

Best Places to Work in BR winners revealed; Methanex tops ranking of 38 local firms

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The winners of the inaugural Best Places to Work awards—presented by *Business Report*, the Greater Baton Rouge Society for Human Resource Management and the Louisiana Workforce Commission—were revealed and honored at an awards breakfast this morning to kick off the annual Louisiana Business Symposium. Independent national firm Best Companies Group surveyed companies that chose to participate in the awards and compiled the final ranking, in which Methanex came out on top.

Receiving the top honor on behalf of Methanex this morning, Geismar plant manager Glynn Fontenot said the company's employees don't feel as if their role is simply "just a job." They have a "feeling that they contribute value every day," Fontenot said.

Rounding out the top five companies on the list of 38 local Best Places to Work are: YP, Sigma Consulting Group, Envoc and Capital Valve & Fitting Co.

Managers from the three top companies all spoke at this morning's awards breakfast, providing insight on how they show their employees they're valued, what is most important to their employees and what the companies are looking for in an employee.

YP General Manager Dennis Dube said it is important that the company's employees feel like they are making an impact.

"We help local businesses and communities grow. There's a

great deal of satisfaction seeing that you were a part of that," Dube said.

Managers from all three companies said they value employee referrals and personality most in their recruitment process.

"We're looking for people that can think out of the box, that aren't satisfied with the status quo," said Miles Williams, president of Sigma Consulting Group Inc., adding that ensuring employees are happy is part of the business model. "From the beginning 27 years ago, we set out to focus on the employee, with the thought that would benefit our clients."

GBRSHRM President Mimi Singer said employees are looking for companies that allow flexibility as to where and when they work, which all three companies afforded.

"They're looking to balance work and life," Singer said, "and they don't always see those as two separate things."