

BUSINESS NEWS

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Family-friendly companies earn employee kudos

by COREY ALBERT

Leslie Rochon knows what it's like to need a helping hand from her employer.

A certified public accountant with the firm of Isler & Co., Rochon became ill while pregnant with her third child and had to take several months off from work.

Then, shortly after returning, she was diagnosed with cancer and was compelled to take yet another leave of absence, this time for 10 months.

Rather than penalize Rochon, Isler promoted her to a managerial position. Additionally, the firm budgeted 150 hours of tax education training to bring Rochon up to date upon her eventual return.

"For what it's worth, they have

earned the respect and loyalty of this employee and I take their needs very seriously," says Rochon, her voice breaking from barely restrained tears.

Rochon's remarks were addressed to the crowd of approximately 150 business representatives who attended the Eugene Area Chamber of Commerce's fourth annual Work Trends conference, which took place Oct. 26 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Springfield.

The conference featured a keynote address on retaining top employees, various business-related workshops, and an awards presentation by Families in Good Company, a partnership among businesses, government and private citizens aimed at promoting fami-

ly-friendly practices among employers.

Isler & Co. LLC, an accounting firm with 75 employees, was one of two local entities this year to receive Family in Good Company's statewide Quality Seal of Approval. The other recipient was Options Counseling Services of Oregon Inc., a nonprofit social service agency with 117 employees.

"[Winning this award] does mean a lot because we really do try to keep life halfway sane for our employees," says Glenn Munro, managing partner of Isler.

According to Munro, being flexible with schedules and other employee needs "doesn't hurt" his company. Instead, because Isler employees look forward to coming



Dr. Stephen Allankemer

to work, Munro believes they transfer that enthusiasm to their jobs.

"This is a kind of refuge — as much as anything — for many of

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