



2015 National Capital Business Ethics Awards  
Judge's Comments  
Large Company Category  
Recipient: Zeiders Enterprises

It is an honor for me, along with my fellow judge Don Boardman, to recognize Zeiders Enterprises as this year's award winner in the large company category.

Don and I would also like to take this opportunity to commend our semi-finalist, 3Pillar for their excellent work in building a highly ethical company; in fact the first of the "3Pillars" is integrity, followed by innovation and agility. 3Pillar impressed us with its efforts to foster ethical behavior in multiple cultures and especially the use of technology to enable face-to-face interaction between employees in Virginia, Romania and India.

Zeiders Enterprises has been providing programs and services to veterans, service members and their families for over 30 years. Created as an employee centered organization with a belief that success comes from culture, Zeiders has developed a reputation for honesty and integrity. Don and I were impressed at the way the employees are at the heart of Zeiders. The company is proud that over 70% of its employees have a first-hand connection with the military community, and 40% are military spouses. This gives them a special connection to the mission of the company. We also noticed how often we heard the words "teamwork" and "collaboration" in talking with employees. Zeiders' outside employment lawyer was impressed with the way they treat employees with such dignity and respect.

Hiring is done using behavior based interviews that focus on values, ethics and cultural fit. Employees then take a course during on-boarding that teaches the company's mission, Core Values and Cultural Norms. Further, every employee takes additional ethics training annually. A full time ethics and compliance manager, an ethics hotline and extensive printed material on company values provide institutional support for the ethics program. Strong and focused communications and the use of technology have enabled Zeiders to maintain its culture, as the company has grown to over 1000 employees at military and civilian locations worldwide. As for the management team, a relatively new employee described them as visible, passionate about the culture and living the company values.

Zeiders also lives its mission by giving back to the military community. It created and continues to fund the "Quality of Life Foundation", an organization providing services to families of ill, wounded and injured veterans.

Perhaps most refreshing in today's business environment was that in four separate interviews, we were told that this company does not focus solely on profit, but rather balances the need for profit with its mission, with its employees, and with doing the right thing.

We are pleased to present this year's award to Zeiders Enterprises for building a company that focuses on mission, employees and doing the right thing in every corner of its far-flung organization.