

Topline Benchmark Report

“Excellence is a better teacher than mediocrity. Truly profound and original insights are to be found only in studying the exemplary.”

- Warren Bennis

Overview

The Great Colleges program was designed to recognize institutions that have been successful in creating great workplaces and to further research and understanding of the factors that influence organizational culture within higher education.

This year 247 institutions participated in the program, nearly a threefold increase over last year. The applicant pool included representation from schools across the country and spanned all major Carnegie classifications. Participating institutions were segmented into two categories: a four-year category and a two-year category. Within these groups, institutions were further divided into three size categories based on undergraduate and graduate enrollment: Small (fewer than 3,000 students), Medium (3,000-9,999 students), and Large (10,000+ students).

At the core of the program is a two-part assessment process: The ModernThink Higher Education Insight Survey[®] and an institutional audit known as the Institution Questionnaire[®] (IQ) that captures information detailing various demographics, policies, practices and infrastructure. The IQ enables us to examine which benefits and programs are most effective, identify best practices and compile relevant benchmark data.

This Topline Benchmark Report which focuses on four-year institutions provides comparative data for some of the most relevant demographics and policies. It includes data from 20 of the 150+ questions asked on the IQ and is an excerpt from our comprehensive 2009 Higher Education Benchmark and Best Practices Report. Summarized in both chart and graphical form, we highlight in aggregate who's doing what so that you can see trends as well as where you stand relative to your peers.

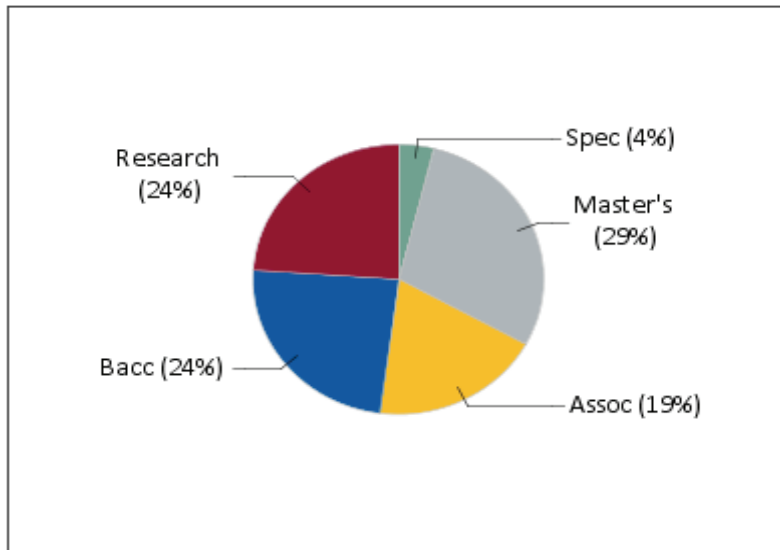
In addition to the benchmark data, we've also included a sampling of best practices as well as verbatim employee comments. The Best Practices provide insight into either “tried and true” or “cutting edge” techniques that your peers are using to create great workplaces. The employee comments powerfully illustrate how an engaged faculty/staff can be among your best recruiting and public relations tools.

We hope this report provides perspective and insight and supports you and your school in your continued good work.

The Great Colleges Survey Team

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Applicant Pool

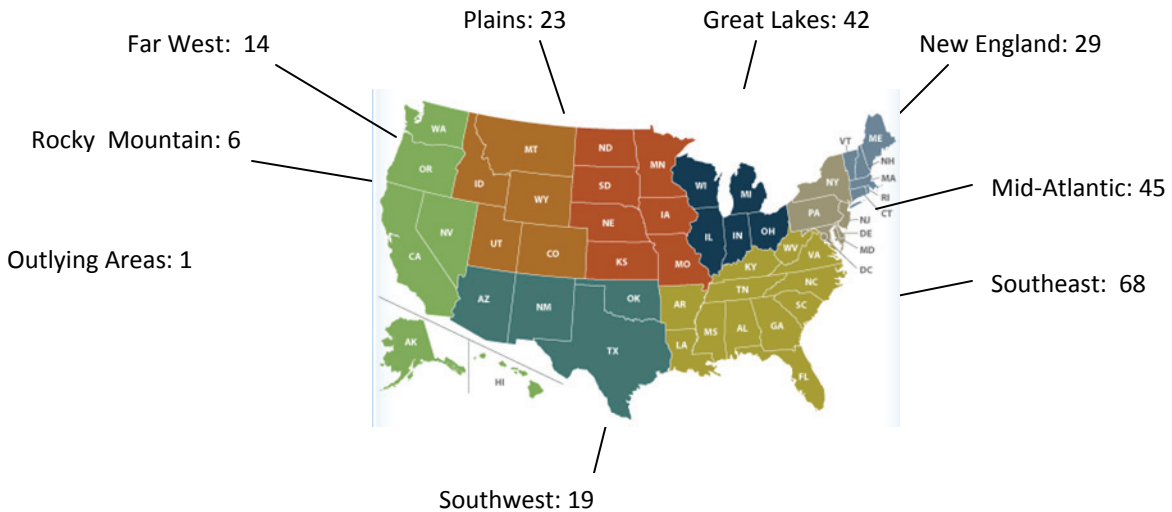


According to the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education™ the 2009 applicant pool includes:

- 46 Associate's Colleges
- 60 Doctorate-granting Research Universities (Research Universities)
- 72 Master's Colleges and Universities
- 60 Baccalaureate Colleges
- 9 Special Focus Institutions

124 public institutions
123 private institutions

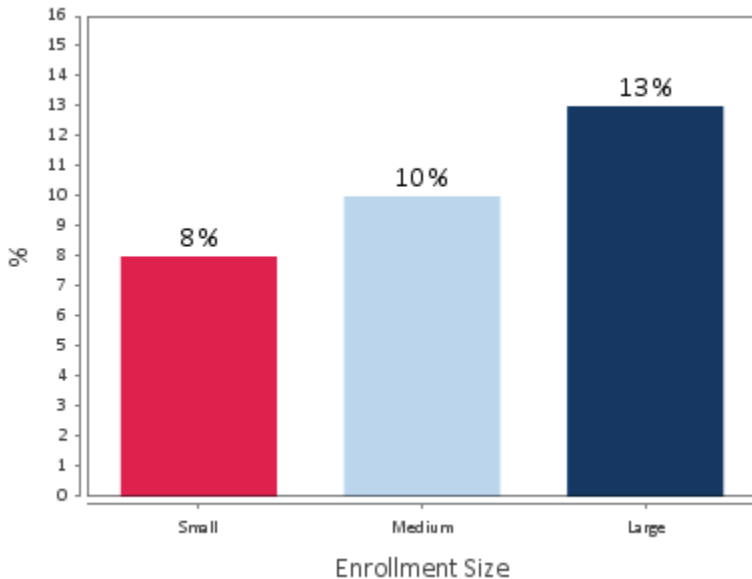
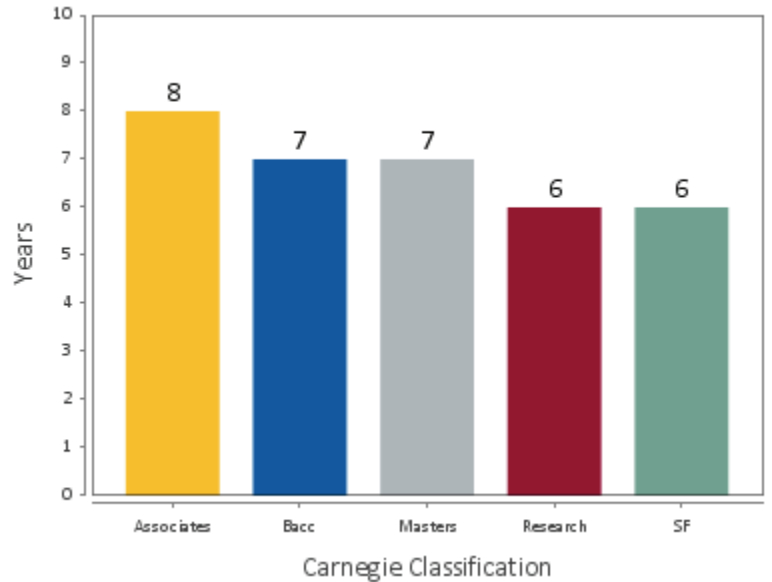
Geographic Distribution



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Tenure of Chancellors/Presidents

Confidence in the capabilities and credibility of senior leaders is critical in today's environment where senior leaders everywhere are being held to higher standards of accountability, not just for financial performance but also for the ethical conduct of their organizations. While there is no one ideal profile for a college president, there are some common traits and characteristics that distinguish the senior leadership in this year's applicant pool. Notable is the consistency and stability in the president's office. Among this year's applicant pool, the average tenure of a president/chancellor is 6.8 years.



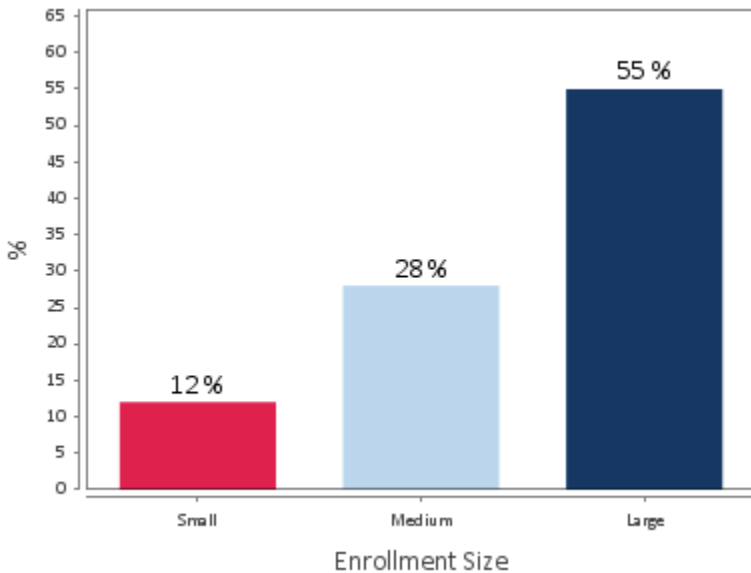
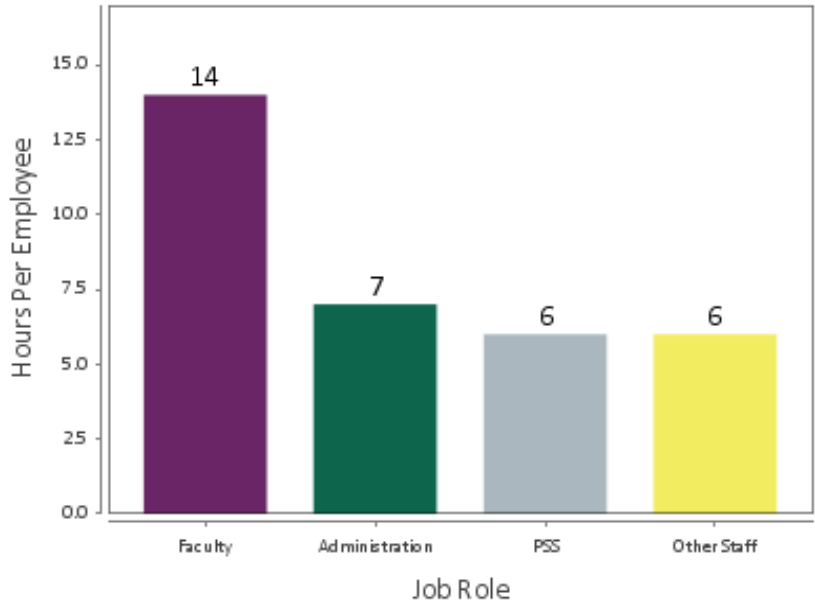
Referral Programs

Research suggests that among the most important factors influencing employee engagement is the concept of job fit. As compellingly demonstrated in the verbatim comments on page 9, current employees and faculty members can be an excellent resource in recruiting top talent who will also have the right fit. Colleges and universities can learn from the best practices of those in the private sector. In a recent ModernThink study examining the best practices of 72 hospitals that had been recognized in a "Best Place to Work" program, 88% had formal Employee Referral Programs.

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Orientation Programs

First impressions count. In fact, the first four days of a new faculty or staff member's tenure go a long way in shaping his/her view of the organization. All colleges know how important it is to help new *students* get acclimated to the campus, learn about the resources available to them and understand how the various university systems and processes work. It's time and money well spent to be equally diligent in welcoming new *faculty and staff*. A strong onboarding process helps new employees get up and running quickly and facilitates smooth integration into their department and the larger community.



Retention Programs

Supporting and retaining the people who create success is a priority in high-performance organizations, especially when some studies suggest that the cost of staff turnover can range from \$4,000 to \$140,000. Many of today's retention programs are targeted at specific demographic groups or academic disciplines. Among the more common practices is the provision of competitive or matching funds to address those scenarios where sought-after faculty members are actively recruited by other schools. In an environment where larger schools sometimes have the benefit of deeper pockets, smaller schools may need to better articulate the value proposition they offer to their faculty and staff.

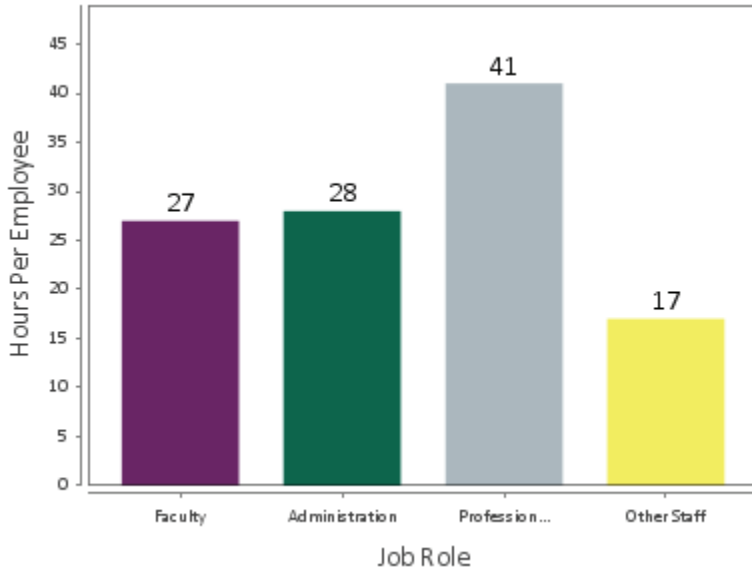
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**"What's worse than training your workers and losing them?
Not training them and keeping them."**

– Zig Ziglar

Training & Development

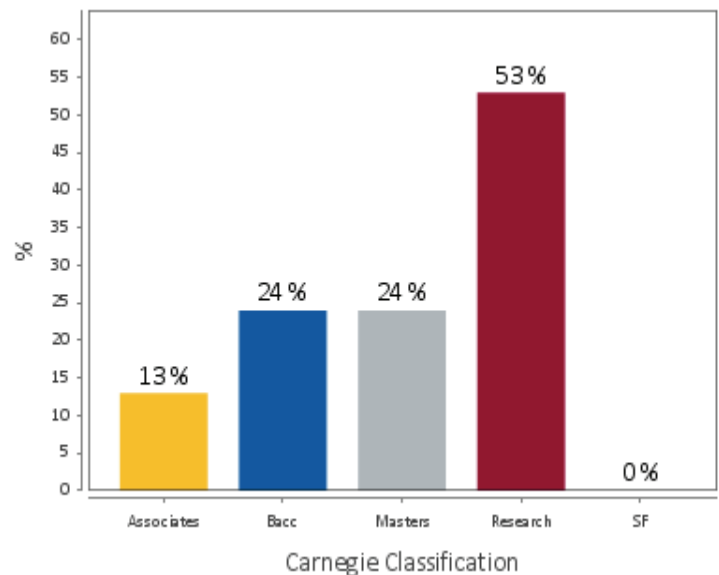
Investments in training and professional development are necessary to help employees be effective in their jobs. They also pay off in their impact on employee engagement, talent development and succession planning. Perhaps nowhere is this investment more important than with those in designated supervisory roles. One increasingly common best practice is specific training for academic department chairs that helps them understand and develop important supervisory skills such as how to deal with complex budgets and underperforming colleagues as well as how to coach junior faculty and create a collaborative environment.



Spousal/Partner Hiring Programs

As the number of dual-career couples increases, many qualified candidates have family considerations that weigh heavily upon career decisions. While spousal hiring programs have been in existence for decades, many colleges are still trying to find the balance between “quality and humanity” – the happiness of the candidate and the quality of the educational program.* If a spousal hiring program is not in your strategic plan, some experts advise that at a minimum, department chairs should create an environment in which the job candidate feels comfortable sharing information about their marital status before the offer is made.

*Association of Departments of English

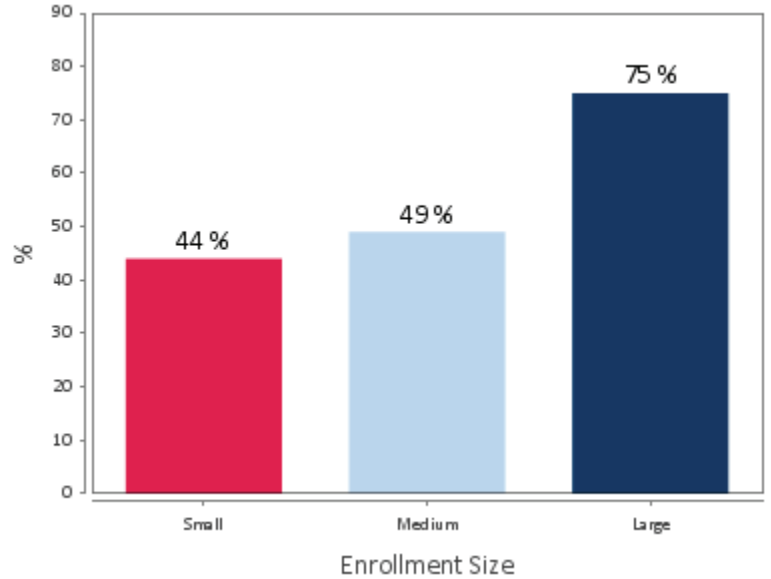


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Mentoring Programs

Much like Higher Education, the word “mentor” has ancient roots – dating back to the eighth century. Today it defines an increasingly common professional development practice. Effective mentors partner with new or junior colleagues to provide guidance, training, coaching and support.

Done well, mentoring can accelerate the onboarding process of new employees, create a greater sense of community and support the preservation of institutional memory. In higher education, mentoring programs are most commonly found in leadership development programs and for new faculty. However, there is increasing interest in more widespread application of mentoring programs to maximize their impact on the success of the organization.



Benefit / Policy	Four-Year Institutions		
	Large: 10,000+ (n=66)	Medium: 3,000 - 9,999 (n=70)	Small: <3,000 (n=65)
Paid Maternity Leave (beyond FMLA)	59%	51%	55%
Paid Paternity Leave (beyond FMLA)	52%	35%	32%
Domestic Partner Benefits	64%	56%	53%
Subsidized Childcare	45%	37%	26%
Eldercare	52%	27%	13%
Vision Coverage	95%	77%	76%
Prescription Drug Plan – Dependents	95%	90%	92%
Long-term Care	75%	66%	56%
Alternative Treatment Options	39%	28%	17%
Work/Life Balance	81%	55%	31%

* Percentages reflect the percentage of schools offering the benefits listed.

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Best Practices

Leadership Development

At **Rice University**, senior leaders take part in a 12-day curriculum called *RiceLeaders*, which is offered in four modules over a one-year period. The program focuses on the critically important capacities of leadership, teamwork, creativity and strategy. Along with the curriculum, participants are responsible for completing action learning projects, which are designed to both advance some key initiatives of the Vision for the Second Century (V2C) and give participants practical experience in trying out new leadership skills. Each participant's assessment of his or her own leadership strengths and weaknesses is aided by a series of assessments by colleagues, subordinates and supervisors, and by dedicated time with an executive coach.

Professional Development

A high value is placed on professional development at **George Mason University**. Programming can vary across disciplines, departments and campuses. However, there are key components available university-wide. These include highly developed computer and software training, including BYTE Weeks (Build Your Technology and Teaching Expertise). This free week of training, held multiple times each year, helps faculty and staff expand their technology skills. Classes range from introductory classes in various software packages to more specialized workshops covering web design, GarageBand and podcasting. This year, BYTE Week included classes taught by Apple professionals on "Building Your First Web Application for iPhone and iPod Touch" and "iTunes U for Beginners."

Ethics & Accountability

Georgia Tech has four mechanisms for employees and students to raise concerns. 1) *The EthicsPoint Hotline* is used to solicit broad feedback from the campus community. The hotline is more than just a mechanism through which individuals can report issues of suspected fraud, waste, or abuse. It is used to solicit questions, comments, and feedback about areas which could be streamlined and made more efficient and effective. 2) *Employee Relations/HR* provides services campus-wide to create a positive work environment for everyone. The office investigates and resolves work-related employee complaints or concerns including complaints of discrimination and/or harassment. 3) *The Ombuds Program* provides confidential and informal assistance for faculty and staff apart from the formal grievance procedures. The Ombudsman Program focuses on early intervention, counseling, facilitation and the exploration of options to resolve complaints. 4) *The Office of Student Affairs* has a confidential mechanism by which students can raise questions, concerns or complaints.

Work/Life Balance

Gettysburg College offers flexible work schedules for employees to attend family activities, such as sporting events, school plays, school meetings, etc. A newly-constructed \$2,000,000 on-site 5-star accredited daycare facility offers parents the opportunity to eat lunch with their children during the day.

Environmental Sustainability & "Green" Programs

The Office of Sustainability at **North Carolina State University** is charged with creating and promoting university programs that push the university towards true sustainability. In 2008, the university celebrated the "Year of Energy" with the dedication of North Carolina's largest grid-tied photovoltaic solar panel array. The university has numerous waste reduction and recycling initiatives: Pack & Go sale, Recyclemania, We Recycle program, desk side recycling, and the celebration of Earth Week. The NC Solar Center has become one of the premier renewable energy centers in the U.S. and serves as a clearinghouse for solar and other renewable energy programs, information, research, technical assistance and training. The Wolftrails program educates the campus community and alleviates congestion, parking and air quality issues through commuter alternatives such as bicycling, carpooling, emergency ride home assistance, park and ride, rideshare, free U-pass service with city and regional bus and vanpooling. University Dining contributes to green initiatives by going trayless, recycling cooking oil, serving dairy products that are processed at its own dairy, serving meals made with all North Carolina products, and working with numerous "green food-service partners." The university recently scored a 90 out of 99 in The Princeton Review's annual "Green College" rankings.

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In Their Own Words...

Excerpts from Open-ended Questions in the ModernThink Higher Education Insight Survey[®]

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There is a special culture that is palpable and really motivates everyone who works here. There is enormous pride in working at a public university and the commitment we have to public service. As an administrator, I have been especially impressed with the faculty who are impressive scholars and impressive teachers.

Everyone here knows that the first question to always ask is "How will this affect our students?" From the cafeteria personnel to the president, each person is valued and recognized as making this the special place that it is. Every one of us has a vital role to play.

I appreciate that the senior administration communicates openly with the staff about challenges facing the institution in this time of economic uncertainty. It is rare that a company is transparent with its employees and honest and open about the financial situation and what changes, if any, may be in the future.

Whether you are a student, faculty member or staff member, and no matter what level you are at, people here are treated with dignity and respect. There's also a strong culture of not letting the University rest on its laurels, so even when something is going really well, there's already somebody thinking about how to make it even better.

This institution values its employees. The work environment is outstanding and the campus is beautiful. The dialogue with the employees and the leadership is regular, frequent and effective.

The culture is entrepreneurial. Rather than the usual response of "We can't do this because..." the response is more often "How do we get around these obstacles to accomplish this objective?" It's a very different attitude from most complex organizations and especially from most research universities.

From the senior administration to my direct superiors to my peers across the entire staff (housekeeping, admin, dining, faculty, etc) - we are respected for not only the work that we do, but also the people we are and what we contribute to this campus environment.

[I value] working for an institution with a bottom line that I appreciate from a moral and ethical standpoint. This school has an institutional moral compass, and we spend our days being true to that compass.

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