

2009

North Bay  
**Business Journal**  
**BEST PLACES to WORK!**

THREE-TIME WINNER

# Heffernan Insurance Brokers

PETALUMA – Heffernan Insurance focuses on creating a family-first environment where people work hard, have fun and can be themselves – and where dogs and children are a common sight in the office.

“First and foremost, they gave me the ability to be myself. I get regular feedback and know that my contributions matter and are appreciated,” an employee said.

The firm’s 32 North Bay employees believe in the company motto, “Answer the phone and have fun.” The firm, led by Senior Vice President Elizabeth

Bishop, supported the community by giving \$550,000 to charities, about \$1,400 per employee, during 2008. Heffernan has a community service program where staff members volunteer four days a year and receive paid time off.

In addition, Heffernan – a four-time Best Places to Work winner – has a grant program that contributes from \$5,000 to \$10,000 annually to non-

profits, an employee matching gift program and a Heffernan scholarship program for company families.



HEFFERNAN INSURANCE BROKERS

A Member of the Heffernan Group

## HEFFERNAN INSURANCE BROKERS EMPLOYEE QUOTE

**The ability for me to be myself first and foremost and I get regular feedback that my contributions matter and are appreciated.**

### How the 2009 Best Places to Work survey was conducted

Companies selected as Best Places to Work in the North Bay were analyzed by the editorial staff of the BUSINESS JOURNAL on the basis of several criteria, including the employer application, the survey ratings by employees, the number of responses, size of the company, the breakdown of responses from management and non-management as well as written comments by employees.

In all, 121 companies were nominated, from which 55 winners emerged from Sonoma, Marin and Napa counties.

Winners are grouped by size so that employee scores are comparable. The winners are then listed within their size categories by employee score.

Nominations for Best Places to Work in the North Bay were sought starting in April. Anyone within a company can nominate their business by completing a simple form. A minimum of 20 employees was required.

Nominated companies were then contacted by the BUSINESS JOURNAL and invited to submit a company application and to ask employees to complete a brief online

survey.

The survey was set up through Zoomerang, a widely used online polling service. Companies had about four weeks in late June and early July to complete the application and survey, for which a minimum number of responses was required, depending on company size.

After an analysis of the employer application and online responses, the winners were selected and formally announced Aug. 12.

– Brad Bollinger, Editor in Chief