

THIS INFORMATION IS UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL: *Friday, September 19, 2025 – 9am 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 eighteenth year, it recognizes the colleges that get top ratings from their employees regarding workplace practices and policies. Please feel free to cite the information below in announcing your institution's recognition in the program.

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 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.

Program Summary

- 199 institutions participated in 2025, including 123 four-year institutions and 76 two-year institutions.
- 76 institutions are recognized as a 2025 Great College to Work For, including 54 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. Honor Roll distinction went to the **top 10** four-year colleges and the **top 4** two-year colleges recognized the greatest number of times in each size category.
- Recognized institutions will be announced on September 19, 2025, at GreatCollegesList.com, and via a special insert of The Chronicle of Higher Education sent digitally and in print to subscribers.

Recognition Categories

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.

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).

Inclusion, Belonging & Community

This recognition category is reserved for program participants who are demonstrating an institutionalized commitment to building a sense of community, 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 policies and procedures for developing and maintaining a sense of community. 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.

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.

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).

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Quotes from Richard K. Boyer, Chief Culture Strategist at ModernThink

Resilient, courageous, and committed—these are the words that come to mind as I reflect on the institutions recognized in this year's program. Their leaders inspire others and foster strong communities. They understand that student success is deeply tied to the success of faculty and staff—and their commitment to both never wavers, in good times or in times of challenge.

With years of experience studying workplace culture in academia, our data consistently shows that how institutions treat their faculty and staff directly impacts their ability to thrive—both as organizations and as communities. When trust and support are present, institutions unlock the creativity, dedication, and resilience essential to navigating today's challenges in higher education.

In a time of unprecedented challenges for higher education, these institutions have demonstrated remarkable unity. From faculty and staff to administrators and facilities teams, everyone plays a vital role in building workplaces where people feel supported and valued.

Great workplaces do not happen by accident—they are the result of intentional choices and courageous leadership. These institutions are leading by example.

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 previously 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 “2025 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 be announced on September 19, 2025 at GreatCollegesList.com, and 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 199 colleges and universities. In all, 76 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 previously 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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