

HRI Properties



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Best Places To Work 2014

1 LARGE COMPANIES HRI Properties

HRI Properties is a New Orleans-based real estate development company with 20 properties, three hotels and 21 apartment complexes. It has 400 employees locally and approximately 75 percent work in its lodging division.

Project manager Grant Melius Worrel moved from Las Vegas to New Orleans three years ago to work with HRI's lodging division and oversee construction of mixed-use projects. She's currently working on the renovation of 225 Baronne St., which will include 192 apartments, 188 hotel rooms and a nine-floor garage once completed.

"My job is fast paced, challenging and interesting," Worrel said. "I work long hours, but I'm passionate about what I do and so is everyone else from the top down. This company is successful because people love to work here."

To help HRI employees grow and stay current, the company provides up-to-date technology and sends them to educational seminars.

"I've gone to the hospitality design show in Las Vegas every year since I joined the company," Worrel said. "It's a great event and a good place to meet vendors, purchasing agents and installers. I also requested an iPad recently to improve productivity. I've never been turned down when I ask for something."

Hope Stough, payroll administrator, joined the company nine months ago. She processes pay-

roll for 12 properties and handles tax issues, benefit accruals, vacation and sick time.

"I was at my former job six years and I was bored because I did the same thing every day," she said. "At HRI, nothing is the same every day. The work is challenging and that's important to me. They also have family functions, which I wasn't accustomed to, and when my child gets sick they let me do my job from home."

HRI offers a comprehensive employee benefit package and two weeks paid vacation a year. Initially, it was one week paid vacation, Stough said, but the company changed its policy recently to be more competitive in the market.

"It's just another way they're striving to make sure we have good work-life balance," she said. "And I get to reap the benefits, which is awesome."

Shawn Reppel, vice president of human resources, credits the company's success to low turnover and an open, transparent, family-oriented culture. The executive team also has an open door policy.

"No one here is above anyone else and it's not unusual to find our top executives eating in the dining room with employees," he said. "We believe it's critically important for people that work together every day to know one another, their families and lives outside work. It builds morale in the organization."

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HRI Properties founder and CEO Pres Kabacoff, foreground, relaxes at the Hibernia Building pool with employees.

Photo by Ashley Merlin

Nature of business: Real estate and development

Headquarters: New Orleans

Employees: 192

Average starting salary: \$56,187 salaried, \$14 hourly

Median salary: \$70,207 salaried, \$14.73 hourly

Average time of employment: 6 years

Health care benefits: 100 percent, unmarried partner benefits, dental, vision, prescriptions

Wait time for benefits: 30 days

Other perks: Tuition assistance, on-site gym, employee recognition program, sick day lottery, Perks pass

Paid days off: 32 days

Website: hriproperties.com

— Kerry Duff