

# Best Employers 2009



**NC** Magazine strives to recognize greatness, innovation and success in North Carolina's business community. That's why, this year,

NC Magazine and the North Carolina Chamber chose to work with the Best Companies Group, a nationally recognized organization dedicated to singling out companies who create workplace excellence, to create NC Magazine's Best Employers 2009.

To choose from among the outstanding entries from a variety of industries, Best Companies Group used a two-part process — a questionnaire filled out by the employers about benefits and policies, and an engagement and satisfaction survey completed by the employees.

Based on the information received, Best Companies Group calculated the state's 10 Best Employers for 2009:

1. Edward Jones
2. RSM McGladrey
3. Targacept
4. Key Risk Management Services
5. Southeastern Regional Medical Center
6. RTI International
7. PPD
8. Allscripts - Misys Healthcare Solutions
9. Administaff
10. Sheetz

All of the standout companies provided a range of employee benefits, including 401k or 403b retirement savings programs, Employee Assistance Programs, flexible spending accounts and tuition reimbursement. All of the top companies also offer additional perks, including cafeteria or meal subsidies, free daily snacks or free beverages. These top 10 companies are also environmental stewards — all 10 have recycling or waste-reduction programs.

Flexibility is a key characteristic of all of the companies on the list. At Edward Jones, which topped this year's list and which also placed second on *Fortune* magazine's 2009 list of the country's best employers, the mantra is "Family Comes First." Company representatives noted that financial advisers set their own hours, branch associates can access the office remotely or via PDA, and the firm lends its financial advisers laptops so that they can work from remote locations.

"At Edward Jones, work isn't the purpose of life — because life isn't all about work," company representatives noted. "Flexibility is the key to keeping them in balance."

RSM McGladrey and Targacept, nos. 2 and 3 on the list, respectively, of-

fer flexibility through seasonally flexible schedules. From Memorial Day through Labor Day, both companies support alternate schedules while still maintaining the total number of hours worked. During that time, Targacept employees are able to work slightly longer hours Monday through Thursday and the company closes at 1 p.m. on Friday. Administaff, ninth on the list, typically closes around 3 p.m. on the day before a holiday to provide employees with more time to be with their families. And Allscripts, eighth on the list, recently added eight days to the number of PTO days its employees receive.

Key Risk Management Services, fourth on this year's list, noted that 14 percent of the company's employees currently work from home. In addition, the company had the lowest rate of voluntary employee



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turnover in the last fiscal year of any company in our top 10, at 4.13 percent

RTI International, sixth on the list, offers a number of options that allow for flexibility for employees with families. An on-site, subsidized childcare facility is available for the children of employees, and as much as is possible, RTI allows employees to arrange their work schedule as it fits their needs.

Because of the nature of its business, Southeastern Regional Medical Center, No. 5 on the list, currently only offers telecommuting to its medical transcription staff. However, SRMC stays in close communication with all of its employees by holding a quarterly Employee Forum with the president and CEO at which employees are asked to submit their input and ideas on a variety of topics.

At Sheetz, the No. 10 company on this year's list, employees are given time to volunteer in the community. Company representatives noted that employees who participate in the United Way Day of Caring are paid for their volunteer time, as are employees who volunteer at both the summer and winter games of the Special Olympics. In addition, employees are granted paid

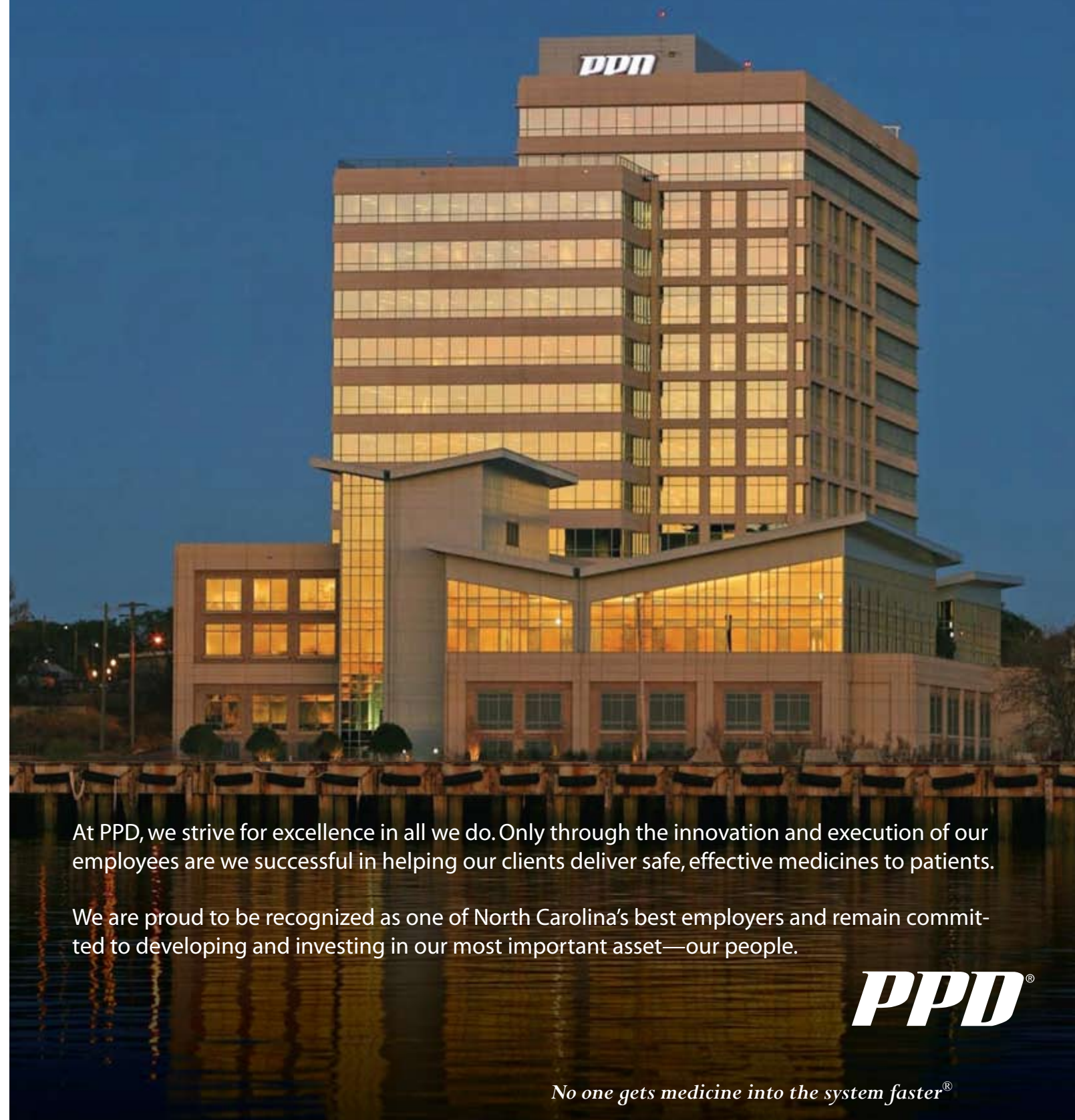
volunteer time on an individual basis for a variety of organizations of interest to them.

Green practices were another key point for the top companies. Representatives of PPD, No.7 on the list, noted that in addition to using energy-efficient heating and cooling systems, they are considering installing solar panels on their roof and reusing air handling unit condensate in a cooling tower.

Employee education was also important to the companies on the list — all of the companies in the top 10 provide some sort of tuition reimbursement to their employees. According to the survey, RSM McGladrey provides the greatest amount of tuition reimbursement to its employees — \$5,250 per calendar year — of any of the top 10 employers.

Company representatives noted, "Our education reimbursement plan is designed to encourage employees to make lifelong learning a priority. To recognize the hard work involved in earning a degree or certification, we offer expense reimbursement in a way that provides tax-free benefits to employees for a broad range of classes associated with attending an accredited college or university." ♦

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