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SUPERSTARS
IN BUSINESS



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SUPERSTARS IN BUSINESS WINNER
25-59 EMPLOYEES CATEGORY

COVER & ROSSITER, P.A.

BY ELLE BORNEMANN

AS ONE OF DELAWARE'S OLDEST and most respected certified public accounting firms, Cover & Rossiter, P.A. boasts an ability to serve a unique cross-section of Delaware businesses, organizations, families, and individuals, as it has for more than 70 years. The firm's dedication makes it a true Superstar in Business.

Employees at Cover & Rossiter provide clients with a full range of financial services, including accounting, auditing, taxes and financial planning, among many others. The company's commitment to minimizing tax burdens and providing valuable business advice has kept its many clients—which include the Blood Bank of Delmarva, Longwood Gardens, University of Delaware Research Foundation and Read-Aloud Delaware, to name a few—happy and coming back each year.

In 1939, Clarence Cover opened a branch of his Philadelphia-based firm in Wilmington. Cover & Co. eventually became Cover & Rossiter, P.A. in 1965 with the addition of Paul Rossiter as a partner. Though the times have changed, Cover & Rossiter's mission to provide clients with individu-

alized and innovative services to its clients has not strayed.

When the recession of 2008 hit, Delaware business leaders needed a firm that would provide accounting guidance to endure and recover during a financial crisis. Managing Director Geoff Langdon says that in times of economic strife, clients need psychological encouragement more than anything else. "By taking the time to get a client on the phone, telling them that we are there for them and we are going to help them make it through goes a very long way," says Langdon. "They just need to know that you're in this with them and that you will stick it out together until the very end. We want our clients to know that we want them to succeed, because their success means our success," says Langdon.

Cover & Rossiter guided its clients through the recession, and prevented even a single client from declaring bankruptcy. The firm itself thrived post-recession and opened a second branch in Middletown in August of 2010. Since 2008, Cover & Rossiter's net revenue increased 2.9 percent over

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Superstars in Business

Cover & Rossiter continued from 25

2009, 10.6 percent over 2010 and 9.3 percent over YTD July 2011. When many organizations were forced to cut back or lay off employees, Cover & Rossiter increased by 6 percent in 2011 and will increase another 6 percent by the end of 2012.

Cover & Rossiter commits fully to its employees, too. In 2012 the firm won The News Journal's Top Workplaces Award, and a Psychologically Healthy Workplace title from the Delaware Psychological Association in 2010. Understanding that happy staff members usually means happy clients, Cover & Rossiter employees are encouraged to choose a desired work week that fits around their family obligations.

Staffers at Cover & Rossiter also trace deep community roots, and give back to it every chance they get. In 2012, the staff pledged \$50,000 over the next five years to the University of Delaware in memory of their friend and co-worker, Julie Gricol, a former intern with the firm. The Julie G. Gricol '08 Memorial Scholarship grants an undergraduate student with the financial ability to study in the University of Delaware's Lerner College of Business and Economics as an accounting major.

With confidence, honesty, and family values folded into every aspect of the workplace, Cover & Rossiter shows no signs of slowing, and continues to serve Delaware just as it has for more than 70 years.

Emory Hill continued from 26

employees (including five who have logged at least 20 years of company service), the staffers of Emory Hill are the core of the business. Winning the Mid-Atlantic Real Estate Journal's 2011 Best Place to Work award proves that the work environment at Emory Hill is anything but dull.

Like many companies, Emory Hill was greatly affected by the economic downturn of 2008. Since then, the company has managed to maintain growth and strives to keep the company relatively small to avoid loss. "This protects us and our employees in case we see another economic crisis," says Hill. Amidst the economic crisis, Emory Hill was still able to meet client demands for real estate services in the lower Delaware region. In June 2012, Emory Hill opened an office in Lewes to support growing

expansion in Kent and Sussex counties. The new office had already listed 25 properties as of press time, including a few that resulted in lease and sale transactions.

In the past year, Emory Hill has implemented two new programs to reward employees that attract new clients. The "Lead Referral Program" rewards employees for bringing in new business while the "Pinnacle" award is given to the employees who voice new ideas and opinions. Launched following a Pinnacle suggestion, Team Theme Lunches were born to maintain stronger unity and camaraderie between the employees in all departments.

Emory Hill constantly finds new ways to increase customer service. New software and technology advancements have been put into practice within the last year. With the addition of two new state-of-the-art customer service programs called "Workspeed" and "Fleet GPS," employees are able to regularly communicate with clients and inform them on progress. "Workspeed," a web-based system by which tenants and property owners can simultaneously monitor when repairs may be needed in their buildings. If a light bulb goes off in a building, the web system points it out, and then informs the tenants, landlords and Emory Hill's maintenance team simultaneously. In the "Fleet GPS" response system, technicians in the field are able to respond to service calls and maintenance problems. "It is highly important to stay in contact with our clients," Hill says. "Customer service is key to running a good business."

Emory Hill encourages employees to form long-lasting relationships with clients and the community at large. Some clients have been with Emory Hill for more than 10 years and include businesses such as the Goodwill of Delaware, WSFS Bank, Chimes of Delaware and Royal Farms.

Emory Hill boasts a long proud history of community contributions, and is led by partners Hill and Facciolo. "Since Bob and Carmen are so involved," says marketing director Michele Chynoweth, "it encourages everyone else to help their community as well."

Blood Bank continued from 27

McDonough, Andrew's father, was recently inducted into the Fenwal Blood Donation Hall of Fame and continues to give blood today.

Young blood proves to be more useful and

versatile for donations and saving lives, so the Blood Bank's marketing department revamped its approach and began targeting younger donors. Utilizing social media and creating friendly, competitive blood drives for local high schools, colleges and businesses, proved successful. In 2011, the Blood Bank was witness to and a participant in the Colonial Athletic Association Blood Challenge at the University of Delaware—the largest one-day blood drive in the history of the state. A total of 1,350 individuals registered to give blood at four simultaneous locations. During the 2011 Summer Blood Challenge, blood donations increased by 20 percent, with 8,611 blood donations and 1,691 new Blood Bank members.

Today, employees and volunteers work together to actively contribute working towards one main goal: providing blood and blood products to patients in need. Employees, volunteers and donors are constantly reminded of the help they are providing and the value their donations hold. Roper conducts ongoing "town hall" meetings for staff members that give them a chance to voice their opinions and ideas on development. It allows staffers to feel a connection with upper management, and fosters the idea that they play an important role in the organization. "We are a team, working towards one common goal- to save lives," Roper says. The GEM program, which stands for Going the Extra Mile, encourages employees to reward one another when they see another one doing extra work for a patient or product.

In the last 12 months, the Blood Bank has pursued partnerships with other area non-profits, including the American Diabetes Association, American Cancer Society, Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, American Heart Association, CureSearch for Children's Cancer, and others. Staff charitable activities supported United Way, Toys for Tots, and Ronald McDonald House.

"With 4 to 5 percent of our population giving the rest of the population blood, the people who are constantly giving are the ones keeping everybody else alive," Waite says. The Blood Bank includes four permanent blood donation centers in Newark, Wilmington, Dover, and Salisbury, Md., and more than 30 locations are visited by bloodmobiles and accommodate all areas of the community.

"It's the most personal type of philanthropy that a person can give," Waite says, "their own blood, a personal part of them." ■