



Best Practices from CARE Award Winners

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



Community Engagement

CARE Award winners have a passion for giving back to their communities and providing opportunities for their employees to do the same.



- » In line with one of their strategic priorities, “community,” **Apple Federal Credit Union** provides employees with 16 hours of paid leave for volunteering.
- » **Consumer Technology Association** matches staff charitable contributions up to \$500.
- » **JK Moving’s** JK Community Farm provides food pantry partners with fresh, nutrient-dense produce and protein. The farm is operated primarily by volunteers who join for all planting and harvesting.
- » At the beginning of 2021, **Highlight Technologies, Inc.** launched “HighlightCares,” a company-led effort to give back to employees’ local communities and support charitable organizations.

Open Communication

CARE companies believe open communication significantly improves employee collaboration and learning.

- » **Dev Technology Group** established a corporate engagement committee led by employees across the company to be the voice of every employee and recommend changes and enhancements to current Dev practices and programs.
- » **Business Benefits Group** values employee feedback and regularly surveys staff to ensure that its initiatives are aligned with the team’s needs, wants, and values.
- » Beginning monthly staff meetings with intentional “Observation Time” allows everyone at **Eleccion, LLC** to continually learn and grow together by developing a common lexicon of ideas and inspiration.

Diversity & Inclusion

Diversity & Inclusion efforts are at the forefront of a CARE company’s operations and culture.

- » **National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA)** established several Workplace Inclusion Networks (WINs), or affinity groups, that support NRECA’s efforts to build an inclusive, diverse, and equitable workplace. The groups offer professional networking and mentoring within the WINs and provide education and awareness for all employees to create stronger connections and allyship across the organization.
- » Being a Service-Disabled, Veteran-Owned Small Business, **OBAN Corporation** believes diversity is a business and moral imperative. Oban is committed to hiring and serving people of all experiences, especially the nation’s veterans and their families, as evidenced by their work with military transition assistance programs.
- » **Evans Consulting** underwent a third-party DEI evaluation, after which the company established a DEI Lead role and DEI council to develop strategies to embed and progress DEI in all areas at Evans.



Flexible Work Environment

Flexible work schedules help employees balance work and life. This results in increased dedication to the company mission; collaboration around expectations, goals, and ethics; and a united workplace that fosters success and innovation.



- » After much consideration and employee input, **Custom Ink** decided to stick with remote work long-term, calling it “Connected Remote,” while placing a high priority on fostering strong relationships and community among all Inkers.
- » Because they believe family comes first, **FranConnect** supports employees by offering a flexible, primarily remote work environment to ensure that folks feel empowered to take care of themselves and their families.
- » **FlexProfessionals** prides itself on being a 100% results-based organization in which no team member has a defined number of hours or structured work schedule. As long as customers are receiving timely and quality service, team members are empowered to choose how, when, and where they work.

Employee Development

Investing in employee education and training encourages employees to be the best versions of themselves, increasing individual performance, company efficiency, and employee engagement.

- » **CALIBRE Systems, Inc.** believes it is essential to invest in the training and professional development of employee-owners and helps them fulfill professional goals through tuition reimbursement, certification bonuses, and a suite of training and certification programs.
- » To encourage employees to pursue continuing education and training, **Comstock** offers a professional development reimbursement fund.
- » As part of their comprehensive virtual onboarding program, **FMP Consulting’s** New Hire Podcast is designed to introduce new team members to the workforce, with each episode featuring an informal “question and answer” conversation with a recent new hire.
- » In 2021, **NetImpact Strategies Inc.** initiated their “Earn That Cert” program and hired a full-time, in-house expert training practitioner to conduct training boot camps across nearly two dozen high-demand professional certifications. Training and testing are free for all employees.

Employee Wellbeing & Culture

Positive workplace cultures attract talent, drive engagement, and impact employee productivity. Investing in a healthy work environment where employees feel they are heard is critical to success.

- » **Air Force Aid Society, Inc. (AFAS)** hosts an annual staff retreat focused on team building and employee engagement. AFAS also provides employees six free summer days off to be used from June 1- Aug. 31.
- » To break the silence and stigma about mental health in the workplace, **B&A** created “Let’s Connect,” a welcoming and supportive space for employees to learn about mental health topics.
- » With the belief that employees thrive when they can put their wellbeing first, **Fors Marsh** offers unlimited Paid Time Off and encourages employees to take mental health days and recharge with vacation time, regardless of tenure.
- » On any given day at **Monument Wealth Management** offices, you’ll find at least one dog with the team!
- » **ENSCO** understands the value of human connections between coworkers and senior leadership and regularly hosts events such as BBQ lunches and ice cream socials.
- » **USTA Mid-Atlantic Section, Inc.** strives to be more inclusive with decision-making that impacts all employees. USTA has an internal staff committee dedicated to planning and implementing ways to enhance workplace culture and incorporating core values throughout the organization to create a culture in which everyone wants to work.

