



# BEST WORKPLACES 2020

The Gazette

*Employees in the Pikes Peak region choose the best local companies.*

DECEMBER 2020



Rocky Mountain  
Health Care  
Services

Thank *YOU*,  
our Healthcare Heroes,  
for being the *difference* that makes  
us the Best Workplace.



BEST  
WORKPLACES  
2020

The Gazette

"The *difference* between  
ordinary and *extraordinary*  
is that little extra"



## THE GAZETTE CONGRATULATES THE **2020 BEST WORKPLACES HONOREES**

Great leaders know the most important resources within a company are its people. We're so grateful to live in a vibrant community that understands this truth and clearly values and supports its employees.

Thousands of innovative companies in the region prioritize retaining engaged and productive teams because every industry requires a thriving community of people to realize its goals. This focus on the individual (or employee) yields an exemplary workplace, with opportunities for positive growth among its workforce, and by extension, for businesses. When people succeed, both personally and professionally, companies succeed with them.

It is an honor to introduce you to many of these inspiring companies through our annual Best Workplace awards.

The Gazette is committed to highlighting people and businesses that strengthen our communities. Organizations like these set the bar for other workplaces to create a fulfilling work-life balance, offer opportunity for achievement, and further the worthy mission to protect and enhance our region with a strengthening economy.

We hope you enjoy this publication and thank you for joining us in celebrating the Best Workplaces.



*Christopher P. Reen*

**CHRIS REEN, PRESIDENT & PUBLISHER  
THE GAZETTE**



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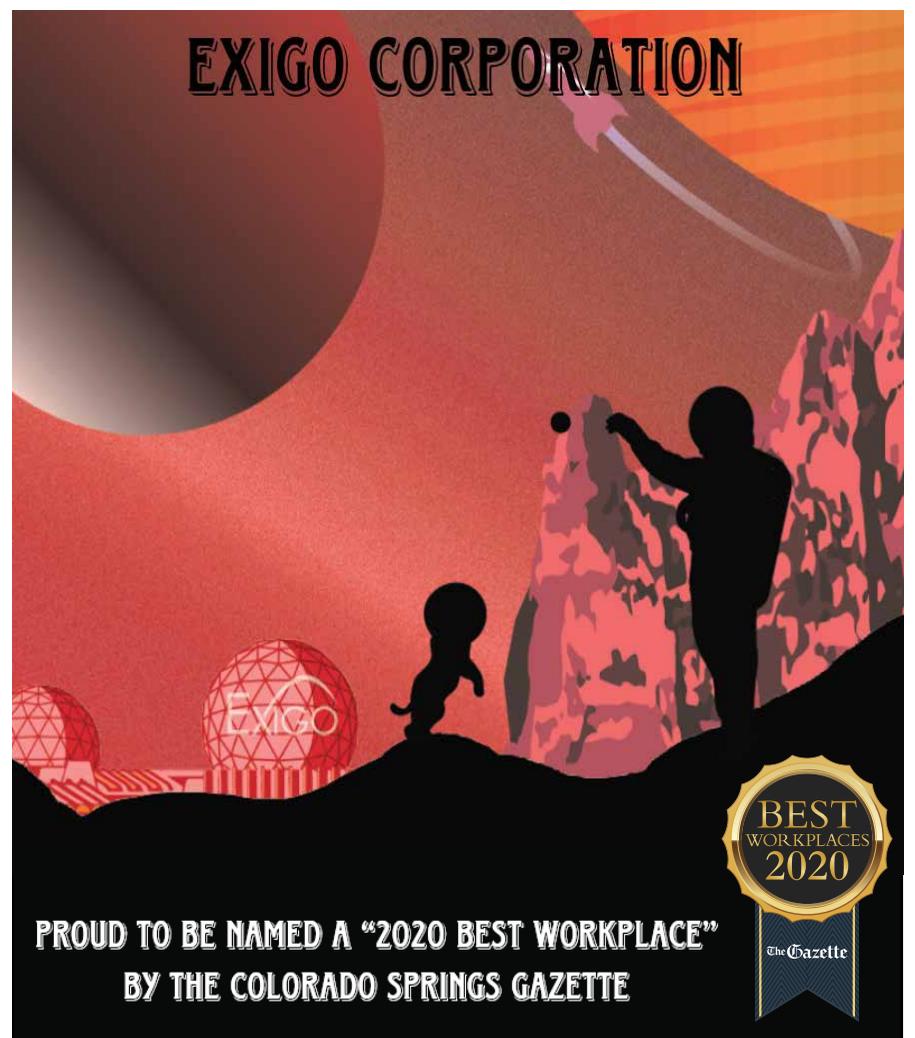
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**PUBLISHED BY THE GAZETTE**

30 EAST PIKES PEAK AVENUE, SUITE 100  
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# How the survey was conducted

BY WAYNE HEILMAN  
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The Gazette partnered with the Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce & EDC and DataJoe LLC, a Boulder-based data collection and analysis firm, to determine the top workplaces in the Colorado Springs area. Providing a program to help businesses better serve customers and employees — and recognize excellence — is a logical step for the local business community.

The Gazette sought nominees beginning June 26 and by Aug. 31 received nominations from 218 private, public, nonprofit and government organizations in the Pikes Peak region. Those organizations rolled out online surveys to employees by Sept. 9. Surveys had to be completed by Sept. 23.

Employees were asked to answer 24 questions about organizational health, engagement and leadership plus other areas like work-life balance, training, pay, benefits, corporate social responsibility and the COVID-19 pandemic. They rate their employers with scores ranging from 1-7: a score of 1 represented “strongly disagree,” 4 was neutral and 7 was “strongly agree.” Employees could also write comments on topics such as motivation, referrals of potential employees, retention, leadership, values and ethics, direction and cooperation.

Employers were required to have a response rate of at least 40% to be honored as a best workplace. Any employer with mostly negative responses was excluded. As a result of the increased participation, 110 employers were honored as best workplaces.

Employers were grouped into four categories by size — extra large with 300 or more employees; large with 76-299 employees; midsize with 30-75 employees; and small with 10-29 employees. Smaller employers tend to score higher than larger employers. Employers with fewer than 10 workers weren’t eligible for the program.

The 110 employers selected as Best Workplaces in Colorado Springs were honored during a virtual event Dec. 3. The Best Workplaces program is designed to be an annual free survey and workplace health analysis to identify companies that are creating strong, healthy workplace cultures.

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# What’s important to workers

WORKPLACE STATEMENTS IMPORTANCE IN HOW PIKE PEAK REGION EMPLOYEES RATE THEIR WORKPLACES



# { THE TOP 110 COMPANIES }

## EXTRA LARGE COMPANIES | 300+ EMPLOYEES

COMPANY	FOUNDED	SECTOR	EMPLOYEES
Ent Credit Union	1957	Credit Union	300
Griffis Blessing	1985	Real Estate, Property Management	300
Hero Practice Services	2006	Healthcare	400
Microchip Technologies	1987	Manufacturing	625
Nursing & Therapy Services of Colorado	2001	Home Healthcare	395
Philips	1891	Healthcare Technology	472
Pikes Peak Library District	1963	Public Library	475
Rocky Mountain Health Care Services	1976	Healthcare, Non-profit Organization	350
T-Mobile	1994	Telecommunications	760
Tek Experts	2009	IT Support & Services	600
The Independence Center	1987	Home Healthcare	300
The Resource Exchange	1964	Non-profit Organization	400

## LARGE COMPANIES | 76 – 299 EMPLOYEES

COMPANY	FOUNDED	SECTOR	EMPLOYEES
Advantage Manufacturing	1993	Metal Fabrication & Engineering	85
Air Academy Federal Credit Union	1955	Credit Union	136
Apogee Engineering, LLC	2004	Engineering	93
Bible Electric, Inc.	1997	Electrical Contractor	110
Braxton Technologies	1946	Defense Contractor	155
Bryan Construction	1978	Construction Management, General Contractor	90
Classic Homes	1989	Home Builder	160
Delta Solutions & Strategies, LLC	2000	Engineering	152
Envision Radiology	2000	Healthcare Imaging	210
Family Care Center	2016	Healthcare	100
HDR	1917	Engineering	80
Jaxon Engineering & Maintenance	2009	Engineering	78
Northwestern Mutual	1859	Financial Planning Insurance	100
Outreach, Inc.	1996	Media & Marketing	120
Shandy Clinic	2007	Healthcare	200
Springs Rescue Mission	1996	Non-profit Organization	100
The Cutting Edge, Realtors	2016	Real Estate	140
The Faricy Boys	1942	Automotive Dealership	76
Vanguard Skin Specialists	2009	Healthcare	80

## MIDSIZE COMPANIES | 30 – 75 EMPLOYEES

COMPANY	FOUNDED	SECTOR	EMPLOYEES
a360inc Technology Solutions	2007	Technology Solutions	64
Action Ready Mix, LLC	2017	Concrete Manufacturing	35
Altia, Inc.	1991	Engineering	46

# { THE TOP 110 COMPANIES }

## MIDSIZE COMPANIES (CONTINUED) | 30 – 75 EMPLOYEES

COMPANY	FOUNDED	SECTOR	EMPLOYEES
BKD CPAs & Advisors	1923	Accounting Services	54
Bluestaq	2018	Software Technology	46
Campbell Homes	1965	Home Builder	30
Colorado Institute of Massage Therapy	2003	Education	30
Credit Service Company, Inc.	1947	Accounts Receivable	68
CSI Construction Company	1978	Construction Management/General Contractor	64
Davidson Technologies, Inc.	1996	Consulting	60
Empire Title of Colorado Springs, LLC	2003	Title Company	59
Erickson, Brown & Kloster PC	1984	Accounting Services	31
Flow Right Plumbing, Heating & Irrigation	2008	HVAC	50
Heating & Plumbing Engineers, Inc.	1955	Mechanical Contractor	65
Integrity Bank & Trust	2003	Banking	70
ITS, LLC	2006	Engineering Services	41
Kids Crossing	1992	Foster Care Services	60
Martin Burlingame Insurance Agency	2004	Insurance	55
Matrix Design Group, Inc.	1999	Engineering Consulting	47
McCloskey Motors, Inc.	1989	Automotive Dealership	65
Modern Technology Solutions, Inc. (MTSI)	1993	Engineering Services/Technology Solutions	73
Nunn Construction	1983	General Contractor	50
Oakwood Homes	1991	New Home Construction	65
Peak Structural, Inc.	2002	Structural Contractor	75
Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments	1967		36
Pikes Peak Habitat for Humanity	1986	Non-profit Organization	35
Pima Medical Institute	1972	Education	50
Sellstate Alliance Realty & Property Management	2017	Real Estate	52
Soul Community Planet (SCP Hotel)	2018	Hotel	30
StableStrides	1981	Non-profit Organization	30
TCA, Inc.	1982	Consulting	33
The Wirenut	2004	Electrical Contracting	53
Torch Technologies, Inc.	2002	Defense Contractor	44
Wilson & Company	1932	Engineering	34
Xledger Inc.	2000	Business Management Systems	30
Young Scholars Academy	1995	Education	35

## SMALL COMPANIES | 10 – 29 EMPLOYEES

COMPANY	FOUNDED	SECTOR	EMPLOYEES
ADD STAFF, Inc.	1984	Staffing Service	10
AEgis Technologies	1989	Engineering	19
Aerotek	1983	Staffing Service	13

# { THE TOP 110 COMPANIES }

## SMALL COMPANIES (CONTINUED) | 10 – 29 EMPLOYEES

COMPANY	FOUNDED	SECTOR	EMPLOYEES
Alpine Contracting	2008	General Contractor	12
Axis Business Technologies	1981	Technology Service	18
Basis Partners	2009	Engineering	29
Bender-Carey Group	2018	Management & Consulting	11
Better Business Bureau of Southern Colorado	1980	Business Reviews	16
Braintree Marketing	2001	Marketing Services	12
Briargate Boulevard Animal Hospital	1986	Veterinarian	20
Broadmoor Dental	2008	Dental Healthcare	14
Cause and Solution, Inc.	2017	Nonprofit Consultant	12
Century Communities	2002	Home Builder	10
Colorado Springs Therapy Center	2006	Therapeutic Services	20
Cordera Family Dentistry	2007	Dental Healthcare	15
Dart Wars	2019	Recreation	11
Dynamic Physical Therapy, LLC	2006	Healthcare	20
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University	1925	Education	10
Exigo Corporation	2008	Engineering Consultant	23
EXIT Realty Pikes Peak Colorado Springs	2014	Real Estate	27
Finch & Gable Real Estate Co.	2020	Real Estate	10
Frontier IT	2016	IT Services/Computer Support	26
Hammond Law Group, PC	2005	Law Firm	11
Heritage Title Company	1983	Title Company	19
HOMEfix	2007	Residential Remodeling	24
Lamar Advertising	1967	Outdoor Advertising	14
Luisa Graff Jewelers	1999	Jewelry Store	26
Maid to Shine	2008	House Cleaning	25
Mayfield Counseling Centers	2015	Counseling Services	25
Nekter Juice Bar	2010	Restaurant	18
Olive Real Estate Group, Inc.	1976	Real Estate	16
Pikes Peak United Way	1922	Non-profit Organization	25
PlayTime Pet Sitters and Dog Walkers	1997	Pet Services	14
Rangewood Orthodontics	2001	Dental Healthcare	18
RE/MAX Properties, Inc.	1986	Real Estate	11
Revolution Jewelers	2013	Jewelry Store	10
Skin Cancer and Dermatology Center of Colorado Springs, PC	1978	Healthcare	18
Springs Dentistry	1981	Dental Healthcare	26
Strive Physical Therapy	2014	Healthcare	26
Summit Wealth Group	2002	Financial Planning	10
The Shafer Group PC	2001	CPA/Business Advisors	29
The Treasure Davis Team	2005	Real Estate	17
Thrivent Financial	2007	Financial Services	25

No. 1  
**EXTRA  
 LARGE**  
 company

**HERO  
 PRACTICE  
 SERVICES**



GETTY IMAGES



Management is open, approachable and very passionate. They are very in touch with all areas of our organization.

— HERO PRACTICE SERVICES EMPLOYEE, BEST WORKPLACES SURVEY



SCAN TO SEE VIDEO

## Hero Practice Services helps underserved children

BY CAROL MCGRAW,  
 Special to The Gazette

Mark Musso's favorite cartoon heroes are Captain Smiles, Specs and Bracket. The characters are central to the mission of Hero Practice Services where he is chief operating officer.

The health care firm is a Colorado Springs-based practice management company whose 1,100 teammates provide dental, vision and orthodontic care for children in underserved areas in six states.

"It fills my cup every day. It's the most rewarding work," Musso said.

Many of the thousands of children seen each year might never have received care because their families could not afford it.

Hero Practice Services provides support to 67 affiliated clinics where there are a wide range of patients and most insurance is accepted.

As a practice management company, Hero handles operations, billing, staffing, and training.

There are 300 employees in Colorado Springs, and four affiliate Academy Kids clinics. The company has its own vision lab in Colorado Springs, which builds eyeglasses. Unlike at many Medicaid entities, patients choose from

hundreds of frames, not a few standard types.

The company was founded in 2006 by Dr. Ronald Montano. The name Hero was ingenious, using the first two letters of both his wife Heather's and his name. It fits perfectly with coming to the aid of needy kids, and making it fun with colorful clinics.

Employees find this compassionate work particularly fulfilling. It is even more relevant for some of them because they, too, faced similar circumstances as children.

The COVID-19 pandemic has made it difficult to deal with regulations in six states, Musso said. When they opened again, the needed safety equipment increased costs dramatically. But employees have found strength in the family-like atmosphere and the company's motto: Hero Strong.

Sophia Reyes, a leadership training specialist, said she was drawn by the excellent benefits, pay, personal time off, flexible hours, educational opportunities and access to life-coach programs.

But when Reyes started five years ago, she had no idea she would become so uplifted by the mission of helping underserved children.

When Reyes was growing up, she did not see a dentist until she was 14. Her mother raised her and her three siblings alone after her father died, and dental and vision care were luxuries they could not afford. When she did get in a dentist's chair, two painful root canals were necessary because of long-time neglect.

She started out as a team leader in the local Academy Kids clinics. She especially liked educating the children on good dental habits, sometimes dressing up as the tooth fairy.

Now, she has four children, and flexible work shifts have been an important benefit. She also is thrilled that Hero has invested in her professional growth.

"They tell us that whatever we want to become they will help," Reyes said. She has no college degree, but moved up the career ladder from team leader to manager. She then was chosen one of six Hero employees nationally for a three-month software training program, and now teaches affiliates around the country.

She said, "It's very hard to find a company with such humbleness of mission and with such down-to-earth teammates from the top executive on down."



# EMPIRE TITLE: Providing You with the Best Closing Experience from the Best Workforce, Indeed!



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No. 1  
**LARGE**  
company

**THE  
CUTTING  
EDGE  
REALTORS**



COURTESY PHOTO



The culture is like no other. Everyone is accepting and willing to look out for each other.

— THE CUTTING EDGE REALTORS EMPLOYEE, BEST WORKPLACES SURVEY

## Home buyers, sellers first with The Cutting Edge Realtors

BY WILLIAM J. DAGENDESH  
Special to The Gazette

Buying and selling a house can be a joyful or discouraging experience depending on the homeowners' particular circumstances.

For this reason, The Cutting Edge Realtors focuses chiefly on serving homebuyers and sellers in and around Colorado Springs, and celebrates each other's victories and lifts up those who need it. Its motto, "We Are Stronger Together," not only has secured TCER's continued success, but resulted in the company's selection as one of the Gazette Best Workplaces for 2020.

In operation three years, TCER is an independent real estate brokerage founded on technology, knowledge and individuality, with agents offering a dynamic culture of idea-sharing, positivity, team support, personal growth and continued education.

Above all, TCER values its employees, their suggestions and hard work. According to Broker/Owner Amy Kunce-Martinez, TCER believes in service quality and experience clients receive over the quantity of transactions the company accumulates.

"Representing our clients means we're advisors, mediators, counselors, marketing specialists, sales reps and often times all of the above in one day. We emphasize collaboration, sharing ideas, communicating trends, training and accountability meetings and a team spirit of helping others," Kunce-Martinez said.

TCER boasts 140-plus agents who likely joined the company because of its dynamic culture, Kunce-Martinez said. "They're passionate about making our work family a top priority. When given the opportunity to pronounce what they love about working at TCER, they clearly rise to the occasion," Kunce-Martinez said.

Recently, the company jumped to No. 3 in the city in overall production, with a second location that opened this year and a third to open soon. TCER has eight partners and a three-office staff, each important to the operation as they serve uniquely different clients while representing the company brand.

"Those chosen to represent us meet the standards we have set to work with honesty, integrity, fairness, and kindness," Kunce-Martinez said.

"In addition, we don't stuff them into our 'box.' We value their individuality. This creates a community of tolerance, new perspectives and ideas that facilitate growth and adaptation. Without their voices and experiences, we wouldn't be growing individually both personally and professionally."

TCER just initiated a Commission Share Program to encourage agents to donate a portion of their pay to a fund dedicated to giving back to our local community. Most agents support an organization or two throughout the year — with time, awareness and monetary donations.

Most important, TCER feels a strong responsibility to foster and uphold what it loves about the city and neighboring communities. TCER hopes the community will stand with them in making a difference in activities such as blood drives, food/toy drives and dedicated shifts at the Marian House.

"When a transaction is complete we are forever remembered for our efforts in seeing them through this monumental moment in their journey. Helping people through the process is incredibly rewarding," Kunce-Martinez said.



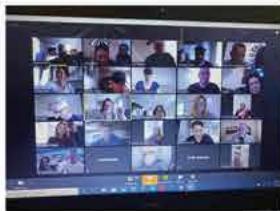
SCAN TO SEE VIDEO

“

Coming together  
is a **beginning**

Keeping together  
is a **progress**

Working together  
is a **SUCCESS**



We want to thank all of our Agents for committing their time and talents to making the 'successes' between the walls of our office feel more like family than work. It is our AGENTS who individually bring knowledge and joy to our community, and in doing so, as a whole, make our brand.



**We Are Stronger Together**

No. 1  
**MIDSIZE**  
 company  
**SELLSTATE**  
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Our managers keep raising the bar to make Sellstate an enviable model for all.

— SELLSTATE ALLIANCE REALTY & PROPERTY MANAGEMENT, BEST WORKPLACES SURVEY



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## Real estate, property management company gives back

BY ROBIN INTEMANN  
 Special to The Gazette

No single explanation applies to what makes Sellstate Alliance Realty & Property Management a best place to work according to Rubika Chettri, director of marketing.

“We are a business that gives back to the community,” she said. “We care very much about the people who work here. Working here is like being part of a family. Even though the Realtors compete with one another there isn’t that sense of competition. Instead of competing everyone helps each other out.”

Sellstate Alliance is a full-service real estate and property management company founded in 2009, but it has been under new ownership for 2.5 years.

Although Chettri is new to the company, she said she was immediately impressed with the family-like camaraderie. “Every time I meet a new agent everyone is super helpful to each other,

whether it has to do with social media or something else.”

COS Network is Sellstate Alliance’s charity arm. “It’s a play on words,” Chettri said. “Of course COS is for Colorado Springs, but it also sounds like ‘cause.’ We give to good causes in our community.” Since the new ownership has been in place, the company has given more than \$1 million to the community.

Before COVID-19, networking events were held to raise money for groups such as Hometown Heroes, Springs Rescue Mission, Wings and Warriors, The Fire Foundation, Iron Life, veterans and others. Many of the agents have a connection to serving the community. Some are former teachers, others are retired fire and police officers and military members.

“We’re a good team,” Chettri said of the 62-employee company comprised of brokers, administrative, marketing and accounting personnel.

Weekly meetings and classes are hosted by owners Carrie Lukins and Preston Smith. “These are good opportunities for people to interact with each other. We have an office team and a corporate team. Each team helps the other,” Chettri said.

Of course a person’s qualifications are important, but almost as important is the ability to work as part of a team, Chettri said. “We hire on overall personality, not just qualifications. In my case part of why I was hired was based on how well I would work with everyone on the team.”

“I’d say we’re a little family and the work we do for the community is what makes us an important and credible business. We are really involved in the community every day, not just every now and then. It’s something built into our business,” Chettri said.

Sellstate Alliance plans to open an office in Pueblo in December and one in Falcon in 2021.



At ITS, we believe that passion & buy-in are the keys to organizational success. Committed, intelligent, and hardworking people guided by positive, inspiring leadership will always produce differentiating results. We prioritize the recruitment and retention of best in class talent who align with and help advance our corporate culture, which is at the cornerstone of our foundation. With a constant focus on integrity, diligence, innovation, and continual achievement, we produce superior results for both our customers & employees.

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Strong values and ethics is exactly how they operate. It couldn't get any better.

— TREASURE DAVIS REAL ESTATE TEAM  
EMPLOYEE, BEST WORKPLACES SURVEY



SCAN TO SEE VIDEO

## Treasure Davis Real Estate Team embodies a different attitude

**BY ROBIN INTEMANN**  
Special to The Gazette

Sales is a competitive field, but the Treasure Davis Real Estate Team has a different attitude.

"As the owner/broker we really focus on the individual, the team and being a mastermind of collaboration," explained Treasure Davis. "What sets us apart, even though we are natural competitors since we're looking at the same house or same clients, is that we are colleagues. This is easier said than done, but we come from a place where we do a Mastermind every day."

The Mastermind concept is based on mentoring and people coming together to address and solve problems or issues.

Due to COVID-19, some changes have been made, but the emphasis on team work remains the same. "We do a lot on Zoom. We've had virtual cooking parties. We're meeting people where they're

at these days since we can't meet in person. As a Mastermind organization we're able to strengthen our staff ... everyone works together," she said.

Also important to Davis and her team is giving back to the community. "We donate a portion of every sale back to our service members. This year alone the team has donated \$175,000 directly from everybody's commissions. This is something everyone on the team does as a whole. Everybody chooses to donate. This definitely speaks to who we are as a company."

She added, "Hometown Heroes are the recipients. We're just making sure we can potentially impact them and all they do. Being local and native to Colorado Springs, I'm committed to seeing healthy growth here. This is one reason why it's important to me to give back to the community in practical ways."

Davis also has a commitment to serving the military community and teach-

es homebuying classes at Fort Carson.

Davis has been in the top 1% of Realtors in Colorado Springs since 2005. Prior to starting her real estate company in 2013, she worked for a larger, national brokerage firm. Now, because hers is smaller, she appreciates having a greater ability to "do things that positively impact our clients. We're really connected to our clients here."

The Davis Team's Core Value is based on C.H.A.R.I.T.Y., Davis said, with each letter representing a value: "Clarity; Honesty; Adaptability; Reliability; Innovative; Team Work; Yes-Minded."

Davis said her first sales partner and first assistant remain on the team, which has grown to 16, including 11 agents. "At minimum the average tenure of staff is four years," she said. "I'm proud of that."

The Treasure Davis Team also was recognized as a Best Workplace in 2018 and 2019.



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**ENT  
CREDIT  
UNION**



COURTESY ENT CREDIT UNION

## Ent Credit Union offers a cornucopia of benefits

BY CAROL MCGRAW  
Special to The Gazette

Blake Kennedy's golden retriever Dallas, affectionately known as Miss Beans, is eligible for employee perks at Ent Credit Union.

A discount on pet insurance is part of the generous benefit package for those working for Southern Colorado's largest financial institution.

Only about 15% of companies nationally, such as Microsoft, provide a pet insurance option as a benefit, according to the Society for Human Resource Management.

The Ent human resources team that chooses benefits believes the pet discount makes sense because pets are so often considered family members.

Ent is at the forefront of anticipating such needs for their 1,165 employees in 41 branches across the state, said Sara Holland, senior human resources manager of total rewards.

That they have chosen to call benefits "rewards" tells a lot about the credit union's culture. "Happy employees mean happy credit union members," Holland said.

Kennedy, a business development specialist, just learned of the new pet insurance choice. "There are so many

benefits to choose from it slipped by me," he said. "I might take advantage of it."

Kennedy is impressed by the cornucopia of benefits to choose from.

For example, the 401(k) retirement savings plan has a Safe Harbor provision. Ent offers 3% of 401(k) compensation even if employees make no contributions. They also match dollar for dollar on contributions up to 6%.

Other benefits include medical, dental, vision, long-term care and life insurance; discounts on mortgages and consumer loans; tuition reimbursement; personal time off for those who participate in community programs; and 100% employer-funded disability.

Kennedy has participated in the credit union's wellness program, which can put an extra \$20 per pay period or \$480 a year in the pocket of those who try healthy recipes, watch videos, do yoga or any activity that promotes mental and physical well-being.

Contrary to popular belief the name Ent is not an acronym. "We hear everything, like it stands for ear, nose throat," joked Holland. Actually Ent was named for Ent Air Force Base, which opened in Colorado Springs in

1951. That base was named for Maj. Gen. Uzal Girard Ent.

The credit union opened in 1957 and today is owned by its 400,000 members. Kennedy's work is to connect with the community and partner with organizations and businesses to introduce credit union service and provide financial education.

"I love that Ent provides opportunity to participate philanthropically," Kennedy said. Through the Ent Engagement Group, he has volunteered at Care & Share Food Bank of Southern Colorado and the Humane Society of the Pikes Peak Region.

Ent's response to the COVID-19 pandemic response has been "monumental," Kennedy said. The credit union, an essential business, has remained open, though the lobbies were closed for a time. Besides a host of safety protocols, there was a rearranging of responsibilities, including working at home. There were no layoffs and frontline employees have been paid extra. During the lockdown, Kennedy helped with the interactive teller machines.

Kennedy said the unwritten benefit of being an Ent employee is "the supportive culture."

“

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— ENT EMPLOYEE, BEST WORKPLACES SURVEY



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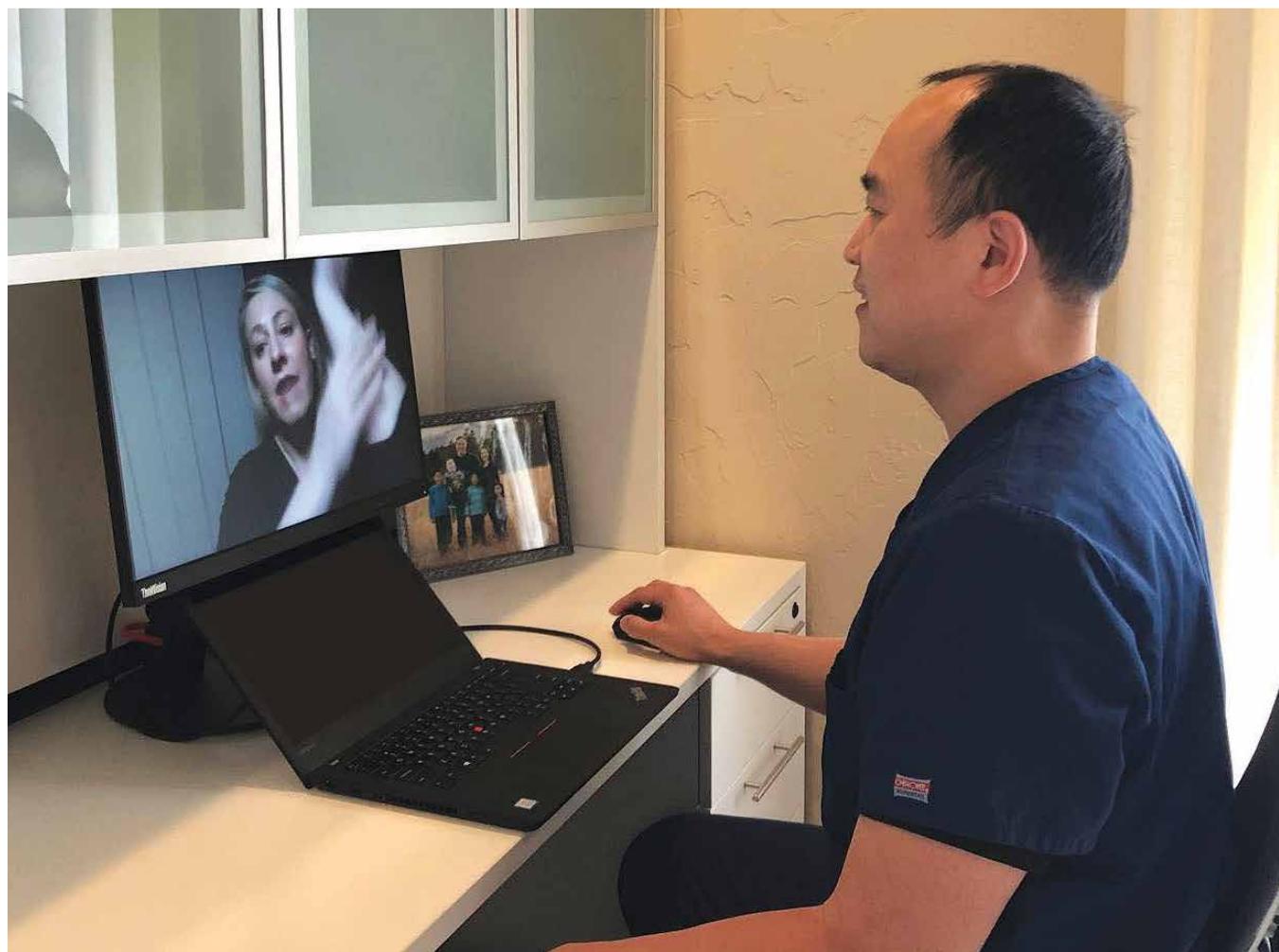
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**VANGUARD**  
**SKIN**  
**SPECIALISTS**



COURTESY PHOTO

# Vanguard composed of top skin specialists

BY WILLIAM J. DAGENDESH  
 Special to The Gazette

Because the health care environment changes constantly, Vanguard Skin Specialists, a dermatology and plastic surgery practice, works diligently to stay informed and respond proactively to clients.

VSS specializes in comprehensive diagnosis and treatment of skin cancer. Its multi-specialty team includes dermatology, plastic and cosmetic surgery, and Mohs surgery physicians serving Cañon City, Colorado Springs, Pueblo and Woodland Park — all of which contributed to the company's Gazette Best Workplaces 2020 selection.

"We offer medical dermatology, general plastic surgery, cosmetic surgery, and aesthetic medicine. We also have a retail skincare shop and skincare line that donates 100% of profits to charity," said Chief Executive Officer Leisle [CQ] Chung.

Although health is priority one, VSS also seeks to impact communities worldwide. "From sponsoring local charities to supporting a medical clinic in Haiti to providing clean water to Rwandan villages, we're passionate

about making lives better," Chung said.

"Our patients know choosing Vanguard means getting the best possible dermatology and plastic surgery care. Choosing Vanguard also means creating a ripple effect of goodness here and around the world."

According to Chung, VSS has a mission to make a positive impact on patients, community and the world. It's a mission everyone at VSS knows and recites by heart as the mission also means VSS isn't just an organization, but a Tribe that lives out its beliefs and takes care of each other.

"The mission drives everything we do whether opening offices in underserved areas, supporting humanitarian missions, donating aesthetic retail profits to charity or giving patients our cell phone numbers," Chung said.

"This mission attracts doctors and medical professionals who want to make a difference in the world, and when you see medicine as a calling, patients notice. We are dermatologists and plastic surgeons who believe in changing the world for the better, one patient at a time."

Mohs surgeon Dr. Vinh Chung,

Leisle's husband, launched VSS as a solo dermatology practice in 2009. Since then, VSS has grown to six office locations with an 80-plus-member team in Southern Colorado, boasting a group of highly-trained surgeons, physicians and skin cancer experts.

VSS sees more than 1,000 patients per week across its six medical offices. Receiving dermatology care is difficult for patients from rural areas and those without private insurance, and driving to remote offices to care for patients is Vinh's biggest reward, he said.

"This is why I, and many of our medical providers, travel to multiple offices an hour from our homes. We do this not only to serve an unmet need, but it also feeds our souls. Joy and gratitude through intimate human connections, knowing our work matters to another human and feeling like our work serves a higher purpose, that is our greatest reward," Vinh said. "If we could do anything, it is to continue learning how to love more... When we lose ourselves in serving others, we find profound joy."

To learn more email [info@vanguardskin.com](mailto:info@vanguardskin.com) or visit [facebook.com/vanguardskin](https://facebook.com/vanguardskin).



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— PIMA MEDICAL INSTITUTE EMPLOYEE,  
BEST WORKPLACES SURVEY



SCAN TO SEE VIDEO

## Students, staff drive PMI's success

BY WILLIAM J. DAGENDESH  
Special to The Gazette

After earning a bachelor's degree in industrial microbiology, Medical Laboratory Technician graduate Sheila Gonzalez learned that serving as a microbiologist required certification.

Gonzalez entered an MLT program at another educational institution which, in June 2017, transferred the program to Pima Medical Institute. During her externship, Gonzalez got hired as a quality specialist for Infinity Laboratories' microbiology department, a move that paid dividends for Gonzalez and her colleagues.

"It was the best thing that could have happened to me and my peers because PMI took us in and helped us finish what we started. PMI prepared me for my profession," Gonzalez said.

PMI is a medical career college, dedicated to providing in-demand, hands-on education so students can thrive in their professions following graduation. PMI is unique from similar institutions in that it focuses on students and their success, a practice that earned the or-

ganization a place as one of the Gazette's Best Workplaces for 2020.

It's an honor PMI takes seriously as employees also figure heavily in the institute's continued success. According to Campus Director Tara Dailey, the nearly 45 Colorado Springs campus staff are a vital ingredient to the operation.

"We were nominated by one of our employees, and then the entire team responded to several questions that went with the nomination. We are proud to say we've been named a winner of Best Workplaces since it began," Dailey said.

While COVID-19 has affected many area businesses, PMI has been fortunate to experience little decline in student enrollment. "Because of the pandemic, students are currently experiencing a hybrid approach to their education, with lectures and theory happening online, and the hands-on experience here in the lab, in small groups," Dailey said.

PMI has been serving the larger Colorado Springs market since 2002. The campus features advanced dental assisting and veterinary technician labs.

PMI provides health care trained individuals, with a sharp focus on soft skills, to various medical facilities throughout Colorado Springs and the state.

Also, the company has many host sites for its clinical rotations, and businesses have been employing graduates for nearly two decades, Dailey said. From its faculty to its staff, PMI believes it has the best, team-centered, student-focused group that strives to provide a quality education and to assist students in achieving their success.

As a result, watching students change their lives every day is PMI's greatest reward, Dailey said. "They come in looking to fulfill a purpose or a life-long dream, and graduate with a passion to serve our healthcare community," Dailey said.

"We are an employee-owned company, and each of us holds our mission to heart. At PMI, we believe in being a true partner in our community. We are proud that many of our students are military members and spouses stationed in the area. You'll truly feel like part of the PMI family at our campus."







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— CAUSE AND SOLUTION, INC. EMPLOYEE,  
BEST WORKPLACES SURVEY



SCAN TO SEE VIDEO

## Cause and Solution, Inc. helps non-profits focus on fundraising

**BY ROBIN INTEMANN,**  
Special to The Gazette

Creating a best workplace environment is nothing new for Cause and Solution Inc.; it was recognized as such in 2019 and the foundation for its success is straightforward.

“We treat our employees like adults,” says Tammy Batchelor, chief operating officer, “and we know their families come first.”

Batchelor, with partners Jamie Lundin and Jim Bocian, started the company three years ago. However, their expertise and that of their 12 employees represent decades in the field of providing technical and financial support to nonprofit organizations. A year ago, the company boasted of 35 clients. The response to the company has, according to Batchelor, been “overwhelmingly positive.” The company now works with 100 foundations across the U.S. and Canada. She cites her employees’

commitment as a factor contributing to the response.

“Our employees are dedicated and often work more hours than they need to,” Batchelor says. “Sometimes we have to pull them out the door and tell them to go home. We know they have a life beyond the office. We are like family. I know all my employees’ kids, grandkids, wives and husbands.”

She adds, “If someone needs to take time off to take care of a family member, that’s no problem.”

Since it is involved with non-profit organizations, Batchelor says the company believes it’s important to give back to the community. “We give our employees four hours of paid time to any cause they want to support. Also, we go to the Marian House soup kitchen as a team,” she says. “We encourage our employees to support what is closest to their hearts.”

Batchelor says she has known most

of her employees for many years; several of them had worked together elsewhere before Cause and Solution, Inc. was established. “I got lucky. We were able to pick up the best and brightest.”

Familiarity isn’t the only key to what makes Cause and Solution a Best Workplace, she notes. “We’re very honest and open with our employees. This is true when things are going well and if they aren’t. I think just being honest with everyone is huge. Our employees are amazing people and I’m very lucky to work with them. Another good thing is no one ever leaves (the company).”

Cause and Solution Inc., focuses on what Batchelor calls “back office support for nonprofits.” That is, it manages such aspects as database reporting, gift processing, graphic design services and more so non-profits can focus on fundraising. The company’s name reflects its interests assisting those whose services benefit others.

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— NURSING & THERAPY SERVICES OF COLORADO, BEST WORKPLACES SURVEY



SCAN TO SEE VIDEO

## Nursing & Therapy Services of Colorado has a special kind of caring

BY CAROL MCGRAW,  
 Special to The Gazette

It can be particularly daunting when parents go in search of home care and Medicaid case management for their disabled children.

Necie and Evan Mize had looked at several services for their then 2-year-old son Major, but nothing quite clicked.

But then they interviewed staff at Nursing & Therapy Services of Colorado (NTSOC).

What stood out was the individualized care, Necie Mize said. “We never got the feeling that Major was one more kid to fill their caseload.”

Nor was the agency deterred by his complex medical needs. Major, now 5, was born with Down syndrome and has cardiac, respiratory, digestive, and other health issues.

“They care for not only the needs of the child, but also the parents, and employees,” she said. “It’s like an extended family.”

The employee part is important, because Necie Mize began working for the agency as a paid caregiver to her son. In Colorado, parents are allowed to be paid for their work through a home care agency. She attended the NTSOC’s nurse assistant school to become certified.

The non-profit agency was founded in

2001 by a parent with a medically fragile child. Today, it serves 400 families in El Paso, Pueblo and Teller counties. It provides case management, in-home and outpatient therapies, and client respite, said Kindra Shankling, chief human resources officer. Staff includes nurses, CNAs and licensed physical, occupational and speech therapists.

Employees have expressed substantial satisfaction with the agency. NTSOC’s pay scale is in the top 18% of its type and benefits are good. Employee turnover is 10.4%, compared to the industry average of 60%, Shankling said. That satisfaction shows in client approval. A company survey found that the overall approval rating was 9.4 out of 10, and 100% of clients would recommend NTSOC to others.

Mize, who has a master’s degree in social work, said the CNA training she went through at NTSOC was just as challenging and concise. “They make sure you are prepared,” she said.

The school serves not only students who are parents, but also those who go on to work in the wider community at hospitals and nursing homes.

Those who become full-time employees for at least a year are reimbursed for the \$1,000 tuition.

As full-time employee, Mize also receives vacation, sick leave and other

benefits.

As an NTSOC employee she attends quarterly staff meetings via Zoom. When she needs to, she can get advice from staff nurses just like any employee.

“It’s like one big family,” Mize said, noting there are fun activities for the children and employees, including zoo trips, Halloween parties and holiday cookie decorating. The parties have been curtailed because of COVID-19, but teletherapy is an option.

Being at home with Major and her other son, Alexander, 2, is a luxury, Mize said.

Her husband Evan is an Army major. They named their son Major when he was a captain. Evan Mize has peace of mind knowing she is there for the children while he is away, she said.

Their son has had frequent hospital stays and the agency is not paid for his stay there. Mize can use her benefit time to make up for the loss of pay. The hospital stays are paid by Medicaid.

When Major is back home, the agency has never made an issue of the burdensome paperwork to re-enroll him. Instead, they focus on the boy’s health and provide emotional support to the family.

“That kind of caring is rare these days,” Mize said.

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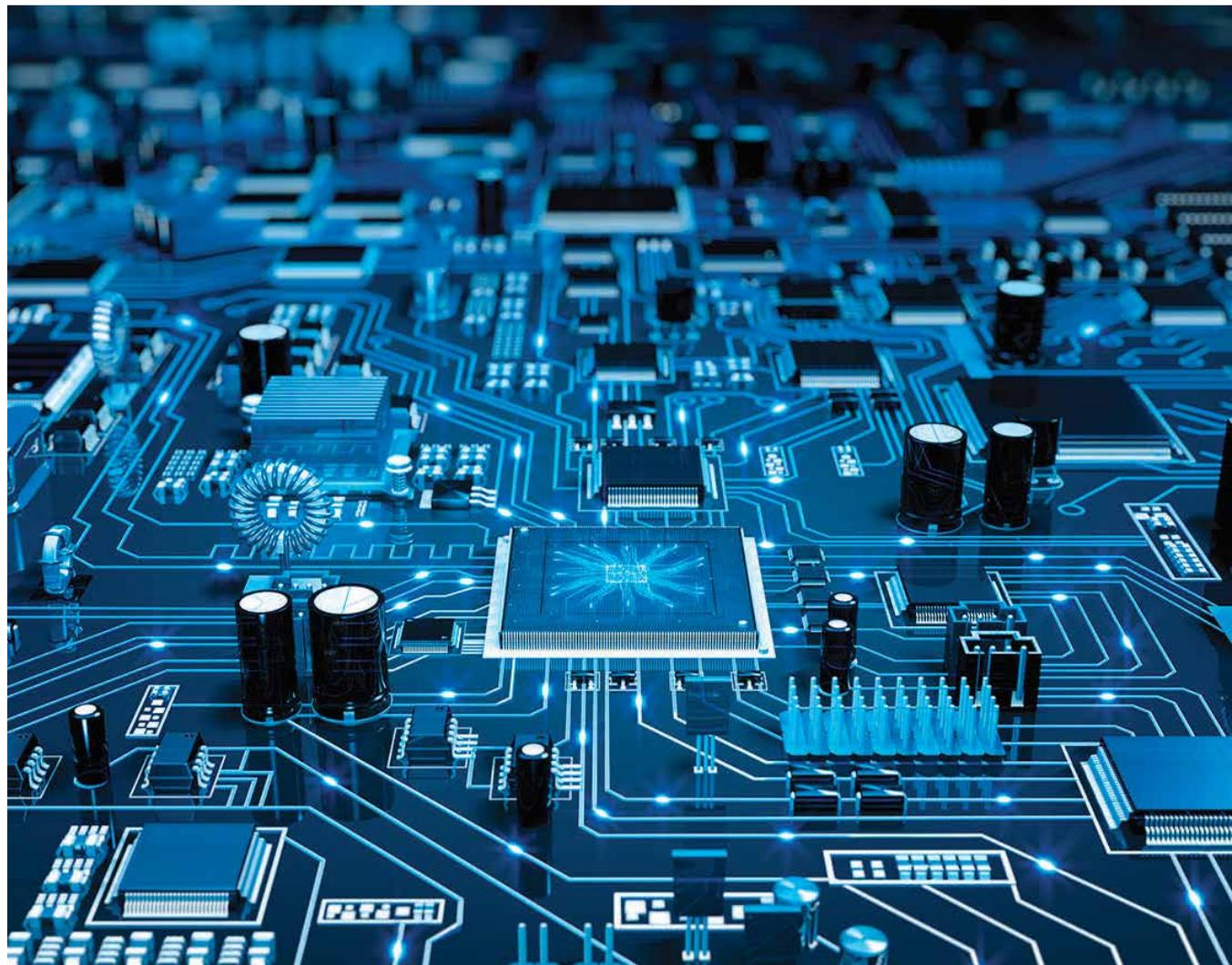
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SCAN TO SEE VIDEO

## Delta Solutions & Strategies combines professionalism with compassion

BY CAROL MCGRAW  
 Special to The Gazette

The sky's the limit for Delta Solutions & Strategies, which focuses on space, satellites, missiles and other out-of-this world technology.

But when it comes to employee relations, the Colorado Springs-based company is down to earth — almost family-like — say those who work for the consulting company.

The work culture inspires not only professional leadership and teamwork but caring individual support, too, employees said.

The business specializes in cyber technology, systems engineering, modeling and simulation, tech education and training. It operates in numerous military installations.

Customers include NORAD/North-Com, United States Space Force, U.S. Army Aviation & Missile Life Cycle Command, Naval Supply Systems Command, Air Force Global Strike Command, and others.

Delta was founded in 2000. Owners today are Kelly Coumatos, senior partner, and Mark Stafford, president and CEO.

Delta hires great people and takes care of them, said Stafford, a U.S. Air Force Reserve colonel. “We treat them very professionally and we give them assignments and let them do it as they see fit.”

It shows in their results.

Revenue doubled to \$30 million this year, and there's a \$120 million contract backlog that has resulted in tripling of the workforce to 200 employees since 2018.

Many of the workers are veterans and retired military. Some, like Stafford, are service-disabled veterans. There's a unique camaraderie because the workforce is 50% military.

Flex-time is a hallmark with 30 days paid leave for the many guard and reserve employees who have continuing military training and active duty. If they are gone more than 30 days, they receive sizeable bonuses from Delta.

The company received the Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award, the highest recognition given to employers for their support of the military Guard and Reserve.

There's also coveted benefits such as

fully paid health insurance, competitive pay, immediate 25% 401(k) retirement match, bonuses, and family flex time. The owners believe that quality pay attracts quality professionals.

But it is more than that.

Mark Shuster, operations and maintenance program manager, has been with the company for three years. A U.S. Marine Corps Reserve colonel, he once worked for aerospace companies. But Delta is special, he says.

There is excellent leadership and executives are more like partners than bosses. “There's a respect for each other and sharing of ideas,” Shuster said. “It's a comfortable work environment with so many coming from military backgrounds.”

Before the pandemic there were celebratory get togethers at event sites. There is note of personal milestones such as birthdays and weddings. When personal tragedy strikes, there is compassionate support.

Shuster said, “Everyone is very professional but at same time it's a lot of fun. I feel like I'm working for family, not a corporation.”



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SCAN TO SEE VIDEO

## Core values, customer success top priorities for MTSI

BY WILLIAM J. DAGENDESH  
Special to The Gazette

Since 1993, Modern Technology Solutions, Inc., an aerospace engineering contracting company, has achieved stable growth and recognition for its core values and commitment to customer success.

MTSI supports the defense and intelligence communities, federal civilian agencies and commercial customers. Its staff draws on decades of experience, including nationally and internationally recognized experts, to provide leading-edge technical services and comprehensive solutions for challenging undertakings.

MTSI is a 100% employee-owned company with a unique culture in which employees — its No. 1 core value — come first. The company stays true to its vision and values, and attracts and retains the best talent. It remains an agile, accurate, responsive and easy-to-work-with prime contractor — all which earned MTSI a place as one of The Gazette's Best Workplaces in 2020.

The company is honored to be recognized by its employees, and the hard work and dedication of many, said Marketing and Communications Specialist Ariel Bendorf.

“Our support spans from highly technical system engineering and integration, ground and flight test and evaluation, modeling and simulation, mission assurance, cyber-security, life-cycle acquisition planning and policy development, to logistics and operational planning. We work with our customers to develop solutions for highly technical problems,” Bendorf said.

“We are the partner of first choice for customers, industry partners and suppliers. We’re a family of talented, passionate and growing professionals committed to owning and solving customer problems. Our industry leading career development and advancement program results in 15% of co-workers internally changing jobs or receiving promotions.”

Presently, MTSI has 1,244 employees and nine office locations nationwide, emphasizing “Employees come first.” “Our employee-centric, trust and collaboration-based culture has resulted in high engagement and retention rates that deliver exceptional service and mission success for our customers,” Bendorf said.

According to Bendorf, MTSI emphasizes giving back to local communities and the nation. Its pledge to social

responsibility is demonstrated in its financial commitment and employee's personal actions.

MTSI's Corporate Giving Committee receives an annual budget that reflects 1% of the company's profits, which helps support local and national charitable organizations. About 75% of the budget is divided among geographic locations and is used to support local organizations, Bendorf said.

“This ensures we are recognizing and giving back to each of the communities our employees live and work in. The remainder of the budget is allocated to support national organizations whose causes are similar to the core values of our organization,” Bendorf said.

“In 2020, our co-workers selflessly gave their time and resources throughout the year to positively impact many communities across the country. As a company, MTSI worked with more than 60 organizations this year.”

MTSI's Charitable Giving Committee prioritizes veterans, poverty, education and health and wellness. “If there is an organization that supports those efforts, we encourage those who are able to please contact them and consider a donation in the form of time, resources, or money,” Bendorf said.



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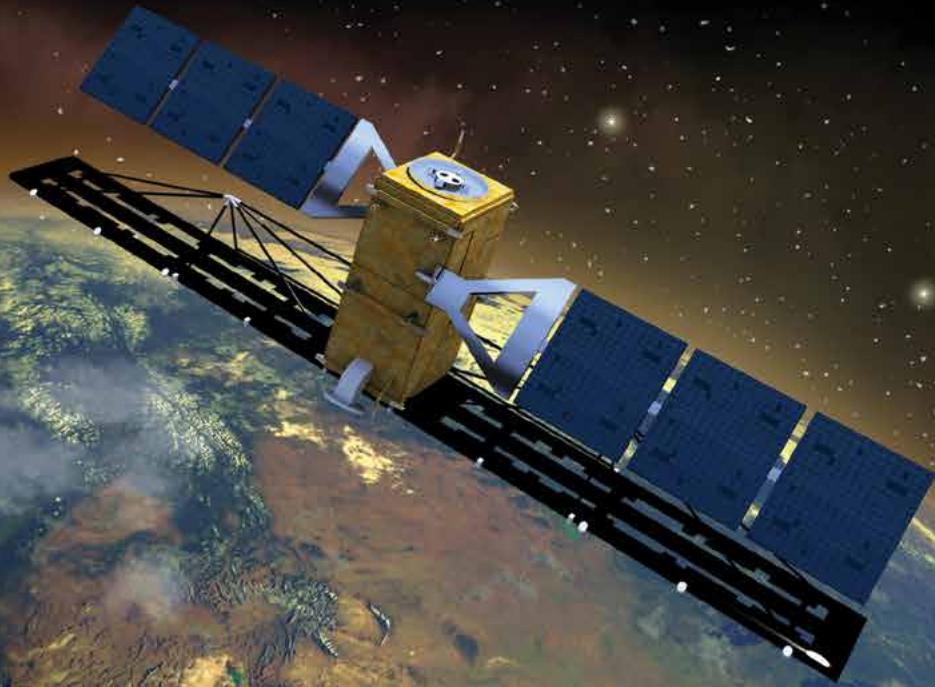
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BEST WORKPLACES SURVEY



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## Olive Real Estate Group: ‘We are a family’

**BY ROBIN INTEMANN**  
Special to The Gazette

At Olive Real Estate Group, Inc., few employees ever leave — thanks to a combination of factors including benefits, but more importantly, the close connections between co-workers.

“From an HR perspective we do not have much turnover,” said Tammy Garner, director of finance and business operations, including human resources. “People want to work here because of the culture we’ve created. Everybody plays an important role here, from the receptionist at the front desk to the president of the company. Everyone is important.”

“Of course there are rules and laws we have to follow when dealing with real estate, but we are not so rigid within the company that our employees feel they have no freedom,” Garner said. “If someone has an idea about something they’ve seen they think we can do better, we’re all ears. We aren’t just em-

ployees here; we are a family, and this is huge to a lot of people.”

The company has 18 brokers on the real estate (commercial and development) side who are contract employees. Garner works with 11 other employees including property managers, a graphic designer, administrative associates, accountants and a receptionist.

“There’s nobody here who has been here just a short time,” she said. “I think that says a lot about us.”

Garner has been with the company for five years. When she started, there were seven employees. She appreciates the flexibility that allows her, as a parent, to be available for her kids.

“Benefits are also an important piece. Pay is always nice, but the benefits we have are huge, including full medical coverage for all employees and a generous PTO (paid time off) package,” she said. “Probably the most important thing for me is respect. I get respect

from the executive team. They value my opinion and value what I bring to the table. Overall it’s just a great company. The brokers are very respectful of the employees. We are all very much like a family.”

Prior to COVID-19, the company hosted quarterly team-building activities. Most recently, employees spent a day bowling, playing laser tag, video games and enjoyed a catered lunch. In the past, after-hours activities were planned quarterly and once a limo was rented for the employees to see all of the properties on the Olive real estate roster. Another time, employees spent a day at Glen Eyrie where they toured the site, had lunch and participated in team-building activities.

The company has been in business since 1976, initially focusing on commercial real estate. Garner said it ventured into property management about 11 years ago.



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The WireNut conducts weekly onsite training and regularly sends team members out of state for specialized training. They are proud to invest and

take care of the team that takes care of their customers.

WireNut Home Services became the first-ever six-time winner of the Excellence in Customer Service Award from the Better Business Bureau of Southern Colorado. The award has been presented since 1995 and recognizes A+ customer service — WireNut has always prided itself on going above and beyond for their customers and will continue to build trust as they provide the highest-

quality service and solutions to their neighbors in the Pikes Peak region.

They believe this is a winning formula, proven by their high employee retention rate. They are a family-owned and operated business, and are proud to employ honest, hard-working Coloradans. Whether it's their expert electricians, plumbers or their skilled HVAC technicians, you can trust that when The WireNut arrives, they are there to take great care of you.

They strive to leave your home

better than they found it by taking care of you and your home's needs. Just as important, they have the best team around and we provide a dynamic, solid workplace where our team can grow, have careers, and make their very house a home. The team continues to win Best of the Springs through its integrity and hard work.

The WireNut is located at 6395 E. Platte Ave. in Colorado Springs. For more information, visit them online at [thewirenut.com](http://thewirenut.com).

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### A leader in developing its people, providing top talent to its customers

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As a recent 2020 winner of Colorado Companies to Watch, Jaxon is continuously working to improve the lives of its workforce and customer goals. As Colorado Biz magazine recently wrote:

Jaxon performs national defense infrastructure services for all military branches. The company's Colorado Springs location is ideal for serving the state's primary military bases, including Buckley AFB, Cheyenne Mountain AFS, and Peterson AFB. The density of the DoD contracting activity fuels one of the most active customer bases that our industry has to offer," Jaxon CEO Scott White says.

Jaxon has invested significant capital into the development of its people and research and development budgets so it can provide top talents

and equipment to its customers. The company is pursuing multiple patents to protect its team members' inventions, which are redefining the stand industry approach." Jaxon has developed an Electromagnetic Pulse (EMP) portfolio that sees a facility through the entire EMP protection development process, including design, construction, testing, maintenance and documentation."

Our hand-picked staff have all been carefully selected to fill strategic positions that complement our capabilities and services. We pride ourselves in selecting, training and investing in our full-time staff to best serve our customers.

Jaxon has produced more proposals in 2020 than ever before, with a resulting pipeline value that is larger than ever forecasted. We sit as the industry leader in a niche market, widely dominated by stagnant thinking. We are scratching the surface of an entirely new commercial marketplace, the demand of which is too large for the industry to supply. Jaxon is the largest EMP services provider in the world, with incredible position.



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**TEK EXPERTS IS A LEADING, GLOBAL PROVIDER OF BUSINESS AND IT SUPPORT SERVICES**, and a developer of technologies that enhance the customer experience by enabling our teams to work more effectively. Whether it's providing follow-the-sun software support services that deliver exceptional customer experiences, developing technologies that enable sales teams to increase and retain revenue or training and developing people to be the best they can be, our focus is always on putting the customer first.

The services we provide are delivered by a uniquely passionate workforce delivering unrivaled levels of business and IT support throughout the whole customer lifecycle. Our clients know their business is always in safe hands and their customers are always cared for.

Whether we're developing the latest technologies, building global teams to deliver exceptional support or providing



professional services, we always focus on putting the client first and delivering the best customer experience possible. We are a true partner to our clients and a seamless extension of their business.

We are known as a place where people grow and develop and have

built a reputation for investing in our talent for the long-term. In an industry where expertise is essential to the customer experience, retaining our top talent is crucial. That is why we believe in rewarding great performance, offering opportunities

for people to grow within our organization and fostering an environment where collaboration and support are part of our unique family culture.

Our team in Colorado Springs has grown by over 250 employees since March 2020. Amidst challenging and uncertain times, our team has thrived and has continued to provide world-class professional IT support services to our clients across the globe! We offer more than a job and a salary — we offer a comprehensive benefits package including health, dental and vision insurance as well as referral bonus opportunities.

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# Valuable services keep seniors independent

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**ROCKY MOUNTAIN HEALTH CARE SERVICES HAS A CRUCIAL MISSION, WORKING EVERY DAY** towards improving lives, optimizing wellness, and promoting independence. Since 1976, this nonprofit has focused on delivering exceptional care for their participants. They are best known for their Rocky Mountain PACE program.

"I want our community to know about the healthcare heroes that work here at Rocky Mountain PACE," said President and Chief Executive Officer Nathan C. Olson. "During a global pandemic, they are focused on providing essential services to our seniors and lifting up those around them. At PACE, we believe the difference between ordinary and extraordinary is that little extra. Our employees are truly that difference, and I am proud of the heart they have for the hard work we do here at PACE."

Rocky Mountain PACE, which stands for Program of All-Inclusive

Care for the Elderly, offers seniors coordinated services to meet all their healthcare needs—from primary and specialty care, to rehabilitation, recreation, and medical transportation. Their goal is to keep seniors independent while improving their health, wellness, and mental being. Essentially, we want them to Live Better.

RMHCS ranked at the top of the extra-large employer category for employers with 300 or more employees. It has long been a goal of Rocky Mountain Health Care Services to be known as the best place to work. "The impact that PACE has on our senior participants and the Pikes Peak community goes back to the whole mission," said Olson. "Our staff are central to everything we do and are some of the most special people I've ever known. I am honored to be one of the Best Workplaces for 2020."

Contact Rocky Mountain PACE for more information at (719) 314-2327 or visit the website at [rmhcare.org](http://rmhcare.org).



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MTSI is also a certified Great Place to Work. According to the survey results compiled by the Great Place to Work Institute, 100% of responding employees at MTSI say it is a great place to work compared to 59% of employees at a typical U.S.-based company. (Source: Great Place to Work 2019 U.S. National Employee Engagement Study.)

Co-founders Phil Soucy and Tom McMahan shared a long-term vision of MTSI as an enduring company solving problems of global importance built upon a foundation of core values that drives all aspects of operations and decision making.

The transition to 100% employee owned (ESOP) provided MTSI a stable, independent foundation used to reward its employees. Having completed the 100% ESOP process allowed us to not only maintain, but also improve upon a package of employee benefits which is significantly better than the industry average. Having a workforce of employees "who think and act like owners" is a key driver of our operational efficiency and overall business success.

MTSI delivers significant value in the rapid acquisition, engineering, testing and delivery of critical capabilities (often highly classified) to the country's warfighters and first responders. As a company, we stay focused on delivering high-end services, subject matter expert support, and integrated technology solutions with maximum mission impact. Read more at [www.mtsi-va.com](http://www.mtsi-va.com). For more information on available career opportunities and offered benefits with MTSI, please visit [www.mtsi-va.com/careers](http://www.mtsi-va.com/careers).



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