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Employers who focus on workers

By Darrel Smith

They are the region's extraordinary employers, the companies employees want to work for. They're **the winners of the 2008 SWEL**, or Sacramento Workplace Excellence Leader, awards.

Presented by the Sacramento Area Human Resource Association, the awards honor for-profit businesses, not-for-profit organizations and government agencies that "provide exceptional benefits, programs, training and workplaces that promote employee health, safety, advancement, diversity and security."

The awards "demonstrate what HR professionals know: that investing in a workplace culture and providing effective programs improve the business performance of an organization," said Debbe Dreher, the association's executive director.

The sixth annual ceremony was held Thursday at the Sheraton Grand Sacramento Hotel:

For-profit: Architecture firm Rauschenbach, Marvelli, Becker (small business); urban design and planning firm EDAW Inc. (medium-size business); and Allied Insurance (large business).

Government agencies: Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality District (small); California Community Colleges System Office (medium); and city of Sacramento (large).

Not-for-profit: **California Employers Association** (small), Travis Credit Union (medium); and California ISO (large).

The winners were selected from a pool of 77 nominees, Dreher said.