



PRESS RELEASE

Atlanta Business Chronicle Names the Winter Group of Companies 3rd Healthiest Employer

(February 18, 2016) ATLANTA, GA – The Atlanta Business Chronicle has named The Winter Companies Atlanta's third Healthiest Employer in the Medium Companies category at the Chronicle's Sixth Annual Healthiest Employers Awards. The awards celebrate health in the workplace, honor Atlanta's top healthiest employers, and acknowledge healthy workplace programs. Last year, Winter received the top award in the category (that includes employers with 100 to 500 employees).

Winter received this esteemed award due, in part, to two new employee wellness programs rolled out in 2015. The first new program allows Winter's health plan participants to receive discounted membership in Weight Watchers, a weight-loss and weight-maintenance program. The second program provides training in a daily stretching and flexibility regime.

Employees sometimes view new programs with a touch of skepticism. However, Carol Swanson, Winter's Human Resources Director, said that employees have been excited about and motivated to participate in the Weight Watchers program, which became available to employees approximately eight months ago. In fact, employees who are participating so far have shed "a remarkable 800 total pounds." (Winter employs 256 full-time employees, though not all participate in the health plan.)

Swanson is cautiously optimistic about the new stretching program. Winter is teaming with Zurich Insurance Group, Ltd. to provide the new program, called "Stretch and Flex." The program rolled out in December 2015. According to Zurich consultant Valerie Hodgkinson, "Stretch and Flex" will be a customized program designed to decrease strain/sprain injuries, promote a health-focused culture, and contribute positively to employee morale.

The rewards of Winter's health initiatives go beyond a health-conscious workplace culture and recognition from the business community. Winter CFO Ralph Mumme recently announced that the Winter Companies' newly realized savings in health insurance costs have been used to increase Winter's match of employees' retirement contributions.

Mumme said that Winter's insurance carrier, Humana, provided the company lower rates due to Winter employees' aggressive wellness practices. For example, 100 percent of Winter's insurance plan participants took biometric screenings in 2015, and, for two years in a row, 100 percent of plan participants achieved Silver Status in the Humana Vitality program. Silver Status designates that an employee has accumulated a high level of points through fitness activities, health education, healthy living measurements, and prevention measurements.

Winter CEO Brent Reid elaborated on the new retirement contributions. He stated that the health insurance savings "have allowed us to increase our 401K match by one full percentage point for two consecutive years."

Winter's wellness push has developed over the past 10 years. In recent years, Winter has been providing a fitness tracker, the Fitbit, to every employee in the company's wellness program.

Winter also sponsors free biometric screenings, group wellness challenges, intramural sports, and wellness lunch-and-learn events. Winter recently paid for its employees to participate in a 5K charity run. Additionally, Winter has begun providing fruit in the downtown office breakroom for employees to grab a healthy snack.

The company's achievements in employee wellness participation have not been easy, according to HR Director Swanson, "Our current program is the product of several years of the leadership's efforts to care for our loyal employees and to overcome obstacles to participation."

Winter CEO Brent Reid said of the company's wellness program, "I was committed to everyone being able to be successful with the program, but reaching a workforce distributed throughout the Southeast, many of whom don't speak English, has required incorporating wellness into Winter's culture at every level of the organization. The award from ABC reinforces that we are on the right path, and we look forward to additional enhancements to our wellness program in the coming months."

About Winter Companies:

Winter Companies is a privately held, multi-disciplinary general contracting company offering construction and environmental services throughout the United States. Based in Atlanta, Winter is consistently ranked as an ENR Top 400 company and is ranked as one of Atlanta Business Chronicle's Best Places To Work. For more information visit: <http://www.wintercompanies.com>

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