



**news release  
for immediate release**

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## **Do the Best Companies Join Chambers of Commerce?**

**Alexandria, VA** - (March 11, 2008) - The best places to work tend to belong to their local chamber of commerce, according to a recent study by the American Chamber of Commerce Executives (ACCE). Of *Fortune* magazine's "100 Best Companies to Work For" in the United States and Canada this year, 94 are members of their local chamber, including all of the top 24.

Separately, ACCE found that in a random sample of 100 companies in the *Fortune* 1000, at least 75 were members of their local chamber.

"This 'Best Companies to Work For' information is one more indication that the best companies tend to be chamber members," according to ACCE President Mick Fleming. "If a company cares about its employees, there's a good chance it also cares about its community and the chamber is the way that great employers invest in both."

Local chambers of commerce are associations of businesses that come together to improve the local economic climate and help members network and find new business. Strong employers link with and learn from like-minded peer companies through business-led civic organizations - chambers of commerce.

Here you can find the *Fortune* list of the best places to work:

<http://money.cnn.com/magazines/fortune/bestcompanies/2008/>

Consumers seem to expect chamber members to be better-than-average companies. A study by the Atlanta-based Schapiro Group last August found that consumers are 63

percent more likely to buy products from companies that they believe are chamber members.

John Bachmann, senior partner at Edward Jones (St. Louis, MO), which placed No. 4 on the "Best Places to Work For" list, said, "I find in my experience, both locally and nationally, that the single most effective voice on issues is the chamber. Because of that, we want to be involved. Whether it is healthcare, performing arts, public schools or universities, people most interested in the community are members of the local chamber." Bachmann is a former chair of both the St. Louis Regional Chamber and Growth Association and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Paul Speranza Jr. is vice chairman of Wegman's Food Markets (Rochester, NY), which placed No. 3 on the Fortune list. His company is active in the local, state, and U.S. Chamber, of which he is the current chair. He's travelled to many local chambers and appreciates what they do. "It is easy for me to see the great value that many of these chambers provide their members in so many areas, including education and workforce development - showing member companies how to be excellent and appreciated employers by partnering in developing great programs and sharing best practices."

ACCE plans to probe further into which kinds of companies join their local chamber and which ones don't. "We are not surprised that many of the best companies join chambers of commerce," said Mick Fleming. "And, I believe when more people are aware of this, we're going to see still more firms joining their local chamber."

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Established in 1914, ACCE serves the professional development needs of chamber executives throughout the United States and Canada. Representing more than 7,000 individuals, ACCE enhances the knowledge, leadership skills, and management effectiveness of chamber executives and their staff through education, benefits programs, trend analysis, benchmarking, and network development. ACCE supports and develops chamber professionals to lead businesses and their communities. To learn more about ACCE, visit [www.acce.org](http://www.acce.org).

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