PLACES TO WORK *in* IT

FROM IDG

INSIDER PRO COMPUTERWORLD

PROFILE

NO. 4 | LARGE

*Among organizations with 5,000 or more U.S. employees*

Empowering talent to solve complex problems »

Booz Allen Hamilton combines industry-leading learning and development with a close-knit culture to build a team that's risen to meet the COVID-19 challenge.

BY SHARON GOLDMAN

MANAGEMENT and IT consulting firm Booz Allen Hamilton, based in McLean, Virginia, has more than 26,000 em-

Booz Allen Hamilton
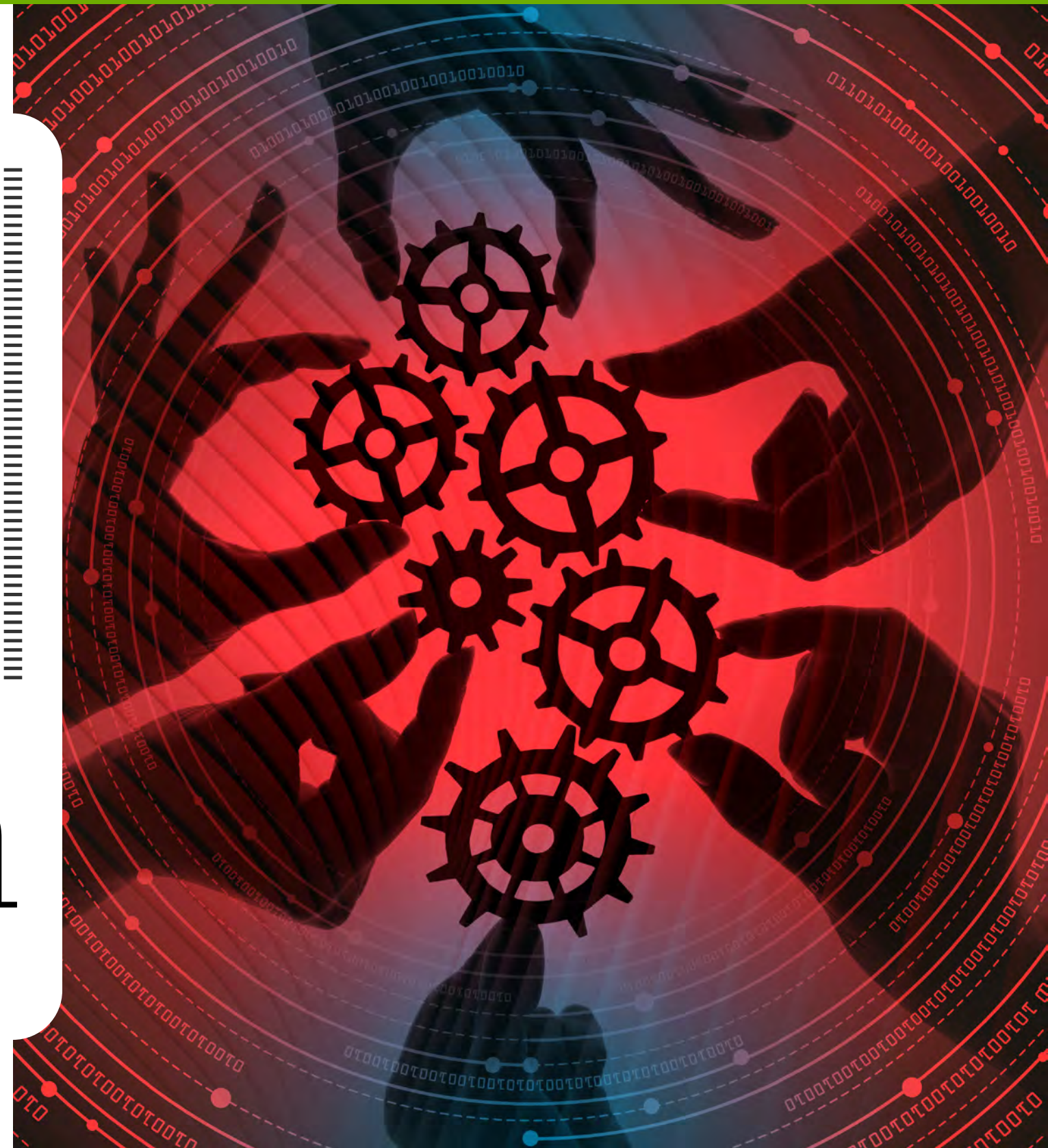
NO. 4 | LARGE

Booz Allen Hamilton
McLean, Va.
boozallen.com
No. of employees: **26,000+**
No. of IT employees: **~500**

11%

IT employee
promotion rate, 2019

$10K-$15K
(per year)

Reimbursement for college
tuition / tech certs / exec ed

17 / 25
(days)

PTO after one year / 10 years

ployees who work in 129 global offices. A phrase often repeated across the company is that it "empowers people to change the world." It comes as no surprise, then, that the #4 large company on the Best Places to Work in IT list this year (with more than 15 years on the list), boasts a strong tradition of recruiting the best and brightest, offering countless opportunities to grow, develop and learn—combined with a culture that is both client-focused and highly collaborative.

The company's 500-strong IT organization is broken into four groups: Cloud Services, IT Service Management, Application Operational Support (Devops and DBA) and Business Operations. It serves as a mission-essential partner that drives the collective success of the entire business, focused

Booz Allen Hamilton has nearly 27,000 employees, with 107 U.S. offices from Honolulu to New York City and 22 others around the world.

Several of Booz Allen Hamilton's largest offices are located in Maryland, Virginia, and Washington, D.C.

on providing robust and secure technology solutions that the company can use to deliver results for clients across critical engagements in defense, civil, commercial and international markets. Its leadership has forged strong relationships across the company and works to infuse technology as early as possible in firm-wide business decisions.

Attracting top talent

Booz Allen Hamilton tends to attract those who enjoy working to solve difficult problems leveraging complex IT tools and solutions, according to Amy Costa, a talent acquisition lead and market strategist at the company who supports several Washington, D.C., metro-area teams. "For many in IT, that is a huge appeal," she says. "In this very competitive talent environment, we need to attract the right talent against hard-to-find skills, such as digital, cyber and analytics, so we work hard to offer the right opportunities and employee value proposition that resonates with candidates."

That includes focusing on providing a good work-life balance and promoting a close-knit culture in which employees lift each other up. Marcello DiClemente, director of IT Service Delivery in Booz Allen Hamilton's Information Services group, says he appreciates how the company's IT organization manages to foster a close-ness among its teams that belies its large size. "I found a group of people who are not only employees, they are part of a family," he says.

One of the company's golden rules of success reflects the IT department's unique bond: *Always help when someone is in need and always ask for help when you need it.* That simple yet essential focus, says DiClemente, keeps him driven, focused and motivated even after two decades at the firm. With 16 years of experience on delivery teams across several market segments of the firm, in 2016 he had the opportunity to take the proficiencies developed across those client engagements and bring them to the internal IT organization. "I found very quickly that this group had embraced the company culture but also forged a unique bond over mission," he says.

Booz Allen Hamilton attracts workers who enjoy using technology to solve complex problems.

That is true of the IT leadership as well: Rebecca McHale, Booz Allen Hamilton's CIO, says the firm's culture of investing in employees and its value proposition of "bringing the best of yourself to work" is what drew her into the company in the first place. "The company supports building at scale, providing access to opportunities and showing appreciation," she says.

"Within my team, we absolutely work to uphold that proposition, with a critical mission to serve our internal clients who, in turn, have clients. What we do really does make a difference and we have to be operating as one big team with clear goals that enable the business."

To accomplish those goals, building the best possible IT team is a must. "That means I spend a lot of time talking about what it means to have healthy conflicts, to hold each other accountable, to trust each other and grow together as a team," she says. Investing in training offerings is part of that equation, with flexible education reimbursements, vendor partnerships and conference opportunities. "We plan our financials within the IT organization every year with a renewed commitment to investment in our people," she says.

The company supports **building at scale**, providing access to **opportunities** and **showing appreciation**.
— **REBECCA MCHALE,** CIO, BOOZ ALLEN HAMILTON

Listening to the IT team

IT employee feedback is also essential, to discover areas where the organization is strong and how it can improve how teams work or what new technologies can help. Recently, a series of focus groups led to the development of a new Technology Strategy team, made up of IT team members, to define a customer-centric, data-driven vision that supports the entire company's multi-year plans and creates an optimal technology experience for employees, leaders and customers. "A lot of our folks are on client sites most of the time, so they are trying to balance the needs of their clients," says McHale. "We are always looking at ways to make our employees effective in every aspect of their role."

Thoughtful planning and hard work by the IT organization also led to a seamless transition

A Booz Allen Hamilton Innovation Lab in Washington, D.C.; these spaces are meant to encourage creative thinking and provide access to cutting-edge technology.

to full-time remote delivery during the COVID-19 crisis. In the 18 or so months prior to this unprecedented event, Booz Allen Hamilton had made several large investments in remote connectivity and collaboration tools and completed several key initiatives to streamline the user experience with mobile solutions and tightly integrated identity platforms.

That has led to a productive and collaborative remote workforce that has also rallied to build morale and make connections, says McHale. "One of the coolest things to see is the amount of creativity that has emerged as people find ways to get to know each other and make each other laugh," she says. "I just feel tremendously proud of my team right now—this is an IT organization that had to enable everyone to operate remotely during this time while also hitting very large milestones in IT projects and not missing a beat." ◆

[100] BEST PLACES TO WORK *in* IT

2020

FROM IDG

INSIDER PRO COMPUTERWORLD

LARGE

COMPANY RANKINGS

Among organizations with 5,000 or more U.S. employees

No.	Company	Location
1	Ultimate Software*	Weston, Fla.
2	Owens Corning	Toledo, Ohio
3	Genentech	South San Francisco, Calif.
4	Booz Allen Hamilton	McLean, Va.
5	Worthington Industries	Columbus, Ohio
6	Vanguard	Wayne, Pa.
7	Norton Healthcare	Louisville, Ky.
8	Cedars-Sinai	Los Angeles
9	Navy Federal Credit Union	Vienna, Va.
10	International Paper	Memphis, Tenn.
11	Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory	Laurel, Md.
12	DHL Express	Plantation, Fla.

No. 1
Overall *for*
Benefits

* Ultimate Software is merging with Kronos (No. 2 Midsize).

JORDAN ZIOLKOWSKI

Discover Financial Services IT employees, from the left: Kishore Kota, Danny Lopez, Molly Hammond, Deana Qiao, and Phylesha Bullard.

No. 1
Overall *for*
Diversity

13	**Erickson Living** *Baltimore*		**18**	**Discover Financial Services** *Riverwoods, Ill.*
14	**Zimmer Biomet** *Warsaw, Ind.*		**19**	**Humana** *Louisville, Ky.*
15	**University of Notre Dame** *Notre Dame, Ind.*		**20**	**Atrium Health** *Charlotte, N.C.*
16	**VMware** *Palo Alto, Calif.*		**21**	**Total Quality Logistics** *Cincinnati*
17	**Aflac** *Columbus, Ga.*		**22**	**Asurion** *Nashville, Tenn.*

JET PROPULSION LABORATORY

Working remotely is the new normal for the Jet Propulsion Laboratory's IT team members.

23	Jet Propulsion Laboratory *Pasadena, Calif.*	29	Jack Henry and Associates *Monett, Mo.*
24	Kaiser Permanente *Oakland, Calif.*	30	Applied Materials *Santa Clara, Calif.*
25	RSM US *Chicago*	31	Motorola Solutions *Chicago*
26	Portland State University *Portland, Ore.*	32	Principal Financial Group *Des Moines, Iowa*
27	CDW *Lincolnshire, Ill.*	33	Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center *New York*
28	Raytheon *Waltham, Mass.*		

34	H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center and Research Institute *Tampa, Fla.*	**43**	AdventHealth *Altamonte Springs, Fla.*
35	MSC Industrial Supply *Melville, N.Y.*	**44**	Liberty Mutual Insurance *Boston*
36	Children's Hospital of Philadelphia *Philadelphia*	**45**	PPG *Pittsburgh*
37	Johns Hopkins Medicine *Baltimore*	**46**	FedEx *Memphis, Tenn.*
38	Southern Co. *Atlanta*	**47**	Fannie Mae *Washington, D.C.*
39	Nationwide Mutual Insurance *Columbus, Ohio*	**48**	Banner Health *Phoenix*
40	Holman Enterprises *Mount Laurel, N.J.*	**49**	Memorial Healthcare System *Hollywood, Fla.*
41	Mitre *McLean, Va.*	**50**	Spectrum Health *Grand Rapids, Mich.*
42	Sharp HealthCare *San Diego*	**51**	Kroger *Cincinnati*
		52	Children's Healthcare of Atlanta *Atlanta*

Our Focus
We are focused on hiring and retaining the best IT talent.

Our Culture
We employ a diverse group of IT professionals in 10 states who are millennials, Gen Xers and Boomers. Most IT employees have been with Banner more than five years.

Our Strategy
Our IT work impacts the patient experience. We support the IT needs of 28 hospitals, 48 urgent care facilities, nearly 300 ambulatory clinics, 51,000 employees, and a health plan across six states.

[2020] [100] BEST PLACES TO WORK *in* IT
INSIDER PRO COMPUTERWORLD

In Appreciation
We thank our Banner Health IT team! During the pandemic, they have risen to the challenges in supporting our patients, front line workers, and employees.

≋ **Banner Health.**

100
BEST PLACES
TO WORK *in* IT
FROM IDG
INSIDER PRO | COMPUTERWORLD

PROFILE
NO. 3 | MIDSIZE

Among organizations with 1,001 to 4,999 U.S. employees

How a growing company prioritizes work-life balance ❯❯ Zebra Technologies values flexibility and respect and strives to create an intellectually stimulating environment.
BY SHARON GOLDMAN

LLINOIS-BASED Zebra Technologies is a growing company of nearly 8,000 employees that continues to meet Wall Street expectations, even in the face of the COVID-19 disruption. The 260-strong global IT organization (not counting managed

Zebra
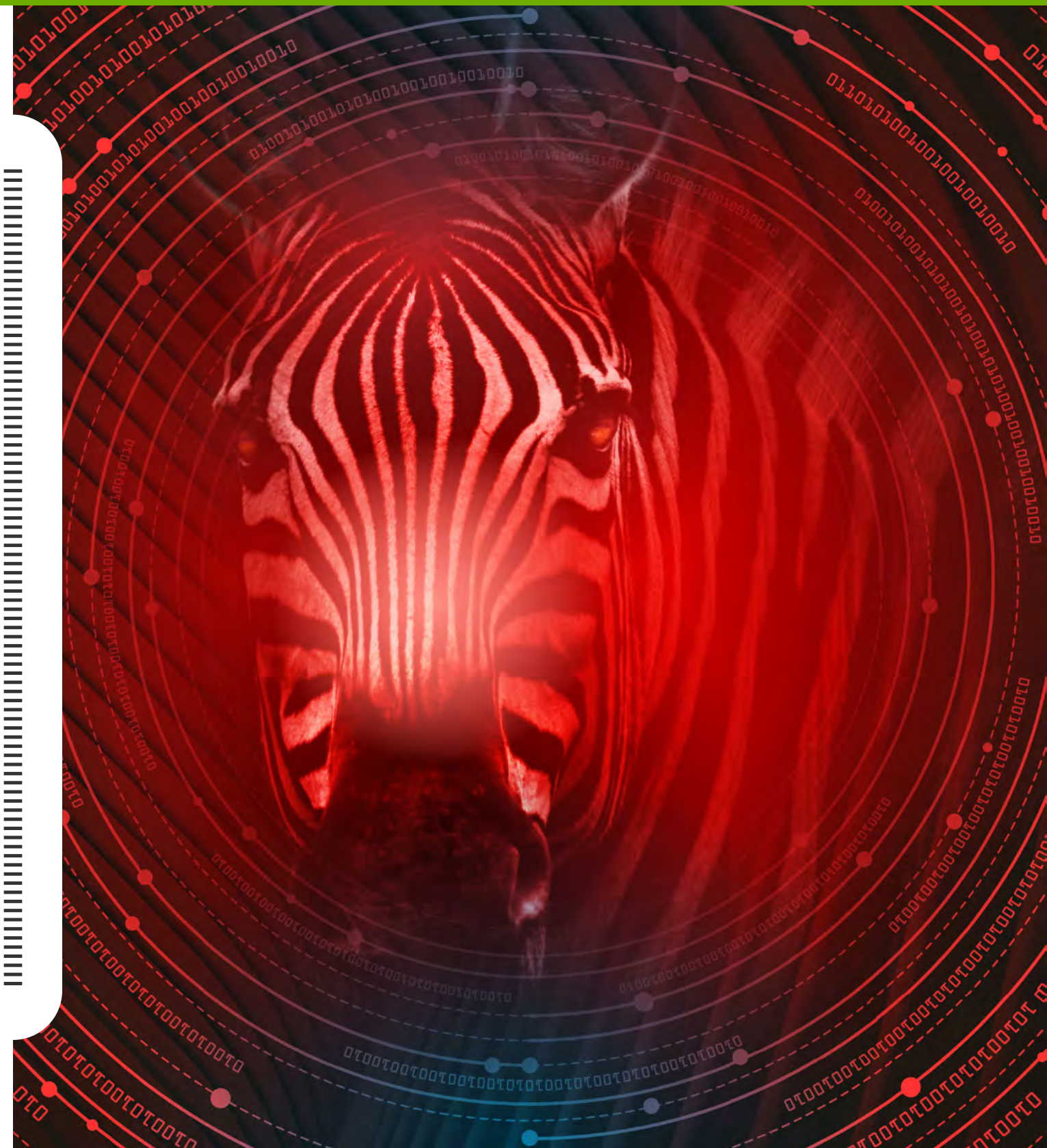
NO. 3 | MIDSIZE

Zebra Technologies
Lincolnshire, Ill.
zebra.com
No. of employees: **4,200+**
No. of IT employees: **~185**

13%

IT employee
promotion rate, 2019

$1,771

Training budget
per IT employee

20 / 25
(days)

PTO after one year / 10 years

services) enables that success, serving as a "strategic lever" for the company's core business of enterprise-level data capture and automatic identification solutions that provide businesses with operational visibility, through everything from barcode scanners and RFID solutions to wearable computers and interactive kiosks.

This growth-oriented, intellectually stimulating environment, combined with a strong focus on work-life balance, led to a low 2019 voluntary turnover rate of only 3.78 percent in an extremely competitive market for IT talent—and contributed to Zebra's ranking as the #3 midsize company on this year's Best Places to Work in IT list. Its leadership says that Zebra provides the best of both worlds: the opportunity to pursue intellectual challenges and advancement opportunities often reserved for consulting,

Zebra designs and builds enterprise-level data capture and automatic identification solutions that provide operational visibility—RFOD scanners and readers, specialized printers for barcode labeling and identification—as well as WLAN products, location systems, related supplies and software.

yet the work-life balance of a stable job, a flex-work policy and generous vacation time.

"The IT department at Zebra has never had a dull moment," says CIO Deepak Kaul, who joined the organization 12 years ago when it was an $800 million company—now it is approaching $5 billion. "Zebra Technologies has always been growing, moving, changing and evolving, with a sense of purpose and accomplishment," he says. "Employees get a lot of ownership in the work they do here and the company has a lot of respect for its people."

Last year, the company rolled

out and deployed multiple cloud-based systems, developed customer-facing digital apps, created technical strategies to support corporate initiatives, and worked on IT modernization projects. The IT team is also learning to use agile methodology and lean concepts to bring high-quality capabilities to customers faster while improving its own work-life balance.

At the center of Zebra's strategy for IT success is talent, Kaul explains. "Our mission is to create a high-performing team and future leaders," he says. "Our IT employees are empowered to live their best lives with challenging, stimulating work but also a flexible work environment."

Zebra's culture retains key workers

The company's strategic growth is what brought Diana Resendez to Zebra, as part of the acquisi-
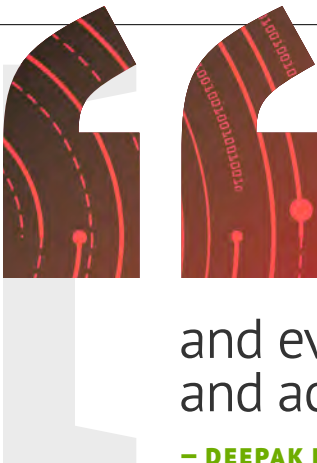
tion of Motorola Solutions' Enterprise business unit in 2014. She serves as an IT enterprise architect and she is responsible for managing IT architecture, standards, design and implementation approaches for the company's application systems

and infrastructure.

But it was the company's culture that has led her to stay—she felt she quickly fit into its culture of learning and development and its strong support for diversity and inclusion, including the Zebra Equality Alliance LGBTQ+ Inclusion Network (ZEAL), a Vet-

erans Inclusion Network (VETZ) and a Women's Inclusion Network (WIN).

"I appreciate the ability to always participate in challenging projects and the opportunities that are available for me to pursue ongoing personal develop-

ment," she says. In 2019, Resendez was sponsored to obtain her Microsoft Data Science Program Certification; the company has also sponsored her participation in business analytics summits for the past three years.

"Currently, I am taking advantage of cloud application train-

ing, advanced analytics, low-code application development and I am working on a third-party machine learning platform we are implementing for the sales team," she says.

In addition to offsite development opportunities, Zebra also

has its own collaborative, online learning platform that launched at the end of 2018. It features content on emerging technologies, business process analysis skills, IT methodologies and leadership concepts. A support team drives continued content creation, from technical learning

> ## The IT department at Zebra has never had a dull moment.
> Zebra Technologies has always been growing, moving, changing and evolving, with a sense of purpose and accomplishment.
>
> **— DEEPAK KAUL,** CIO, ZEBRA

circles to innovation workshops. There are also opportunities to strengthen soft skills through the company's Leadership Development Program and People Manager Learning Circles, providing a safe space for IT leaders to express their challenges.

can then redeem their GEMs for a variety of products and experiences. "IT employees get so much appreciation, whether it is for helping others in the company with simple problems such as resetting a password or for long-term projects that have been suc-

and flexible work environment that the company offered along with the great work-life balance," she says.

Communication is also front and center at Zebra. Each quarter, Zebra hosts town hall meetings during which members of

ing the company how approachable management and our CIO are by keeping open door policies and encouraging us to reach out to them to voice our opinions and concerns."

Zebra's recipe for IT success was visible during the move to enable all 8,000 worldwide employees to work from home during the COVID-19 crisis. "We did it very quickly, in just a few days," says Kaul. "We had to deal with a surge in requests because many people were not used to it, but we had the technology infrastructure, from collaboration tools to remote desktops." But even as Zebra's IT team continues to tackle challenging projects, they are still taking the time to remind employees to take care of themselves and their families. "This is the time to be empathetic, even while we drive results," says Kaul. "At Zebra, we strive to offer a balanced life." ◆

> "One of the things I noticed right away was the **positive and flexible work environment** that the company offered along with the **great work-life balance**.
>
> — **SAILAJA YELLATURU,** SENIOR MANAGER, IT, ZEBRA

3 OVERLOOK POINT

ZEBRA

Giving back to employees

There are also many ways that Zebra thanks its employees, including its Going the Extra Mile (GEM) employee appreciation platform. Each manager receives a quarterly budget to reward GEM points for positive employee behaviors. Employees

cessful and take a lot of effort to get to the finish line," says Kaul.

For Sailaja Yellaturu, senior manager, IT, the generous 401(k) plan, health plans and flexible work hours are appreciated perks—as is the office fitness facility. "One of the things I noticed right away was the positive

the executive team come in to talk to all employees about how the company is doing and new initiatives. "I appreciate that our company keeps us informed and gathers us together on a regular basis to improve communication and collaboration," says Yellaturu. "I've also noticed since join-

[100] 2020 BEST PLACES TO WORK *in* IT

FROM IDG

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MIDSIZE COMPANY RANKINGS

Among organizations with 1,001 to 4,999 U.S. employees

#	Company
1	**FINRA (Financial Industry Regulatory Authority)** *Washington, D.C.*
2	**Kronos*** *Lowell, Mass.*
3	**Zebra Technologies** *Lincolnshire, Ill.*
4	**Plante Moran** *Southfield, Mich.*
5	**Axon** *Scottsdale, Ariz.*
6	**Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina** *Durham, N.C.*
7	**Avanade** *Seattle*
8	**National Information Solutions Cooperative (NISC)** *Lake St. Louis, Mo.*
9	**DriveTime** *Tempe, Ariz.*
10	**Suddath** *Jacksonville, Fla.*
11	**Enova International** *Chicago*

* Kronos is merging with Ultimate Software (No. 1 Large).

Nationwide®
is on your side

THANK YOU,

NATIONWIDE TECHNOLOGY

Here's to an exceptional group of associates who help make Nationwide a great place to work.

Thanks for everything you do to make sure we protect people, businesses and futures with extraordinary care.

[100] 2020 BEST PLACES TO WORK *in* IT

INSIDER PRO | COMPUTERWORLD

ERIN MYERS

IT team members at Credit Acceptance, from the left: Mercedes Dallas, Petey LeFever, Arielle Hinojosa, Ashley Taylor, Ping Los, Scott McIver, Melanie Plair, Sam Downey and Jason Ledgerwood.

No. 1
Overall *for*
Training

12	**BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York** Buffalo, N.Y.
13	**VyStar Credit Union** Jacksonville, Fla.
14	**Robert W. Baird and Co.** Milwaukee
15	**Tokyo Electron U.S. Holdings** Austin, Texas
16	**Janney Montgomery Scott** Philadelphia
17	**CME Group** Chicago
18	**Credit Acceptance** Southfield, Mich.
19	**Align Technology** San Jose, Calif.
20	**Power Home Remodeling** Chester, Pa.
21	**Informatica** Redwood City, Calif.
22	**Workiva** Ames, Iowa
23	**Veeam** Columbus, Ohio
24	**Genesis HealthCare System** Zanesville, Ohio
25	**American Fidelity Assurance Company** Oklahoma City

2020

100
BEST PLACES
TO WORK *in* IT
FROM IDG
INSIDER PRO COMPUTERWORLD

PROFILE
NO. 4 | SMALL

Among organizations with 1,000 or fewer U.S. employees

NCAA

Teamwork is the name of the IT game at NCAA »
Collaboration and caring—plus access to coveted championship tickets—are big draws at this small shop. **BY SHARON GOLDMAN**

AS A SPORTS FANATIC, Josh Smith had no intention of turning down the opportunity to interview for a job as systems engineer with the infrastructure team at the NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association), which is most famous for its March Madness

NO. 4 | SMALL

NCAA

Indianapolis

ncaa.org

No. of employees: **535**

No. of IT employees: **~40**

2%

IT employee
turnover rate, 2019

$3,125

Training budget
per IT employee

28 / 33

(days)

PTO after one year / 10 years

basketball tournament—even though he wasn't looking for a new gig.

But during the interview process, the organization's team-oriented dynamic was clear, which made Smith realize it was the right move. "I could tell it was about 'I've got your back and you've got my back,'" he says. "I couldn't wait to get started." Now, he enjoys both being close to sports as well as the culture of collaboration and innovation at the NCAA's IT organization. Going to events like the Men's Final Four is a perk, he explains, but the real reward is seeing what goes into the event and behind the scenes. "We help student athletes create memories that last the rest of their lives," he says.

The NCAA's IT staff is a small shop, with about 40 full-time employees. Its main charge is supporting a staff of about 500 employees who run the business

Based in Indianapolis, the NCAA supports student athletes, organizes 89 national championships annually, provides educational services to coaches and athletics administrators, manages financial systems for the membership and conducts research into the experiences of those involved in college sports.

of the membership organization of 1,200 schools and universities, which, in turn, represent a half-million student athletes and 89 championships.

CIO turns to ITIL

When CIO Judd Williams first joined the organization in 2012, the IT department still needed to mature in terms of its technol-ogy and governance, so his priority was to transition to the cloud and implement ITIL best practices. Now that those goals have been achieved, Williams says his teams work to push the NCAA's digital transformation further.

That includes "cool new projects" such as the NCAA Transfer Portal. It was created in 2018 as a compliance tool to add trans-

parency to the student athlete transfer process but has gotten significant recognition from media and sports fans. News of student athlete transfers fills hours on sports talk shows and runs on tickers at the bottom of screens. "It's great to get that recognition," says Williams.

Innovation is also not simply valued but has become a requirement within the IT organization. "I want 10 percent of IT employee time spent on innovation, whether it's [technology] someone is interested in exploring or something I'm looking for volunteers to look into," says Williams. In addition, IT staffers are regularly sent to national conferences to learn about new technologies. "I want them exposed to the latest and greatest," he says. "It costs more, but I think that investment is really paying off."

Smith, for example, has developed a strong focus in the

Microsoft Office 365 environment over the past five years, and he has felt lucky to attend Microsoft Ignite conferences. The results have been highly valuable: For instance, he was an important part of rolling out Microsoft Teams in the middle

of February. It turned out to be excellent timing, as the entire Indianapolis-based headquarters moved to remote work during the COVID-19 crisis.

No place to sit and hide

As teamwork is valued so highly at the NCAA, it's no surprise that

Williams makes sure new hires have the right soft skills, interpersonal abilities and all-around good attitudes. According to Kristi Kennedy, director of the IT Project Management Office, the NCAA attracts a certain type of person with a "servant-type"

attitude. "You don't go into a nonprofit organization if you don't fit that student culture," she says. "There's a lot of collaboration and teamwork, so if you're looking to be a part of an IT team where you can just sit at your desk and hide, the NCAA is not a place for you."

Yet there is a great deal of autonomy as well, thanks to the trust Williams and Kennedy have in their IT employees. "We have structure, but the leadership is there to support and enable success, not to dictate," says Kennedy.

The NCAA's flat organizational chart may mean there isn't a lot of opportunity to climb a vertical career ladder, but Kennedy points out that autonomy means team members can make their roles as broad and robust as they want and need to be successful. "We

> **We have an amazing team of sharp, intelligent people** who are passionate about what we do and who are empowered to make the right decisions.
>
> — **KRISTI KENNEDY,** DIRECTOR, IT PROJECT MANAGEMENT, NCAA

offer professional development and learning to expand their knowledge, but we also encourage and enable them with creativity and innovation to find new ways to do things better," she says. "We want them to broaden and expand their role."

The small size of the organization, as well as its unique mission, also add to the importance of teamwork. "We don't do projects because stock prices increase or make shareholders happy," Kennedy explains. "We have to be thoughtful about resources to meet stakeholder needs, because as a nonprofit we can't just go and expand a team by five people." That means trust and respect are even more important, with leadership that provides guidance from a strategic perspective: "We have an amazing team of sharp, intelli-

gent people who are passionate about what we do and who are empowered to make the right decisions," she says.

A March without madness

It was difficult for the entire NCAA organization when this year's March Madness tournament was cancelled. "It's sort of like our Super Bowl," says Kennedy. "We have many other championships, but losing the big party was hard to emotionally wrap our minds around." Yet, with another academic year coming up quickly in the fall, the IT organization has come together to keep its systems running and help student athletes across the country continue towards academic success.

With low turnover within IT, Williams points out that he knows each of his team members well, with each enjoying a great deal of built-in, inherent

NCAA staff gathering for the daily stand-up with the project management office in pre-pandemic times.

trust. Since the entire organization has moved to remote work, staffers miss each other but have been busier than ever and kept upbeat attitudes. "We still have a lot of fun, with plenty of virtual coffees and lunches that keep this culture strong," he says. "In a way, I'd say we are almost bet-

ter off as a team, because we've reached out with such genuine caring for each other." ◆

SHARON GOLDMAN *is a B2B technology writer who has been covering the space for over a decade, from IT and cybersecurity to martech, insurtech, fintech and retail.*

[100]

2020

BEST PLACES
TO WORK *in* IT
FROM IDG
INSIDER PRO COMPUTERWORLD

SMALL
COMPANY RANKINGS

Among organizations with 1,000 or fewer U.S. employees

1	Cloud for Good
	Asheville, N.C.
2	Central Minnesota Credit Union (CMCU)
	Melrose, Minn.

3	Axxess
	Dallas
4	NCAA
	Indianapolis
5	OneStream Software
	Rochester, Mich.
6	Health Catalyst
	Salt Lake City
7	KnowBe4
	Clearwater, Fla.
8	ExtraHop
	Seattle
9	MetroStar Systems
	Reston, Va.
10	Connectria
	St. Louis
11	Secure-24
	Southfield, Mich.
12	Accelirate
	Sunrise, Fla.
13	Avaap USA
	Edison, N.J.

PARAMOUNT SOFTWARE SOLUTIONS

Staffers at Paramount Software Solutions' Alpharetta, Ga. headquarters, from the left: Gauri Sharma, Shane Neighbors, Parul Sharma and Rohit Davey (at table), with Mallika Ghosh and Kadir Abdi in the offices in back.

No.	Company		No.	Company
14	**Dataprise** *Rockville, Md.*		**19**	**Planned Systems International** *Arlington, Va.*
15	**Paramount Software Solutions** *Alpharetta, Ga.*		**20**	**CarGurus** *Cambridge, Mass.*
16	**OCLC** *Dublin, Ohio*		**21**	**Nitel** *Chicago*
17	**NRECA (National Rural Electric Cooperative Association)** *Arlington, Va.*		**22**	**Sprinklr** *New York*
			23	**IT Convergence** *Irving, Texas*
18	**Konstruktor Service** *Redwood City, Ca.*			

No. 1 Overall *for* **Career Development** *and* **Retention**

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COMPUTERWORLD BEST PLACES TO WORK IN IT

2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020

NSIDER PRO and *Computerworld* conducted the 27th annual survey from IDG to identify the 100 best places to work for IT professionals. In November 2019 *Insider Pro* and *Computerworld* started accepting nominations from U.S.-based organizations and from non-U.S.- based employers that met the following criteria: Nominated organizations were required to have a minimum of 300 total employees at a U.S. headquarters and a minimum of 30 IT employees in the U.S., with at least 50 percent of IT employees based in the U.S.

Participants were asked to provide contact information for the person at their organization who is familiar with or has access to employment statistics and financial data, as well as benefits policies and programs for the IT department and the

How We Chose *the* Best Places to Work

The methodology behind our selection of the 100 organizations on the 2020 Best Places to Work in IT list. **BY DAN MUSE**

entire organization.

In January 2020 the contacts at the nominated organizations received a 52-question company survey asking about average salary and bonus increases, percentage of IT staffers promoted, IT staff turnover rates, training and development, and the percentage of women and minorities in IT staff and management positions. In addition, information was collected on the employer's retention programs, methods of rewarding outstanding performances, and benefits ranging from elder care and child care to flextime and reimbursement for college tuition and the costs of earning technology certifications.

Upon completion of the company survey, participants were instructed to select a random sample of employees from their U.S.-based full- and part-time IT staffs for participation in an

employee survey. All participating companies were emailed instructions regarding sample selection as well as a unique survey link to share with employees. Topics covered in the employee survey included satisfaction with compensation and benefits, training and development programs, and work/life balance. In addition, employees were asked to rate employee morale in the IT department, the importance of various benefits, and their level of agreement with a variety of statements on topics ranging from career growth to management's fair and equal treatment of employees.

A total of 21,301 IT employees responded to the employee survey from the final 100 organizations selected as best places to work for IT professionals.

The nomination survey, company survey and employee survey were all conducted online.

The responses to the company and employee surveys were collected and tabulated by a third-party research vendor. The company portion of the research was closed in February 2020, and the employee survey portion was closed in March 2020.

In scoring the responses from the company and employee surveys, company results were weighted based on the importance ratings provided by respondents to the employee survey. Approximately half of the total scoring was based on employee responses, with the remaining half based on the survey of the company's benefits and other programs.

Top 10 Lists

Our top 10 lists show the best of the best—the organizations that excel in these five areas of human resources: benefits, career development, diversity, retention and training. To determine those lists, we considered the following factors:

- **Benefits:** The range of benefits offered, including sabbaticals, elder care and childcare, and health and vision plans; employee satisfaction with the range of benefits.
- **Career development:** Mentoring programs; tuition reimbursement for college classes and technical certifications; promotions within IT; employee satisfaction with tuition reimbursement, opportunities for career growth and management's involvement in career development.
- **Diversity:** Percentage of women and minorities in staff and managerial positions; employee perceptions that management treats everyone fairly regardless of race or gender.
- **Retention:** Frequency of employee satisfaction surveys; turnover rate; promotions; morale; employee satisfaction with work/life balance, sabbaticals, job-sharing and telecommuting programs.
- **Training:** Number of training days; training budget; employee satisfaction with training and access to training; satisfaction with reimbursement for certification training; satisfaction with continuing education programs.

The survey process was managed by Jen Garofalo, research director in IDG's Insights and Performance Marketing group, working with independent firm Research Results. ◆