

THIS INFORMATION IS UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL: Monday, September 11, 2023 – 11am Eastern Time

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The Great Colleges to Work For® program is one of the largest and most respected workplace recognition programs in the country. Now in its sixteenth year, it recognizes the colleges that get top ratings from their employees regarding workplace practices and policies. Please feel free to cite the below information in announcing your institution's recognition in the program.

2023 Great Colleges to Work For® Program Methodology

The Great Colleges to Work For® program includes a two-part assessment process: the ModernThink Higher Education Insight Survey© administered to faculty, administrators, exempt professional and non-exempt staff, as well as adjuncts at two-year colleges, and the ModernThink Higher Education Institution Questionnaire® (IQ), which captures employment data and workplace policies and practices from each institution. Recognition analysis for the Great Colleges to Work For program is conducted by ModernThink, an organizational development firm with particular survey and "Best Place to Work" expertise. The principal factor in deciding whether an institution receives recognition is the feedback from employees collected from the ModernThink Higher Education Insight Survey®, assuming a sufficient response rate. Given the wide range of faculty/staff populations at participating institutions, there is no minimum response rate threshold that institutions are required to achieve to be eligible for recognition. However, in analyzing the data we do review confidence levels to ensure statistical significance. The institutional policies and practices information collected through the ModernThink IQ provides supplemental insight to the employee survey and is reviewed and analyzed both for completeness and content.

2023 Program Summary

- 194 institutions participated in 2023, including 121 four-year institutions and 73 two-year institutions.
- 72 institutions are recognized as a 2023 Great College to Work For, including 50 four-year institutions and 22 two-year institutions.
- 42 institutions are on the Honor Roll, recognized as stand-outs in their size categories.
- There are 10 recognition categories (see below). Special acknowledgement goes to those schools recognized in multiple categories. Accordingly, Honor Roll recognition goes to the top schools in each 4-year size category and the top schools in each 2-year size category based on the number of times they were honored in the individual recognition areas.
- Recognized institutions will first be released on September 11, 2023, at GreatCollegesList.com. Results will then be distributed on September 15, 2023, via a special insert of *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, sent digitally and in print to subscribers.

Recognition Categories

Job Satisfaction & Support

This recognition category is based on satisfaction with job fit, autonomy and resources. High degrees of job satisfaction are essential to an engaged workforce.

Compensation & Benefits

The perception that one is compensated fairly and that benefits are adequate plays an important role in employees feeling valued and respected. This recognition category is based on survey items capturing satisfaction with the benefits offered and compensation.

Professional Development

Support for faculty/staff professional development is critical both in terms of building organizational capacity and supporting individual development needs. This recognition category is based on survey items related to onboarding processes, professional development opportunities, and support for career development.

Supervisor/Department Chair Effectiveness

It is widely regarded that the experience of one's immediate supervisor is among the most important factors influencing whether an employee is truly engaged. This recognition category is based on the survey items providing insight into critical managerial competencies such as providing clear direction and constructive feedback and ensuring effective communication and equitable treatment.

Confidence in Senior Leadership

This recognition category is based on the expressed confidence faculty and staff report in the capabilities and credibility of senior leadership. In the Great Colleges to Work For program, "senior leadership" is defined as the most senior members of the institution (e.g., chancellor or president and those who report directly to him/her).

Mission & Pride

Understanding an institution's mission *and* how one's job impacts that mission are considered primary drivers to faculty/staff engagement. In addition to mission understanding, this category is based on survey items that provide insight into the level of pride in being associated with the institution and the willingness to recommend the institution as an employer.

Faculty & Staff Well-being

With roots in work/life balance and wellness models, this recognition category is based on the impact of one's employment experience on their well-being (e.g., the opportunity to do meaningful work, the support for work/life balance and the experience of a safe working environment).

Faculty Experience (Only Faculty and Adjunct Faculty Considered)

Faculty have a unique role in the life of a university and there are some elements of their specific employment experience – the support for advancement and promotion opportunities and the perceived balance of teaching, service and research, for example – that are uniquely viewed through the faculty lens. This recognition category is based on the faculty responses to the survey items addressing these topics.

Shared Governance (Only Faculty and Adjunct Faculty Considered)

The concept of shared governance is one of the most widely valued and deeply respected traditions within higher education. For many Faculty, it is a core part of their experience. Consequently, this recognition category is based on Faculty responses to the survey items on collaborative governance processes and decision-making. We also include the responses of Adjunct Faculty respondents from two-year institutions.

Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging

This recognition category is reserved for program participants who are demonstrating an institutionalized commitment to diversity, as reported through the experiences of faculty and staff. It is based on measures of individual experiences of inclusion and belonging, as well as measures of the impact of institutional diversity policies and procedures at the individual level. This recognition category is based on the responses of all employees at an institution and does not necessarily reflect the specific employment experience of any one demographic group of any protected class of employees.

Quotes from Karen Kukulka, Chief Operating Officer at ModernThink

“Participation in the Great Colleges program alone demonstrates a commitment from colleges to opening a dialogue with their faculty and staff. Pair that commitment with recognition in a key area of engagement, and you’ve got a group of institutions who are putting the best practices of employee engagement to work – they are walking the talk.”

“No matter the challenges facing higher education – even in the midst of the pandemic, even now with DEIB efforts under attack – we don’t see significant change in our aspirational benchmarks. Why? Because great places to work are generally great all the time. For those special institutions, the challenges that other colleges may find divisive are unifying.”

Quotes from Richard K. Boyer, Principal and Managing Partner at ModernThink

“Once again, leaders at the institutions recognized in this year’s Great Colleges to Work for program have demonstrated their collective commitment to the stewardship of their institutions’ cultures. Their commitment to the well-being of their faculty and staff is second to none.”

“Leaders at the institutions recognized in this year’s Great Colleges to Work for program have managed to provide clarity in the face of uncertainty and empathy in times of continued stress. This year’s Honor Roll designees outperformed the applicant pool by an average of 38 percentage points on the survey statement, ‘Senior leadership shows a genuine interest in the well-being of faculty, administration, and staff.’ That 38-percentage point difference was also mirrored on the statement, ‘Senior leadership provides a clear direction for this institution’s future.’”

“This year’s Great Colleges to Work for honorees have found ways to manage change better than most. Arguably, one of the keys to successful change management is effective communication, and that is evidenced in the survey item, ‘Senior leadership communicates openly about important matters,’ a statement in which the Honor Roll institutions outperform the field by 35 percentage points.”

“Among the differentiating qualities of this year’s Honor Roll institutions is their ability to create cultures of appreciation, even in the face of pervasive burnout. On the survey item, ‘Our recognition and awards programs are meaningful to me,’ they outperform the field by 38 percentage points. In a time where

many faculty and staff continue to feel unappreciated, these institutions have found creative ways to provide meaningful recognition.”

About ModernThink LLC

As a research and consulting leader in workplace issues, ModernThink has supported a wide variety of “Best Place to Work” initiatives. Through these programs, the firm has gained substantial survey and industry expertise, including specific insight into higher education. ModernThink knows what it takes to build a great place to work and shares that know-how with its clients. The ModernThink team of organizational development experts is dedicated to helping colleges follow through and capitalize on feedback from employees and benchmark data from peers to drive meaningful change at their institutions. Learn more about the Great Colleges to Work For® program, including all current and previous recognized institutions, at GreatCollegesProgram.com and GreatCollegesList.com, and about ModernThink at ModernThink.com.

Sample Press Release

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[Institution Name Here] named a “2023 Great College to Work For”
This honor puts [Institution Name] in elite company.

[Institution Name] is one of the best colleges in the nation to work for, according to the Great Colleges to Work For® program.

The results, released today [Recognized institutions will first be released on September 11, 2023, at GreatCollegesList.com. Results will then be distributed on September 15, 2023, via a special insert of *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, sent digitally and in print to subscribers.] in a special insert of *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, are based on a survey of 194 colleges and universities. In all, 72 of those institutions achieved “Great College to Work For” recognition for specific best practices and policies. Results are reported for small, medium, and large institutions, with [Institution Name] included among the [large universities with 10,000 or more students] [medium universities with 3,000 to 9,999 students] [small universities with 500 to 2,999 students].

[Institution Name] won honors in [#] categories this year:

- * Professional Development
- * Faculty Experience
- * Confidence in Senior Leadership
- * Etc.

[Institution Name] was also named to the Great Colleges Honor Roll, a status granted to only 42 colleges each year who are highlighted most across the recognition categories.

“This is a very satisfying affirmation of [Institution Name], but our real goal is not recognition – it’s being a community that values the needs and contributions of every individual. In that sense everyone at [Institution Name] helps to make this a great place to work,” said [Institution Name]’s President/Chancellor [President/Chancellor Name].

The survey results are based on a two-part assessment process: an institution questionnaire that captures employment data and workplace policies from each institution, and a survey administered to faculty, administrators, and professional support staff. The primary factor in deciding whether an institution received recognition was the employee feedback.

The Great Colleges to Work For® program is one of the largest and most respected workplace-recognition programs in the country. For more information and to view all current and previous recognized institutions, visit the Great Colleges program website at GreatCollegesProgram.com and GreatCollegesList.com. ModernThink, a strategic human capital consulting firm, administered the survey and analyzed the results.

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