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Thursday, September 24, 2009

Dow Jones Industrials	-81.32	Nasdaq composite	-14.88	Standard & Poor's 500	-10.79	Russell 2000	-7.32
9,748.55		2,131.42		1,060.87		613.37	

# TOP BILLING

**Traffic Planning and Design named best place to work for by industry publication**

By Michelle Karas  
mkaras@pottsmmerc.com

LOWER POTTS GROVE — There's a pretty big cause for celebration at Traffic Planning and Design Inc.

The transportation engineering firm on Tuesday received top billing on the annual CE News list of Best Civil Engineering Firms to Work For. The honor, announced Tuesday night at the 2009 Best Firm to Work For Summit in Chicago, was accepted by Matt Malozi, TPD executive vice president.

On Wednesday came the celebrating at the company's five offices in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. In Pottstown, at TPD headquarters and home to about 75 of the company's 124 total employees, there was a big cake along with balloons and flowers.

More cheers will probably be heard when the October print edition of CE News comes out with TPD on the cover. The cover shot was taken at one of TPD's local projects — the pedestrian underpass connecting the College Drive and High Street portions of the Pottstown campus of Montgomery County Community College.

The national honor from CE News stems in part from TPD's employee-centric philosophy, according to company president Kevin L. Johnson.

"I've always felt that you should treat other people as you would want to be treated, and we've always practiced that as a company," Johnson said.

He explained that CE News has a panel of judges who review both a corporate survey and one that's completed by employees each spring.

In past years, TPD has ranked as high as fifth on the CE News list, but this year is the first time the company has achieved the top rank, Johnson said. Last year TPD was 16th on the list.

In light of the recession, this year CE News chose to spotlight firms that maintained or improved their financial performance. TPD reported \$14.8 million in revenue in 2008, according to CE News.

TPD's initiatives along those lines include a no layoffs policy to foster employee loyalty at a time when job security is no longer the norm nationally. While there were no true paycuts this



Traffic Planning and Design President Kevin L. Johnson announces to employees at the company's Pottstown headquarters Wednesday that the company was named 2009 Best Civil Engineering Firm to Work For by CE News. Below, TPD employees are treated to some celebratory cake.



hours a week and are able to attend necessary meetings and obligations, they may come and go as they please. TPD helps out by keeping the office open seven days a week.

"We basically give the employees all the tools they need to get the job done well and also the training," Johnson said.

There are also niceties such as quarterly bus trips, such as one TPD sponsored earlier this month for employees and their families to the Pennsylvania Renaissance Faire, where they enjoyed theater performances, games and wine tastings. The bus trips carry a nominal cost — \$5 or \$10 — to the employees.

Most valuable in the Best Civil Engineering Firms to Work For awards process, according to Johnson, is the feedback TPD receives from CE News from the employee surveys.

"We look at what's important to the employees," Johnson said. "It's a tremendous resource for us to find out what they like and what they would change."

As a direct result of past years' survey feedback, for instance, TPD has in-

creased company match on the employee 401(k) program, upped the company match for health insurance coverage, and expanded the number of recreational bus trips they offer to employees, Johnson said.

Another invaluable result of such an accolade is increased ability to recruit talent, he said.

"This award allows us to attract the best talent," Johnson said. "We have people calling us for jobs. People know that we're a great place to work, and they call us. Basically almost everyone here has been hired that way, or through college co-ops."

Lack of employee turnover — TPD's rate is as low as 1 percent, according to Johnson — is a boon to clients, who can be assured the same person will follow through on a project.

"It's very rare that people leave," he said.

And if things go as planned, no one will be laid off, either.

"Hopefully, ideally, the no layoff pledge will continue forever," Johnson said.

*Celebrating its 20th year in operation, TPD (www.TrafficPD.com) was founded in Oaks in 1989 with just six employees. In addition to the Pottstown headquarters, TPD has offices in Pittsburgh, Center Valley, Harrisburg and Camden.*