

## Rescue Mission earns praise

Certified as one of 55 Best Christian Workplaces in U.S.

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Water Street Rescue Mission was certified Monday as one of the 55 Best Christian Workplaces in the United States in 2009.

Best Christian Workplaces Institute surveyed more than 11,000 employees in 113 organizations across the United States in 2008, seeking to identify great workplaces with a Christian mission and/or values.

The survey included more than 50 questions addressing such issues as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, Christian witness, supervisory effectiveness, work satisfaction, personal growth and development, management effectiveness, customer/supporter satisfaction, teamwork, communications and pay and benefits.

"The Best Christian Workplaces survey consistently reveals that Christian employees appreciate God-glorifying relationships shaped by the fruit of the Spirit," said Al Lopus, president and cofounder of the Mercer Island, Wash.-based Best Christian Workplaces Institute, in announcing the survey results.

"Water Street Rescue Mission was no exception," Lopus said. "One employee put it this way when asked what they appreciated most about Water Street Rescue Mission: 'Co-workers are an encouragement.' "

"Christians are called to mirror the excellence of God, and this certification is a reflection of that goal," said Maria Schaszberger, Water Street Rescue Mission's public relations and media manager.

"No one can deny that Christian organizations are feeling the effects of the nation's worry over the economy," Lopus said.

"Although we believe that Christian organizations should do all they can to pay competitively, our survey shows that there are other factors even more influential in making your employees feel blessed by their work, including work being a place of community."

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What makes Water Street Rescue Mission unique, Lopus said, is that over the past year the mission improved and retained highly qualified employees.

"The award identifies Water Street as a good investment for donors and volunteers," Schaszberger said. "It also shows wise leadership on the staff and board of directors, measuring how Water Street was doing and making changes to improve."

Schaszberger said the rescue mission's staff participated in the survey each of the last five years.

In response to past surveys, Schaszberger said, Water Street's board approved benefit improvements and created a salary structure based on education and experience.

"What that means is equal pay for equal work," she said.

The board also added staff performance evaluations to review progress which "ultimately increases communication and staff effectiveness," she said.

Because of these changes, Water Street's work environment "innately reduces turnover and increases staff commitment, and ultimately, by retaining employees, saves thousands of dollars in retraining fees and from poor work," Schaszberger said.