

SecurAmerica LLC

By Allison Shirreffs

CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Turnover in the private contracted security services industry is alarmingly high — varying sources peg it anywhere from 100 percent to 300 percent. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics indicate that security guards make less than half the annual salary of police officers, and their benefit plans have been roundly criticized. Most security companies don't even offer sick days to their employees.

But Atlanta serial entrepreneur Frank Argenbright Jr. understood that the private security services industry was flawed. When he founded SecurAmerica LLC in late 2004, he made sure the company was privately owned. Company executives, including Argenbright, SecurAmerica's chairman and founder, could make decisions based on the best interests of customers and employees, not stock prices.

It's paying off. SecurAmerica's employees voted it one of Atlanta's 2007 Best Places To Work, coming in at No. 2 in the medium-sized employer category.

SecurAmerica hires the best employees available, trains them above and beyond the levels required by Georgia law, and then places them in organizations and situations best-suited for their particular skills.

As part of the screening process, applicants are tested for writing and communication skills.

"If they're great security officers but don't have great customer service skills, they don't need to be in an office situation," says John Adams, president of SecurAmerica. Good culture matches, as Adams calls them, result in lower turnover rates. With 1,000 total employees (300 in Atlanta), SecurAmerica's



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Securing the best staff:

SecurAmerica President John Adams, left, with Randall Jefferson, manager of HR and training.

turnover rate is 28 percent — well below the industry average.

Adams grew up poor. He went through the agony of losing his older brother because his family couldn't afford to pay for his medical care.

"[I] worked hard to get ahead because I never wanted to go back to my childhood environment," he said. "I feel I understand how our workforce views life. This helps me build our company's policies and programs around those things that will make a difference to our workforce."

To that end, benefits include affordable health insurance, a \$10,000 life insurance plan, long-term disability, a retirement plan, tuition assistance, vacation and holiday pay, and a sabbatical program at 10, 15 and 20 years of service.

Employees are rewarded on a regular basis for a job well done. The company also created the "SecurAmerica 110% Club." Throughout the year, employees collect points for various deeds, and the accumulated points afford them the opportunity to win prizes — including a large cash prize — at the company's annual banquet.

If Adams hears of someone doing a great job, he'll deliver a gift card and a certificate of recognition. "A few months ago I helped a person coming

into our building," wrote one employee in a survey conducted as part of the Atlanta's Best Places To Work program. "I guess they wrote a letter to Mr. Adams. He came by my site to see me and gave me a gift card to Target. He didn't have to do that. He spent time with me and told me how much he appreciated me doing a great job and how that helps grow the company."

Last Thanksgiving, Adams hand-delivered pies to SecurAmerica employees who were working. "We want them to know that without you, this wouldn't work," he says. "That those things you do, they stand out. We value you."

By this time next year, SecurAmerica (which in April was ranked Atlanta's No. 1 fastest-growing private company by Atlanta Business Chronicle) expects its workforce to hit the 2,000 mark. SecurAmerica's clients include real estate firms such as Hines, Barry Real Estate Companies Inc., InterContinental Hotels Group and FedEx Corp.



ATLANTA'S BEST PLACES TO WORK - MEDIUM COS.

Ranked by overall survey scores

Rank	Company*	Brief description of company or services offered	Type of company	Chief Atlanta officer(s)	Year established in Atlanta
1.	Hire Dynamics LLC 3479 Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road, Suite A (678) 482-8041 Suwanee, Ga. 30024 www.hiredynamics.com	skilled staffing and professional recruitment company; skilled staffing division specializes in call center, light industrial and clerical/administrative staffing; professional recruitment divisions find and recruit top candidates for sales and call center management, accounting and financial services, and pharmacy	private	Dan Campbell, Jon Neff	2001
2.	SecurAmerica LLC 3399 Peachtree Road N.E., Suite 1800 (404) 926-4200 Atlanta, Ga. 30326 www.securamericallc.com	physical security and manned guarding services for class A commercial high-rise, industrial, logistics and corporate campus environments	limited liability company	Frank A. Argenbright Jr., John K. Adams	2004
3.	Microsoft Corp. 1125 Sanctuary Parkway, Suite 300 (678) 629-5876 Alpharetta, Ga. 30004 www.microsoft.com	provides software, services and solutions that help people and businesses realize their full potential	public (Nasdaq: MSFT)	Maureen Flannagan	1988
4.	Grand Hyatt Atlanta 3300 Peachtree Road N.E. (404) 237-1234 Atlanta, Ga. 30305 www.grandhyattatlanta.com	serves leisure and corporate travelers, as well as large-scale meetings and conventions; the business hotels include technology, business and leisure facilities, banquet and conference facilities, and specialized programs that cater to business and vacation guests	private	Scott VandenBerg	1997
5.	RBM of Atlanta Inc. 7640 Roswell Road (770) 390-0700 Sandy Springs, Ga. 30350 www.rbmofatlanta.com	Mercedes-Benz dealer offering new and pre-owned cars and parts and service	private	John Ellis	1964
6.	Wells Real Estate Funds 6200 The Corners Parkway (770) 449-7800 Norcross, Ga. 30092 www.wellsref.com	real estate-based investment funds	private	Leo Wells III	1984
7.	The North Highland Co. 550 Pharr Road, Suite 850 (404) 233-1015 Atlanta, Ga. 30305 www.northhighland.com	international consulting company employing locally based consultants who achieve results for their clients in a unique way; works with large corporations worldwide and has 14 offices in the United States and partnerships throughout Europe	private	Dan Reardon, Dave Peterson, Dave Deiters	1992
8.	Jackson Healthcare Solutions 3650 Mansell Road, Suite 300 (770) 643-5500 Alpharetta, Ga. 30022 www.jacksonhealthcare.com	provides clinician staffing, anesthesia management and health-care information technology solutions that improve clinical and financial outcomes and increase operational efficiency	private	Richard L. Jackson	2000
9.	Moxie Interactive Inc. 384 Northyards Blvd. N.W., Suite 290 (404) 601-4500 Atlanta, Ga. 30313 www.moxieinteractive.com	provides digital marketing, including online advertising campaigns, e-mail marketing, ECRM programs, Web site design and development, sweepstakes and promotions, CD-ROMs, kiosks, digital signage and search engine marketing	public (owned by Zenith Media Services, a part of Publicis Groupe)	Kris Zagoria, Bob Conquest, Shelley Bertsch, Joel Lunenfeld	2000
10.	IDI Inc. 3424 Peachtree Road N.E., Suite 1500 (404) 479-4000 Atlanta, Ga. 30326 www.idi.com	a national, full-service industrial real estate developer, providing strategically located properties throughout the U.S. to meet its tenants' distribution, warehouse and light-manufacturing needs	private	Henry D. Gregory Jr.	1989
11.	Careerbuilder.com 5550-A Peachtree Parkway, Suite 200 (800) 891-8880 Norcross, Ga. 30092 www.careerbuilder.com	online job site with more than 22 million visitors and more than 1.5 million jobs	private	Michael Hargis, Eric Presley, Jeff Clark	1999
12.	Advanced Solutions Inc. dba ImageRight 1510 Klondike Road, Suite 400 (770) 860-0065 Conyers, Ga. 30094 www.imageright.com	insurance-focused content management and workflow systems	private	Michael Jansen, Don Elias	1992
13.	firstPRO Inc. 5607 Glenridge Drive, third and fourth floors (404) 252-9422 Atlanta, Ga. 30342 www.firstproinc.com	staffing and executive search firm specializing in accounting and finance, information technology, sales and marketing, life sciences, supply chain, manufacturing and engineering, legal, diversity, banking, insurance, administrative, clerical, light industrial	private	April Fawcett Nagel	1986
14.	Ackerman & Co. 10 Glenlake Parkway, South Tower, Suite 1000 (770) 913-3900 Atlanta, Ga. 30328 www.ackermanco.net	full-service real estate company specializing in brokerage, development, investment and management	private	Charles S. Ackerman	1967
15.	Grant Thornton LLP 245 Peachtree Center Ave. N.E., Marquis One, Suite 300 (404) 330-2000 Atlanta, Ga. 30303 www.grantthornton.com	provides assurance, tax and business advisory services, including valuations, due diligence, internal audit and enterprise cost reduction	private	André Schnabl	1968
16.	Medieval Times Dinner & Tournament 5900 Sugarloaf Parkway (888) 935-6878 Lawrenceville, Ga. 30043 www.medievaltimes.com	dinner attraction 11 miles northeast of the Atlanta Perimeter; four-course meal is served while being entertained by knights on horseback competing in medieval games of skill, sword fights and a jousting tournament	private	Jonathan Rico	2006
17.	CB Richard Ellis Inc. 3280 Peachtree Road, Terminus 100, Suite 1400 (404) 504-7900 Atlanta, Ga. 30305 www.cbre.com/atlanta	specializes in office, industrial and retail representation; office, industrial and retail landlord representation; property management; project and construction management; facilities management; corporate services; investment property sales; debt and equity placement; appraisal; financial consulting	public (NYSE: CBG)	John Ferguson, John Shlesinger, Sam Holmes, Brett Hunsaker, David Lanier	1973
18.	Cypress Care Inc. 2736 Meadow Church Road, Suite 300 (678) 730-1002 Duluth, Ga. 30097 www.cypresscare.com	manages claims expenses related to pharmacy and ancillary service benefits for the Workers Compensation, Auto and Medicare Set-Aside markets	private	David George	2001
19.	Frazier & Deeter LLC 600 Peachtree St. N.E., Suite 1900 (404) 253-7500 Atlanta, Ga. 30308 www.frazierdeeter.com	certified public accounting firm specializing in real estate and hospitality, manufacturing and distribution, technology, high-net-worth individuals, employee benefits, professional and advisory services	limited liability company	David A. Deeter	1981
20.	Windham Brannon P.C. 1355 Peachtree St., Suite 200 (404) 898-2000 Atlanta, Ga. 30309 www.windhambrannon.com	accounting and financial services firm that provides assurance and tax services, corporate governance, wealth management, executive compensation and litigation support for high-net-worth individuals and closely and publicly held entities	private	Charles L. McGimsey	1957

* Atlanta's Best Places To Work are the companies that scored highest in a survey of their employees conducted by Quantum Market Research Inc. during July and early August 2007. The companies on this list have 101 to 500 employees.

SOURCES: Atlanta Business Chronicle in conjunction with Quantum Market Research Inc. (www.qmrrinc.com)

It is not the intent of this list to endorse the participants or to imply that the listing of a company indicates its quality. Although every attempt is made to ensure the accuracy and thoroughness of Atlanta Business Chronicle charts, omissions sometimes occur. Please send corrections or additions on company letterhead to Rachael Gates, Research Associate, Atlanta Business Chronicle, 3423 Piedmont Road, Suite 400, Atlanta, Ga. 30305, or e-mail rgates@bizjournals.com.