

MINNESOTA NICE:
HOW TIM MCKEE
RULES THE WORLD

DARA REVIEWS
AMERICA'S FIRST
SAKE BREWPUB

THE STORY BEHIND
THE TURMOIL IN
THE A.G.'S OFFICE

OUR 6TH ANNUAL
UNCOMMON LOON
AWARDS

Minnesota

Monthly

48
of the Cities'
Coolest
Companies

Great Places to Work



Our official
bail-yourself-out
package.

JANUARY 2009
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Great gigs with... fabulous flextime, generous tuition reimbursement, sweet fitness facilities, super vacation stipends, profitable profit-sharing (profits?), ridiculous retirement matching, on-call financial planners, **and more...**

Photographs (this spread) by DARRELL EAGER

GREAT PLACES TO WORK

BY ALI BRADY, SARA GLASSMAN, JOEL HOEKSTRA,
COURTNEY LEWIS, AND ANDREA WAGENKNECHT

Right now, lots of us are happy just to get a paycheck that doesn't bounce. But there are dozens of companies in Minnesota that offer employees something more, from generous retirement plans and cool office environs to subsidized child-care and no-cost health care. Here, 48 companies that treat their employees like customers.

JANUARY 2009 • PAGE 51



motivating force behind Bremer's tuition-reimbursement policy. Full-time workers are eligible for up to \$5,250 per calendar year for undergraduate degrees and \$7,500 for graduate degrees. Once someone is approved, they are reimbursed for courses and textbooks, without a lot of strings attached. Since Bremer is a bank, most of the programs are related to finance, accounting, human resources, and business communication. Approximately 30 people a year take advantage of the reimbursements, including Stacy Kennedy, a human-resources man-

ager who recently finished a master's degree. Over several years, Bremer covered her full tuition, which would have totaled more than \$24,000. "I feel lucky to have an employer that places such a high value on continued development and exposure in the field," Kennedy says.

CAPELLA UNIVERSITY

Minneapolis
1,300 Minnesota employees

Employees can take all of Capella's classes for free, though they're respon-



WHAT DO YOU LIKE BEST ABOUT YOUR WORK MATES?



JUDY JOHNSON
Bank services manager

"Everyone takes a great deal of pride in their work. There is a vast range of expertise, and we all benefit from working together."



MARK PULHSTROM
Lawyer

"We have a high level of collegiality at our firm. It's easier when you're working with people you get along with."



HEIDI BIRKHOZL
Restaurant manager

"Everyone is very dedicated to the success of not only the business, but each other's success."



JOE MINNICH
Financial advisor

"I like the people. They've made the culture really comfortable. Even the top execs are approachable. We all rely on each other."

Great for Cool Work Environment

SÁLO

Minneapolis
350 Minnesota employees

You can walk while you talk during meetings at this multi-faceted staffing company. For the 50 employees who work at the company headquarters, there are two conference rooms equipped with four treadmills each, and another eight treadmill workstations are available for anytime use. With a max speed of two miles per hour, workers aren't exactly breaking a sweat while they type. But the results can be astonishing: "All of the sudden, you've walked five miles and you're not even thinking about burning calories," says Craig Dexheimer, director of operations, who dropped 25 pounds in six months. There have been company-wide benefits, too: Perhaps not coincidentally, in the first three months after the treadmills' installation, revenues were up 10 percent.

LOLL DESIGNS & EPICUREAN CUTTING SERVICES

Duluth
37 Minnesota employees

Minnesota architect David Salmela put a modern spin on this building, formerly home to a casket company, for Loll-Epicurian. The dramatic glass walls offer sweeping views of the St. Louis River Valley, where employees can hike during lunch breaks.

CARMICHAEL LYNCH

Minneapolis
275 Minnesota employees

To promote creativity and team-