

NW Tucson's Largest Employers

BY DAVE CALIFANO

Northwest Tucson is a great place to live, of course, but it is also the perfect place to locate a business. In fact, in 2008, Oro Valley took the 44th position on "Fortune Small Business" magazine's 100 Best Places to Live and Launch survey. The area was chosen for its pro-business local government, its burgeoning tech and biotech industries and its location to the University of Arizona. It's no wonder why companies like The Ritz-Carlton, aerospace firms Honeywell Aerospace and Evergreen Maintenance Center, and Sanofi-aventis have located in the area.

One look at the area's largest employers — the Marana Unified School District, Northwest Medical Center, Ventana Medical Systems and The Ritz-Carlton, Dove Mountain when it opens in the late fall — speaks volumes about the diversity of business opportunities in Northwest Tucson.

Marana especially benefits from its great accessibility to Tucson and beyond. "I-10 runs through the center of Marana giving businesses access to one of the busiest interstate highways in the country, and to Mexico," explains Ed Stolmaker, president of the Marana Chamber of Commerce.

Stolmaker also points out that the area is a great place to work and raise a family. "Marana has a great school system and great communities with parks, hiking trails and bike trails," he says.

Mark Blazer, executive director of Splendido, at Rancho Vistoso — the area's 18th largest employer — agrees. "The beautiful views from the Santa Catalina mountain range alone are incentives to live in Northwest Tucson," says Blazer. "And access to some of the region's best hospitals, like Northwest Medical Center, is also a great asset for residents and businesses alike."

Companies are also attracted to the local governments' pro-business stance. "With the help of municipalities in our community and local chambers of commerce, businesses have all the resources they need to start or expand their business," says Ramon Gaanderse, president of the Northern Pima County Chamber of Commerce. Stolmaker adds, "The business community is working together to make this a successful place to have a business."

And in turn, those companies give back to the community. Ventana Medical Systems has turned their lobby into a public art gallery, Northwest Medical Center sponsors various events and provides free health education seminars for the public. At Splendido, both its residents and staff perform community service for places like local domestic violence shelters and the VA Hospital in Tucson.

In the end, what makes Tucson's northwest a great destination for both businesses and residents is the constant support that each group gives the other. So much so, that it surely deserves a position better than 44th on Forbes list. But that's ok, we know it's truly No. 1. ■



PHOTOGRAPHY BY JENNIFER POLIXENNI BRANKIN

The Who's Who of Hiring

	Company	Industry	Website
1	Marana Unified School District	Education	MaranaUSD.org
2	Northwest Medical Center	Health Care	NorthwestMedicalCenter.com
3	Ventana Medical Systems Inc.	Manufacturing and Research	VentanaMed.com
4	Honeywell Aerospace	Aerospace and Aircraft	Honeywell.com
5	Northwest Medical Center Oro Valley	Health Care	NMCOroValley.com
6	Town of Oro Valley	Government	OroValleyAZ.gov
7	Evergreen Maintenance Center Inc.	Aerospace and Aircraft	EvergreenAviation.com
8	Town of Marana	Government	Marana.com
9	Silverbell Army National Guard Heliport	Military and Defense	AZ.ngb.army.mil/WAATS/default.asp
10	Sargent Controls & Aerospace	Aerospace Components	SargentControls.com
11	Marana Health Center	Health Care	MaranaHealthCenter.org
12	CTI (Cement Transportation Inc.)	Transportation and Shipping	CTI-AZ.com
13	Omni Tucson National Resort	Resorts	OmniHotels.com
14	Comcast of Arizona Inc.	Cable Television	Comcast.com
15	Coca-Cola Bottling Co. of Tucson	Restaurants and Food Distribution	—
16	Waste Management of Tucson	Waste Disposal	WM.com
17	Escalante Concrete Construction Inc.	Construction and Contracting	—
18	Splendido at Rancho Vistoso	Health Care	SplendidoTucson.com
19	Trico Electric Cooperative	Utilities	Trico.coop