

101-500 employees |

DaVita

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Employees are called teammates, the company is characterized as a village, and the CEO dresses like a musketeer on occasion to espouse a “one-for-all and all-for-one” philosophy.

Sound like your typical publicly traded, multi-billion dollar health care corporation? Hardly — and DaVita Inc.

TOP OFFICIAL: Kent Thiry

YEARS IN BUSINESS: 15

EMPLOYEES: 425

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Brentwood 37027

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chairman and CEO Kent Thiry wouldn't have it any other way.

“This is a very different place,” says senior vice president Steve Priest. “It is not a sterile corporate office. It is very much a living and breathing neighborhood. So by creating that atmosphere you then get teammates who really feel a sense of community and who will go out of their way to do something special for a fellow teammate or for a patient or for a vendor.

“People tend to treat people differ-

ently in an environment like this,” Priest says.

DaVita's Brentwood office is home to Team Music City. It is composed of 425 teammates in 22 departments and is one of seven central business offices for the California-based company.

DaVita is the largest independent provider of dialysis services in the United States with about 1,400 outpatient facilities and acute units in more than 700 hospitals.

“There's a sense of energy that you wouldn't expect at a health care company,” says Lauren Clark, of the communications staff. “It's a completely different feeling.”

DaVita provides a comfortable work environment to balance the serious and somber nature of its business, treating patients with chronic kidney disease.

The Brentwood office features “lively, upbeat, real” music playing in the common areas and eclectic work areas that aren't subject to strict rules.

“A lot of places create a bunch of rules around how you take care of the building and we have removed all of those,” Priest says. “This is your house. Take care of it as you would.”

DaVita's culture is based on seven values, which were identified in a project involving 700 managers in 2000. The areas are service excellence, integrity, team, continuous improvement,



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accountability, fulfillment and fun.

“We honor people not for business performance, that's kind of an expected outcome of what you do every day,” Priest says. “But we honor people for their commitment to our mission and values.”

“Those core values are what you want to live by every day,” Clark says. “Not in your workplace but in your everyday life.”

Priest arranged for some fun during the fall. Inspired by watching school children play, Priest had volleyball nets and basketball goals set up in the parking lot for the teammates to use for a couple days during their breaks.

“Some people might say that's a waste,” Priest says. “Well, no. It builds team, it builds collaboration, it builds camaraderie, and people look forward to coming to work here.”

Thiry discussed the importance of DaVita's culture at an event sponsored by the Nashville Health Care Council in April 2007.

“The company has a truly unique workplace culture driven by dynamic CEO Kent Thiry,” says Council president Caroline Young. “They go to great lengths to create a team-centered, passionate and mission-driven environment for their staff and the patients they serve.”