

TOP WORKPLACES 2022

Royal United Mortgage a Top Workplace in Central Indiana for 14 consecutive years

Michael Jackson Special to IndyStar

For 14 consecutive years, Royal United Mortgage has been among the winners in The Indianapolis Star's annual ranking of the area's top workplaces. It's an achievement unmatched by any company in the annual survey of Central Indiana employers.

So how does a company within an industry that is filled with ebbs and flows stay on top despite market conditions? For the leaders at Royal United, it starts with a singular focus on the people.

Whether it's their team members or their customers, employees at Royal United say their people-first purpose is what sets them apart.

"We aren't a loan origination company. That's not what we do on a regular basis," said Royal United CEO Gabe Allen. "We are a people development company. And every bit of who we are, from the interview process through their first day of employment, it's really all about people development first and foremost."

Allen speaks from his own experience. He started with the company in 2009 as a loan advisor and has slowly risen to the top where he now leads more than 460 U.S. employees, including 338 at the company's headquarters near Castleton Mall on the Far Northside of Indianapolis.

Founded in 2008 during the Great Recession, Royal's mission is a simple one: make life better for its employees and customers.

"This is a place that is really more family oriented and thinks about the employees first," said Brandon Powe, who left a retail job to join Royal more than six years ago and now leads a team of 12 employees. "That's why I love coming here. I never had a job before this one where I enjoyed going to work."

Like a lot of companies, the pandemic forced Royal United leadership to rethink how work gets done. The company invested heavily in technology to give workers the tools needed to work remotely. And even as 95% of the team is back in the office, the lessons learned during the pandemic are manifesting in ways that are creating a more flexible work environment.

Some employees have moved out of state. Others may jump online at home in the evening because it works better for a customer. And adverse weather or unexpected home emergencies such as a sick child no longer prevent an employee from being able to work.

That commitment to the individual also is reflected in the company's approach to talent development. Allen and Wright say employees at Royal create their own career paths. It's not uncommon for employees to move into leadership positions within 18 to 24 months.

Even though the opportunity exists to move quickly into a leadership position with Royal, Allen acknowledges that the mortgage industry isn't for everyone — even when record home sales and prices are a boon for lenders and their employees.

While the past 18 months of record sales and home prices have made the job easy for some, the industry faces an uncertain 2022 as the Federal Reserve works to curb inflation. Mortgage rates have hit a 12-year high and home sales have started to slow compared to 2021 levels.

But Powe and others say the company is well-positioned to continue to be a local leader in the mortgage business and continue to hold onto its title as a top workplace in Central Indiana.

Royal CEO Allen echoes that sentiment.

"When you really develop is when times are tough," Allen said. "It's times like this when you advance your career and make a name for yourself. That's part of it, but the bigger goal is to keep people aligned around our purpose and how we treat our employees and customers."

Bottom Line

- Founded: 2008
- Central Indiana locations: 1
- Description: Royal United Mortgage is a mortgage lending company who said its mission is simple: make life better for its employees and customers.
- Employees in Central Indiana: 338

Michael Jackson is a local freelance consumer journalist.



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