

P O W E R E D B Y

PURPOSE



2024 Benefit Report
2023 Yearbook

P O W E R E D B Y

PURPOSE

Firespring 2024 Benefit Report and 2023 Yearbook

P O W E R E D B Y

PURPOSE

Firespring 2024 Benefit Report and 2023 Yearbook

by Jay Wilkinson and Firespring



Published by
Do More Good Publishing®
Lincoln, Nebraska
domoregoodpublishing.com

First printed edition April 2024

Copyright © 2024 by Jay Wilkinson, Firespring and Do More Good Publishing

All rights reserved by the author and by Do More Good Publishing

Because this book is our creation (and we're proud of our work), please don't reproduce or copy it. That means no photocopying or recording, information browsing, storage or retrieval system. If for some reason you're really wanting to do any of those things, you're welcome to ask our permission in writing, and we'll gladly chat with you!

ISBN

979-8-9881275-2-9 (Powered by Purpose - The Firespring 2024 Benefit Report and 2023 Yearbook paperback 4/5/2024)

979-8-9881275-3-6 (Powered by Purpose - The Firespring 2024 Benefit Report and 2023 Yearbook eBook 4/5/2024)

Printed in the United States of America by



Lincoln, Nebraska



CONTENTS

2	Introduction	40	2023 Values Hall of Fame
4	Planting the Seed	66	2022 Values Hall of Fame
8	Impact Report	68	2021 Values Hall of Fame
10	Certified B Corporations®	70	Successes
14	2023 Power of 3	76	Akira
15	UN Global Compact	78	Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
16	Supporting Our Community	82	Culture Club
26	Do More Good Movement	84	2023 Events
30	Sharing is Caring	152	Office Cribs
32	Firestarter	154	Pets of Firespring
34	2023 F Recipients	156	Team Swag

2023 VALUES HALL OF FAME

Aaron Grauer | 42

Bridget Anderson | 44

Kiersten Hill | 46

Steve Schamp | 48

Lori Evers | 50

Jeff Norris | 52

Steve Schrody | 54

Deb Brazau | 56

Levai Alles | 58

Amanda Wettlaufer | 60

Stella Salas | 62

Charlie McIntosh | 64

2023 EVENTS

Robbers' Cave Holiday Party | 86

Shuffleboard League | 90

Chili Chili Bang Bang | 92

Firespring Face Off | 96

Not ENerf | 98

Marcho Madness | 99

Grilled Cheese Day | 100

Earth Day Cleanup | 102

Poker Night | 103

Breakfast Club | 104

May the Crawfish Be with You | 106

Gutterfest | 108

Culture Club Cook-out | 112

Omaha Storm Chasers | 113

Firespring Potluck | 114

Alumni Party | 115

Ice Cream Truck | 118

Kona Ice | 119

Firespring Goes to the Zoo | 120

Kick-off Potluck | 122

Tailgate Party | 124

Ignite Lincoln | 125

SBF Head-Shaving | 126

Pumpkin Patch Palooza | 130

Shuffleboard Tournament | 134

Spooky Trivia | 135

Souptacular | 136

Trick-or-Treating | 139

Thanksgiving | 140

General Knowledge Trivia | 144

Santa | 145

White Elephant | 148

The minute you step into Firespring's global HQ in Lincoln, Nebraska, you know you've entered a special place.

You'll be greeted by our welcoming and beloved MOFIs—managers of first impressions. Take a right into our break room, and you'll find team members catching up over free coffee, soda or (after hours) beer. From there, you can wander into our spacious hangout area with comfy couches, a pool table and shuffleboard, a mini spa, plus a stand-up meeting spot for our daily Firestarter—all in a space we call the Firepit.

And you won't be able to miss the huge slide smack dab in the middle, which serves as a quick and easy (and ridiculously fun) way to get from the office area upstairs down to our gathering space. It's a pretty cool place to spend your working hours, for sure.

But as much as we love the perks, a cool office space is not what makes Firespring special. Companies don't make an impact in their communities because of slides or toys or cool stuff; it's about people who are aligned with one another and focused on making an impact outside their own walls.

We have nice perks, but it's our shared values that make us a formidable force.

At Firespring, we've worked hard to create a vibrant culture that attracts top talent and passionate employees who want to work for something bigger than themselves. And while we've had our fair share of ups and downs, we've been able to sustain it for over 30 years now, whether we're all congregating together in the Firepit or connecting virtually via Zoom. Post-pandemic, we've embraced a hybrid work environment, allowing our team members to work from their home office or a Firespring office, and our commitment to do good has not wavered.

Here's how we've done it.

We know—and embrace—our values.



Bring it. Every day.



Have each other's back.



Give a shit.

Excuse our language on the third, but when we express it that way, people really rally around the sentiment because (and this is important) they know exactly what it means. Firespringers connect to these values because they make sense, they resonate and people can identify how to tangibly live them out.

We hire according to our values.

Once we established our values, we brought people on board who readily embraced them—and we continue to do so. At Firespring, we hire first for culture fit and second for skill set. Why? Because we can't change people after we've hired them. We can train them, we can educate them, we can help them develop skills—but we can't fundamentally change them and how they do or don't align with our values.

Because we allow remote work, we've expanded our talent pool beyond Nebraska's borders, which gives us even greater potential to find people who fit our culture, mission and values. In fact, 28% of our job candidates come from outside the state. Thanks to our IT team, we have the technology in place to allow workers to safely and securely join our team and work from anywhere they want.

We live our values.

Supporting our community and nonprofit organizations is a non-negotiable at Firespring. We require each team member to spend a portion of their work hours each month volunteering for a cause of their choice. This is a tangible way we embrace our third value, and we are constantly looking for opportunities to care more and make an impact; volunteering is never a one-and-done deal. It's embedded in our DNA.

Creating a dynamic culture cannot be accomplished overnight; it's an evolving process that requires consistent attention, care and evaluation.

In the end, the efforts are worth it because we'll not only have improved the lives of our team members, we'll have furthered our impact on the world and advanced the causes we so passionately champion. That, after all, is what we're here for.



The Firespring Promise

OUR PEOPLE

We value people above profit. If we take great care of our people, our people will take great care of our clients.

OUR CLIENTS

We are obsessed with our clients' success. Each and every client has the capacity to change the world. The more clients we have, the more impact we make.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

We work with purpose, and we live our values. We believe in fixing what's broken and cultivating what works. We are invested in the power of transparency. We are aligned in our words and actions. We make and keep big promises.

Nebraska's
First B Corp™



A Letter from Jay

At the end of my sophomore year in high school, I was elected to serve on my school's Student Council. In order to be eligible to participate the following year, I was told I had to attend a summer leadership camp facilitated by what is now known as Launch Leadership.

I registered reluctantly. And thank goodness I did, because the experience changed the direction of my life.

Inspired by the volunteer staff and four days of hands-on, experiential activities, I learned who I was for the first time. I went back home re-wired as a servant leader with an open mind and a passion to be a difference-maker in my school and community. On that long drive home, I made a commitment that I would form a company one day with the mission to make a difference in the world. In 1992, I started a printing business that grew and expanded into Firespring and I've been fortunate to lead a team of difference-makers ever since.

We've had some incredible ups: In 2014, Firespring became the first Certified B Corporation in Nebraska. In 2016, we were featured in Inc. Magazine as one of the 50 Best Places to Work in America. In 2017, we were included in the Inc. 5000 as one of the fastest growing companies for the seventh time—a statistical anomaly.

We've also had our share of downs. Our team was deeply affected during and immediately after the pandemic when we lost key team members in what corporate America coined "the Great Resignation."

We also lost three members to untimely deaths. The early 2020s ushered in trials that we'd never faced as a company—it was a challenging time for sure.

Even in tough times, we've stayed focused on our mission. With a motto to "find a better way," we became a resilient bunch that refused to give up on our goals, and there's not a month that goes by when we don't grow and change and look for ways to right the ship, if necessary. As we enter into 2024, I'm excited about how strong we've become as a team and our unwavering commitment to continue to do more good.

One thing that has never changed through both the good and difficult times is the love, admiration and respect we have for the people who make Firespring a great place to build a career.

Every day, I'm thankful that, for over 30 years, I've gotten to lead this special company that truly embodies the sentiment in Stephen Grellet's words written more than 100 years ago—the very words that inspired me that summer in high school when my life changed for good.

*"Do more good and do it now.
You will not pass this way again."*



Jay Wilkinson
Founder and CEO of Firespring



"I expect to pass through this world but once. Any good, therefore that I can do or any kindness I can show, let me do it now. Let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again."

— STEPHEN GRELLET



"Firespring really gives a shit about people, even before they're brought on board. Despite the pandemic, the hiring and interviewing process was smooth and relaxed. I've never experienced an interview where who I am had just as much (or more) weight than my resume. It was awesome. My first few weeks as a team member were incredibly structured and allowed me to be a sponge, soaking up the role responsibilities as well as Firespring's culture. I loved it!"

—**Ashley Frevert**, Account Coordinator

"As a company, we've always been in a fortunate position to get to work with top talent across the country as part of our remote workforce. The pandemic required us to adapt like the rest of the world and mobilize the majority of our workforce, which also empowered us to think outside the box in order to bring a traditional three-dimensional space of teams, meetings, events and culture into a relatively new two-dimensional cyberspace of sorts.

These new obstacles also allowed for new growth opportunities with roles, teams, engagement and onboarding efforts, including widening our candidate pool from coast to coast. In the past month, I've reviewed applications from candidates in California, Colorado, South Dakota and New York, to name a few.

Our IT and HR team members continue to evolve our technology and processes in order to improve our interviewing and onboarding experience for new remote team members, which speaks volumes to the people-centric focus here at Firespring. Technology makes it possible, but our people make it happen.

So where do we go from here? To infinity and beyond... #love."

—**Nick Shybut**, Chief Client Experience Officer

Firespring B Impact Report

Firespring is proud to be Nebraska's first Certified B Corporation®. By voluntarily meeting rigorous standards of transparency, accountability and performance, B Corps™ distinguish themselves by offering a positive vision of a better way to do business. The B Impact Assessment is a tool that keeps Firespring accountable to our B Corp commitment, which requires that our directors and officers consider the interests of all stakeholders, not just shareholders, when making decisions.

To be clear, our Certified B Corporation status is more than just a label or badge; the principles and values it represents define our culture and fuel our growth. We recognize that our social and environmental impact are just as important as bottom-line profitability. But make no mistake about it: We know that the more profit we make, the more good we can do—so we believe in growth and prosperity.

Certified



Corporation

** Median score of Ordinary Businesses that have completed the B Impact Assessment (BIA).

*** Median scores of all Certified B Corporations that have received a minimum certified score of 80 on the BIA.

**** For Ordinary Businesses and B Corps, Total B Impact Scores will not equal the sum of the sub-scores since each reflects a median score.

2023 Overall Impact Score <i>Updated every 3 years.</i>	Firespring 128.4 pts	B Corps*** 80 pts****	Ordinary Businesses** 50.9 pts****
Governance	23.3	14	6
Mission & Engagement	5.3	+	+
Transparency	8.0	4	3
+ Mission Locked	10.0	+	+
Workers	30.3	26	20
Financial Security	10.8	17	15
Health, Wellness & Safety	4.5	3	1
Career Development	6.7	+	+
Engagement & Satisfaction	8.1	+	+
Community	54.3	44	15
Diversity, Equity & Inclusion	7.6	2	1
Economic Impact	5.8	3	1
Civic Engagement & Giving	11.5	5	2
Supply Chain Management	0.0	6	3
+ Designed to Give	26.8	+	+
Environment	9.3	13	6
Environmental Management	4.9	5	3
Air & Climate	0.9	3	1
Water	0.5	1	1
Land & Life	3.0	+	+
Customers	11.0	18	5
Customer Stewardship	2.8	+	+
+ Support for Underserved/ Purpose Driven Enterprises	8.1	+	+

What is a Certified B Corporation?

B Corporation certification (also known as B Lab® certification or B Corp certification) is a private certification issued to for-profit companies by B Lab, a global nonprofit organization with offices in the United States, Europe, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and a partnership in Latin America with Sistema B. To be granted and to preserve certification, companies must receive a minimum score on an online assessment for “social and environmental performance,” and satisfy the requirement that the company integrate B Lab commitments to stakeholders into company governing documents. Companies must re-certify every three years to retain their B Corp status.

Firespring’s B Corp Journey:

Firespring became the first company in Nebraska to achieve B Corp certification in July 2014. At the time, there were slightly more than 1,000 Certified B Corporations worldwide. Today there are over 8,000.

Becoming a Certified B Corporation introduced Firespring to a community of like-minded businesses from diverse industries, countries and cultures. We are companies who advocate, educate and inspire—each other and the world—to do better. And we proudly carry the flag for this community of leaders as we work together toward a single unifying goal: using business as a force for good.

What is a benefit corporation and how is it different than a Certified B Corporation?

Benefit corporation is a legal status conferred by state law in the United States whereas B Lab certification is issued by a private organization and has no legislative framework. B Lab certification is not needed to obtain benefit corporation status. Legislation for the passage of this corporate legal status has been passed in 37 states, including Nebraska.

A benefit corporation voluntarily meets the highest standards of corporate purpose, accountability and transparency. Benefit corporations have a corporate purpose to create a material positive impact on society and the environment, have expanded the fiduciary duty of their directors to include consideration of stakeholder interests and are required to report on their overall social and environmental performance.

Firespring's Benefit Corporation Journey:

Firespring, Inc. became the first legally incorporated benefit corporation in the state of Nebraska, having filed on the date that the Nebraska Benefit Corporation Act became effective on July 18, 2014.

Benefits of Becoming a Certified B Corporation and Benefit Corporation

A community of leaders with shared values. The strength of the B Corp community—and the sense of being part of something bigger than our individual business—is one of the most deeply fulfilling aspects of B Corp certification.

Protecting Firespring's mission for the long term. B Corps, in addition to meeting rigorous standards of social and environmental performance, amend our governing documents to be more supportive of maintaining their social and environmental mission over time.

Identifying areas for improvement. B Corp certification is an independent, precise, third-party standard that evaluates every aspect of our business—from how we treat our team members, to our community involvement, to our overall effect on the environment. We believe this will help us continue to create social, environmental and financial value.

Attracting and retaining top talent. Many studies have shown that the best people want to work for a company with a larger purpose. B Corp certification helps us signal to prospective and existing team members that we are committed to using business as a force for good.

Building collective voice. Many of the movements taking place around the globe—from clean tech, microfinance and sustainable agriculture to the buy local and cooperative ownership movements—are manifestations of the same idea: how to use business for good. The B Corporation organizes and amplifies the voices of this diverse marketplace behind the power of a unifying brand.

Firespring Board of Directors 2023 Benefit Corporation Act Statement

The board of directors of Firespring, Inc. prepared the following statement pursuant to the requirements of Nebraska Rev. Stat. 21-401 to 414, otherwise known as the Nebraska Benefit Corporation Act:

“It is the opinion of the board of directors of Firespring, Inc. that the benefit corporation succeeded in pursuing its general public benefit purpose in all material respects for the calendar year 2023.”

Firespring, Inc. Board of Directors:

Jay Wilkinson, *Chairman and Benefit Officer*

Dustin Behrens, *Secretary and Treasurer*

Tawnya Starr

Molly Coke

Firespring, Inc. has facilities in Lincoln and Omaha, Nebraska, and Council Bluffs, Iowa. Its corporate address is 1201 Infinity Court, Lincoln, NE 68512. More details about Firespring, Inc. and how our B Corp certification impacts team members, customers, communities and the environment can be found at firespring.com.

2023 Power of 3

Minimum Target

- 1% of Profits
- 2% of Products
- 3% of People

Firespring is committed to leveraging our people, products and profit to do more good. We care deeply and work side by side across teams to bring it every day and make a positive mark on the world.

As a purpose-driven organization that truly walks the talk, Firespring understands the unique challenges and responsibilities nonprofits and businesses face and embraces high levels of accountability and transparency. We pride ourselves on being great stewards to the community through our Power of 3 program.

2023 Results

Profits: \$344,000 donated to nonprofits.

Products: \$1.4M in-kind donations of products and services.

People: 10,916 hours donated to causes we care about.

Total Power of 3 Financial Impact in 2023: **\$2.1 Million**

Firespring is a Member of the UN Global Compact



The United Nations Global Compact initiative is a voluntary leadership platform for the development, implementation and disclosure of responsible business practices. We joined thousands of other global companies that are committed to taking responsible business action to create a world we all want to live in. This is in line with our commitment to leverage our people, products and profit to do more good, as well as our status as a Certified B Corporation®. To us, our social and environmental impact are just as important as bottom-line profitability.

Launched in 2000, the UN Global Compact is the largest corporate sustainability initiative in the world, with more than 20,000 companies based in over 160 countries and more than 70 local networks. It's a call to companies everywhere to align their operations and strategies with 10 universally accepted principles in the areas of human rights, labor, environment and anti-corruption, and to take action in support of UN goals and issues embodied in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



Supporting Our Community is in Our DNA

Community service has been part of the Firespring story from day one. The very foundation of our company was built on the concept of kindness and servant leadership.

We've known from the beginning that if we wanted community impact to be a pillar of Firespring's culture, we would need to hire and inspire team members willing to make community service a meaningful part of their lives. So, instead of simply pulling out our checkbook and matching donations, we urged people to get out into the world, roll up their sleeves and get their hands dirty, so to speak.

The result? Our team members began sharing stories of doing more good, connecting with one another and becoming happier individuals not only at work but overall. Today, every team member gets one paid day off each month to volunteer in the community in any way they'd like—whether it's in person, virtually or both.

In 2023, our team members volunteered over 10,916 hours to local organizations.

By supporting our team members' ability to volunteer—and holding them accountable—we've created meaningful change in our community and our people.

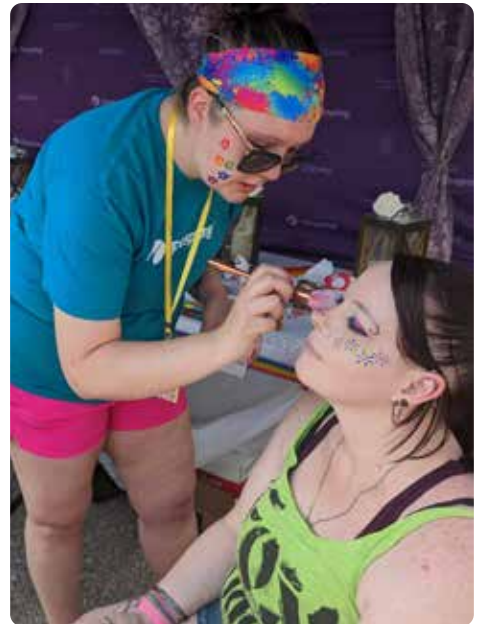
Giving as a Team

Sometimes we get together and pool our time, talent and energy to make a bigger impact than we could alone, like during Lincoln's Pride Parade, Boo at the Zoo and our annual St. Baldrick's head-shaving event to raise money for childhood cancer.

Lincoln's Star City Pride Parade

Firespring is all about showing #love and support to everyone, and we're always thrilled to celebrate the LGBTQIA+ community at the Star City Pride Parade each June. This year, we decorated the booth with a fairy theme (that's right, we were the Firespring Fairies!), so we donned our fairy wings, spread body-safe "fairy dust" everywhere (you know how glitter is) and offered face painting for all our booth visitors. We love spreading the love (and glitter) in support of our LGBTQIA+ brothers, sisters and community members.





#love ↻

St. Baldrick's Head-Shaving Event

In September, we hosted our 14th annual head-shaving event for St. Baldrick's at The Mill Telegraph. This is an exciting event where brave shavees, volunteers and supporters gather to raise money for childhood cancer research. The success of this event is driven by those willing to part with their hair, at least temporarily (thankfully, it usually grows back). Our shavees volunteer to go bald to stand in solidarity with kids who have cancer. At this beloved event, bald truly is beautiful.

St. Baldrick's Foundation is a longtime Firespring client based in California. They're a volunteer-driven charity committed to funding the most promising research to find cures for childhood cancers, **funding more grants than any organization except the U.S. government.**

2023 Numbers

Total Raised: **\$11,223**

Total Shavees: **7**

Teams: **4**

Top 3 Fundraisers:

Wendi Jensen **\$1,792.36**

Brophy Ringdahl **\$1,493.10**

Dylan Matthews **\$981.00**



Boo at the Zoo

One of Lincoln Children's Zoo's longest-standing and most popular traditions, Boo at the Zoo is Lincoln's largest trick-or-treat event. Families come from all over the area, decked out in costumes and ready to stroll through the zoo, visiting over 40 trick-or-treat booths to get candy, kids meal coupons and more. All of the money raised during Boo at the Zoo directly supports the zoo and its animals. Fun fact: Lincoln Children's Zoo has been a Firespring client (both print and website) for 12 years.

This year, nine Firespringers donned their best Encanto costumes and reprised this theme at the zoo's request because they'd received so much positive feedback about our first go-around. Fun fact: This was our 11th year to participate in one of Lincoln's favorite family events.

Trick-or-treaters: **9,562**
Attendees: **18,159**



Giving as Individuals

When we're not giving as a team, we follow our personal passions to places where we can pour our lives into organizations or causes that have captured our individual hearts.





Our Big Three

As part of our Power of 3 program, we give 1% of our revenue to nonprofits. In order to maximize our impact, we are hyper-focused on providing substantial support to the following three organizations.



Foundry Community: Firespring pledged over \$1 million in 2015 to create a community space that now serves as home base for hundreds of nonprofit organizations. Through coworking, coffee (shout out Bagels & Joe) and community, the Foundry has become ground zero for Lincoln's robust nonprofit sector. More than financial support, we also roll up our sleeves and get our hands dirty, literally, to show some TLC to the Foundry building when necessary. Last October, 27 of us spent a day cleaning, tidying and freshening up the building for everyone who uses it.



Do More Good® Movement: Founded in 2018, the Do More Good® Movement was created to educate, empower and amplify companies and business leaders doing more good. The organization's signature event is the ROI of Why conference held every year. In 2020, Just Do Business was launched as a new division of DMG to educate and inspire Nebraska business leaders to take action on economic inclusion for Black residents across the state.



Launch Leadership: Designed to empower young leaders to transform their communities and change the world, this organization is the one Jay mentions in his introduction letter. Their flagship leadership experience, Summer Leadership Workshop, is powered entirely by volunteer staff members and hosted on Doane University's campus. The program serves thousands of students entering grades 6-12 from all over the country.




Firespring

+ Do More Good Movement

= A Greater Force for Good

Founded in 2018, the Do More Good® Movement was created to educate, empower and amplify companies and business leaders doing more good. The organization's signature event is the ROI of Why conference held every spring. Thousands of people from all 50 states and all over the world have attended the inspiring annual event.



“We firmly believe that a rising tide lifts all boats. Our goal is to be that tide.”

—Jay Wilkinson





The **WHY** Behind the Do More Good[®] Movement

This movement was created to educate, empower and amplify businesses to pursue their path to purpose so they can do more good. Even the most well-intentioned businesses need a guide.

We are living in a new normal where social responsibility and transparency have moved to the forefront as consumer expectations have evolved. Businesses are being asked to explain their “why,” their inspiration to serve, their justification for consumers’ attention and their standing in the marketplace. Businesses embracing the change are thriving as they clearly articulate, implement and live out their “why.” Meanwhile, those ignoring the changing economic realities are falling by the wayside as they fail to define their value and purpose.

The Do More Good[®] Movement, initiated to encourage businesses to focus on their purpose and social responsibility, is gaining momentum. In today’s evolving consumer landscape, where transparency and social responsibility are paramount, businesses are increasingly expected to articulate and live out their core purpose or “why.” This shift toward purpose-driven business practices is not only reshaping consumer expectations but also determining business success. Companies that embrace their “why” are thriving, while those ignoring these new economic realities struggle to remain relevant. The Do More Good[®] Movement champions a “Main Street” approach to capitalism, emphasizing problem-solving, creating fulfilling work environments and building stronger customer and employee relationships. By fostering purpose-driven values, businesses, their employees and communities are poised to flourish.

Be Our Guest, Be Our Guest

We love our office space, and it seems selfish to keep it to ourselves—so we're all about sharing the love (and our giant slide) with organizations that would like to use it. For nonprofits, the fee is zero dollars to “rent” our cool digs for meetings and events—just one more way we're able to support some of the people making the world a better place.



"What a joy you are to work with! I can't express how grateful I am for all of your help with our conference. From all the time changes to our guest requests, you were all smiles all the time and so willing to help. You made my job super easy. Firespring is lucky to have you on their team. I hope to work with you again soon."

—**Kate Holman**,
Advancement Director
Mourning Hope Grief Center

"Thank you for all your help setting up our DEI Training last month. You made my job so much easier, and I can't thank you enough. You do so much! By providing a space for HopeSpoke's staff to learn, you and Firespring are helping us bring healing and hope to Nebraska's youth!"

—**Paige Kruse**,
Executive and Development Coordinator
HopeSpoke

"We use this space every year! It's a fantastic area, and the families love it here!"

—A thank-you note from
the Down Syndrome Association for Families

**Shout-out to our managers of first impressions,
Jayden and Sara, who roll out the red carpet to guests.**



The Firestarter: 11 Minutes at 11:11

Every workday, we gather together as one big crew, both online and in person, for our Firestarter—an 11-minute all-team standup where we accomplish several things in a quick but important daily get-together. This tradition has lasted for over a decade, and it's an integral part of each day for our team. Here's how these important 11 minutes roll out:

First, we welcome guests, celebrate birthdays and shout-out work anniversaries. Guests are always welcome—clients, friends/family, people taking a tour, etc. So, we take a few minutes to highlight the “who’s who” among us, plus highlight important milestones.

Then good news, better ways and big wins permeate the air. We liberally sprinkle shout outs and high fives to coworkers who've gone above and beyond that week—it's an important time to recognize those who are giving a shit and having backs.

Next, we run through a quick status update. Someone from every team gives a quick status update of their squad's projects and goals on the Firestarter board for that week, which serves a few important purposes: It gives everyone insight into what other teams are working on, and it holds us accountable (and keeps us focused on) that week's goals.

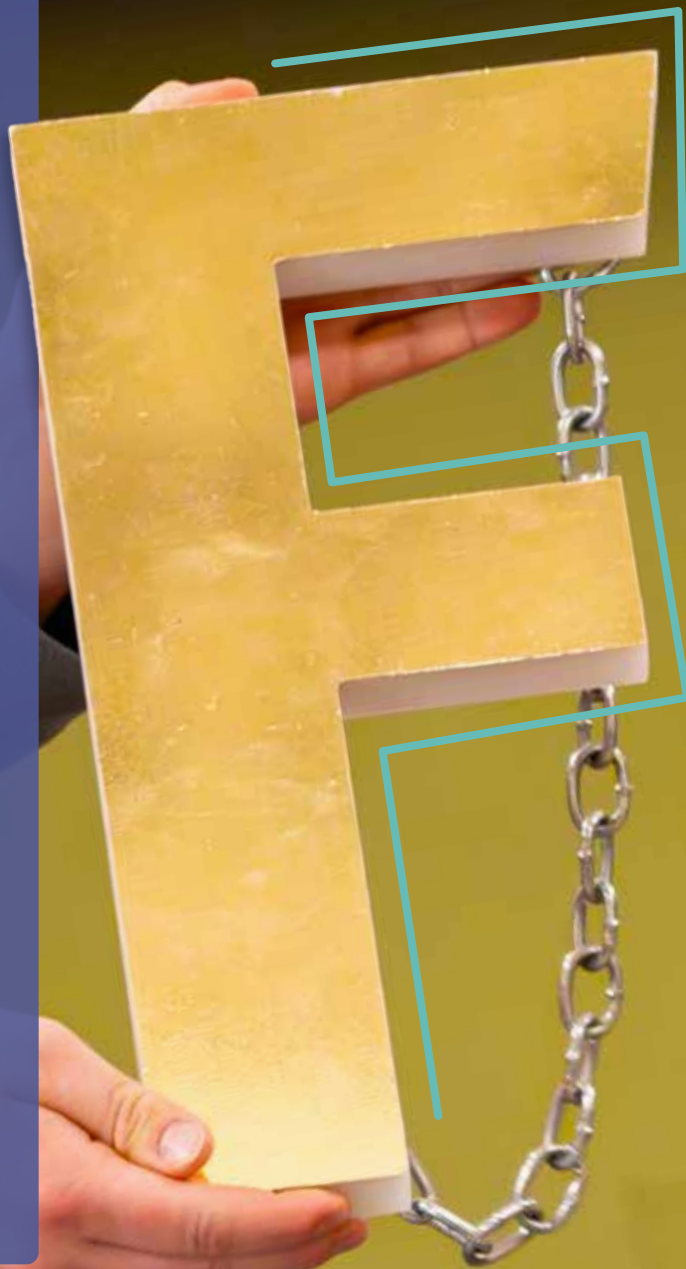
Then we have a quick moment of “here's a heads up.” Following status updates, there's an opportunity for anyone to voice potential “risks or challenges” for the week, which makes us aware of any goal-blockers or hiccups that may arise.

And finally, we end on a note of unison. To wrap up every Firestarter, an assigned team member leads us in a rousing cheer—everything from “Do work!” to “This day in history . . .” to “Husker Power!” and beyond. This sends us back to our desks, ready to live our best lives and take on the rest of the day—and maybe a follow-up on Slack to give context for a particularly obscure cheer. (As much as we love each other, we're not always in tune with the same pop culture references or cult followings.)

Giving an F

Going a few levels beyond our most colloquial value (to) give a shit (and flirting with the limits of HR compliance), giving an F recognizes a Firespringer who's gone above and beyond the day-to-day shit-giving that's expected of all of us and delivered at the very highest level.

It became a thing in 2012 when Firespring had just moved into its current location and we were installing a new lobby sign. Through a series of events, we acquired an extra F (without the “irespring”). Instead of tossing it in the trash, we turned it into a traveling trophy, passing from one team member to another who deserved extra recognition. Along the way, we added flair with a chain and gold foil, and today the Golden F is a coveted award within the Firespring family—given ceremoniously each week to a favored fellow team member. (One man's trash is indeed another man's treasure.)



2023 F Recipients

Aaron Grauer

from Nicole Swanson

Nicole Swanson gave the **F** to Aaron Grauer. Aaron is a great designer who works hard to create amazing and beautiful websites for Firespring's clients. As the Firespring song guru, Nicole appreciates his music knowledge and contributions to the Firestarter.

Sarah Robbins

from Aaron Grauer

Aaron Grauer awarded the **F** to Sarah Robbins, recognizing her as an incredible back-haver. Sarah is a rock for Firespring and holds a special place in Grauer's personal and professional esteem.

Lisa Thompson

from Sarah Robbins

The **F** goes to Lisa Thompson. Lisa has been with Firespring for over 16 years and became one of Firespring's first remote team members when she moved to California. Her exceptional ability to capture the Firespring voice further accentuates her invaluable contributions.

Bridget Anderson

from Lisa Thompson

Lisa Thompson presented the **F** to Bridget Anderson as she continually makes Lisa's job easier. Bridget is wicked smart, a great creative brief writer, and truly gives a shit about her projects.

Megan Shoemaker

from Bridget Anderson

This week's **F** went to Megan Shoemaker, whom Bridget recognized as an empowering, strong woman. She enjoys working with Megan when she is given the chance and appreciates Megan's use of her amazing photography skills to remind Bridget that her light can shine in the darkness.

Leah Abbott

from Megan Shoemaker

Megan Shoemaker awarded the **F** to Leah Abbott. Leah is a gem and consistently adds value to the work at Firespring and clients' sites. Megan enjoys working with Leah as she is always living the Firespring values.

Molly McCabe

from Leah Abbott

This week's **F** went to Molly McCabe. Leah Abbott recognized her as someone who is kind, has great attention to detail and handles complex projects with grace. Molly truly cares about clients and the team.

Kiersten Hill

from Molly McCabe

Molly McCabe awarded the **F** to Kiersten Hill. Molly enjoys working with her and how she always WOWs Firespring's clients. Kiersten's involvement in the website projects significantly enhances the output. Firespring is fortunate to have her as a part of the team.

Megan Guenther

from Kiersten Hill

Kiersten Hill presented the **F** to Megan Guenther. Megan always goes above and beyond for clients and the team. She is constantly looking for better ways and has a "get it done" attitude that makes the work day run smoother.

Aaron Mack

from Megan Guenther

The **F** goes to Aaron Mack. He is a joy to work with and Megan is always impressed with Aaron's professionalism, work ethic, consistency meeting deadlines and so much more. Megan's role requires strong organizational skills, but Aaron gives her a run for her money with his organization.

Mike Losee

from Aaron Mack

Aaron Mack awarded the **F** to Mike Losee. Mike is always a friendly face around the office. During one of their first client projects together, Aaron was impressed with how organized and thoughtful Mike's pitch was. Mike's professionalism and demeanor emulates his ability to represent Firespring.

Julie Hull

from Mike Losee

This week's **F** is for Julie Hull. Julie is no stranger to living Firespring's values. She always goes the extra mile and has an abundance of institutional knowledge about Firespring and our clients.

Jen Bruhl

from Julie Hull

Julie Hull gave the **F** to Jen Bruhl, recognizing her for the behind-the-scenes work she does every day to keep things running smoothly. Jen embodies the Firespring values as she is willing to help out and is always looking for a better way.

Katie Wilson

from Jen Bruhl

Jen Bruhl awarded the **F** to Katie Wilson. Katie always brings positivity to work. She is always willing to help and isn't afraid to find a better way.

Lori Evers

from Katie Wilson

The **F** goes to Lori Evers. Katie recognized Lori's care for her clients over the decades and noted that she is both caring and knowledgeable in everything she does.

Steve Schrodtt

from Lori Evers

Lori Evers presented the **F** to Steve Schrodtt. Steve provides a great attitude and attention to detail alongside his caring and fun personality.

Connor Johnson

from Steve Schrodtt

This week's **F** went to Connor Johnson. Steve praised Connor's widespread care for his work. Connor works unorthodox hours and in three locations, which is vital to Firespring.

Jeff Norris

from Connor Johnson

Connor Johnson gave the **F** to Jeff Norris. From tricky camera installations to cooling down an overheated server room, Jeff is always willing to help.

Emily Lowe

from Jeff Norris

The **F** goes to Emily Lowe. Emily has many responsibilities in the Omaha office. Jeff shared his admiration for how quickly she solves problems and her organizational skills.

Ahriel Mireles

from Emily Lowe

Emily Lowe awarded the **F** to Ahriel Mireles. After only two months on the Firespring team, Ahriel has provided so much help. Emily recognized that she is quick to act and appreciated her willingness to speak with team members in person.

Dan Morrissey

from Ahriel Mireles

Ahriel Mireles crowdsourced ideas for the next **F** and presented it to Dan Morrissey. While being down a driver, Dan, among others, frequently stepped up to ensure deliveries made it to their intended destinations.

Steve Schamp

from Dan Morrissey

This week's **F** is for Steve Schamp. Dan appreciates that if he ever needs anything, Steve is always ready to help out.

Nate McKean

from Steve Schamp

Steve Schamp presented the **F** to Nate McKean. Steve recognized Nate's willingness to help, no matter the task or time of day.

Darcy Lijoodi

from Nate McKean

The **F** goes to Darcy Lijoodi. Darcy quickly made a great impression and has brought the lines of communication—among all teams—to the forefront.

Deb Brazau

from Darcy Lijoodi

Darcy Lijoodi gave the **F** to Deb Brazau, recognizing her for all the help she has provided in a realm of tasks.

Andy Turner

from Deb Brazau

This week's **F** goes to Andy Turner. Andy was a great trainer on all things mailing and post office work. Andy is a great guy!

Josh Chmiel

from Andy Turner

Andy Turner awarded the **F** to Josh Chmiel. Andy recognized Josh for always being there for his team. He works hard on projects and everyone can count on him to provide quality work.

Kassie Templeton

from Josh Chmiel

The **F** goes to Kassie Templeton. Even though he has only worked with her over Slack, Josh can tell Kassie has others' backs and truly gives a shit.

Darren Mareno

from Kassie Templeton

Kassie Templeton presented the **F** to Darren Mareno. Darren has taken on new tasks with a smile on his face, which is highly appreciated by the Firespring team.

Tom Hanus

from Darren Mareno

This week's **F** goes to Tom Hanus. In addition to managing his day-to-day work, Tom has taken on a big role with the Ramona & Ruth production. He doesn't hesitate to help out if anyone needs anything.

Sean White

from Tom Hanus

Tom Hanus gave the **F** to Sean White. The man, the myth, the legend, Sean White, adapts to new challenges and brings it every day. Sean also has some top-notch dad jokes.

Dave Jensen

from Sean White

The **F** goes to Dave Jensen. Sean appreciates Dave's helpfulness with deliveries and being an all-around team player.

Rhonda Halligan

from Dave Jensen

Dave Jensen awarded the **F** to Rhonda Halligan. Rhonda is at work by the crack of dawn, ready to greet the Omaha team and visitors. She always gives a shit and keeps everyone's invoices in line.

Mary Kay Hanus

from Rhonda Halligan

This week's **F** went to Mary Kay Hanus. Mary Kay is the Omaha fulfillment and packaging queen, always working away quietly and mightily. Her cookies and cakes are also delicious.

Charlie McIntosh

from Mary Kay Hanus

Mary Kay Hanus presented the **F** to Charlie McIntosh. Mary Kay recognized Charlie for being one of the hardest working guys around. Charlie has taught his team a lot about all things printing and is one of the first smiling faces you see in the morning.

Amanda Wettlaufer

from Charlie McIntosh

The **F** goes to Amanda Wettlaufer. Amanda is a true representative of Firespring and the account management team. She always asks great questions and ensures her clients have what they need.

Stella Salas

from Amanda Wettlaufer

Amanda Wettlaufer gave the **F** to Stella Salas. Stella is the only person who is in a good mood while unloading the dishwasher! Her joy is contagious and she lives all the values. Stella's insanely delicious food is always well enjoyed.

Jayden Denning

from Stella Salas

This week's **F** is for Jayden Denning. Stella recognized both managers of first impressions in Lincoln. Jayden has been helpful, making the front lobby look nice and clean for guests.

Lee Alles

from Jayden Denning

Jayden Denning awarded the **F** to Lee Alles. They bring it every day with positivity and hilarious jokes. Lee is quick to help and truly gives a shit.

Shane Thompson

from Lee Alles

The **F** goes to Shane Thompson. Shane is a great human being who always has a positive attitude. He brings signage projects to the shipping area with enthusiasm and is an expert on the Communication Log.

Annie Olsen

from Shane Thompson

Shane Thompson presented the **F** to Annie Olsen. Annie always has a smile on her face that brightens the day. She is a diligent worker and gives a shit.

Tim Yoakum

from Annie Olsen

This week's **F** went to Tim Yoakum. Tim always lives the Firespring values, especially finding a better way. He is pleasant to be around and almost always has something nice to say.

Matt Williams

from Tim Yoakum

Tim Yoakum gave the **F** to Matt Williams. Tim recognized Matt for teaching him a lot and always being willing to work overtime. Tim has a lot of different ideas and appreciates Matt's openness to such ideas.

Matt Heigel

from Matt Williams

The **F** goes to Matt Heigel. Matt keeps digital running smoothly and stays proactive with keeping things organized, even when things are slow.

Tracie Alles

from Matt Heigel

Matt Heigel awarded the **F** to Tracie Alles. Matt appreciates Tracie having the company's back every day. He is grateful for her reminder emails about time cards and for coordinating lunches every week.

Nicole Swanson

from Tracie Alles

This week's **F** is for Nicole Swanson. Nicole gives a shit about work, her fellow team members, and volunteer hours. She even changes up her cube decor for different seasons and holidays, adding some cheer to the office!

Phil Cunningham

from Nicole Swanson

Nicole Swanson presented the **F** to Phil Cunningham. Phil is much more than a salesperson as he lives all the Firespring values. He cares about the team, prospects, and clients—while getting lots of oxygen in his plant-filled office.

Molly Coke

from Phil Cunningham

The **F** goes to Molly Coke. Phil recognized that Molly is insightful, energizing and lives all the Firespring values. She has his back—and all of our backs on all kinds of projects, even if you don't know it.

Rebekah Cabonargi

from Molly Coke

Molly Coke gave the **F** to Rebekah Cabonargi. Rebekah started at Firespring as part of a business acquisition. She was a little timid at first but we quickly realized that she lives all of our values AND our mantra to Find a Better Way. This is true in her interactions internally with our team and processes and certainly with our clients. She does not like to take no for an answer and works to really understand questions to provide the best outcome. When the opportunity arose for her to expand her role, it was a no brainer. I am so proud to get to work with Rebekah!

Donna Salas-Correa

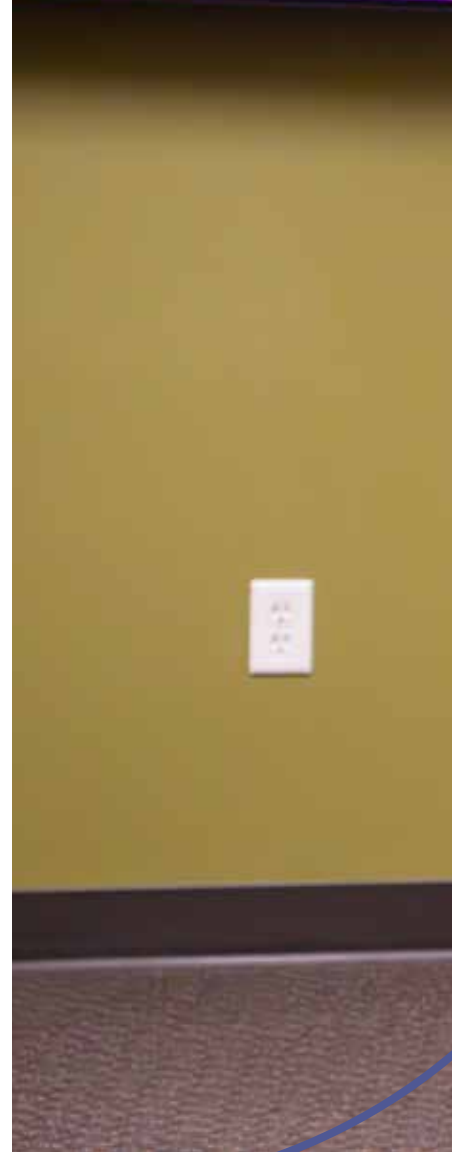
from Rebekah Cabonargi

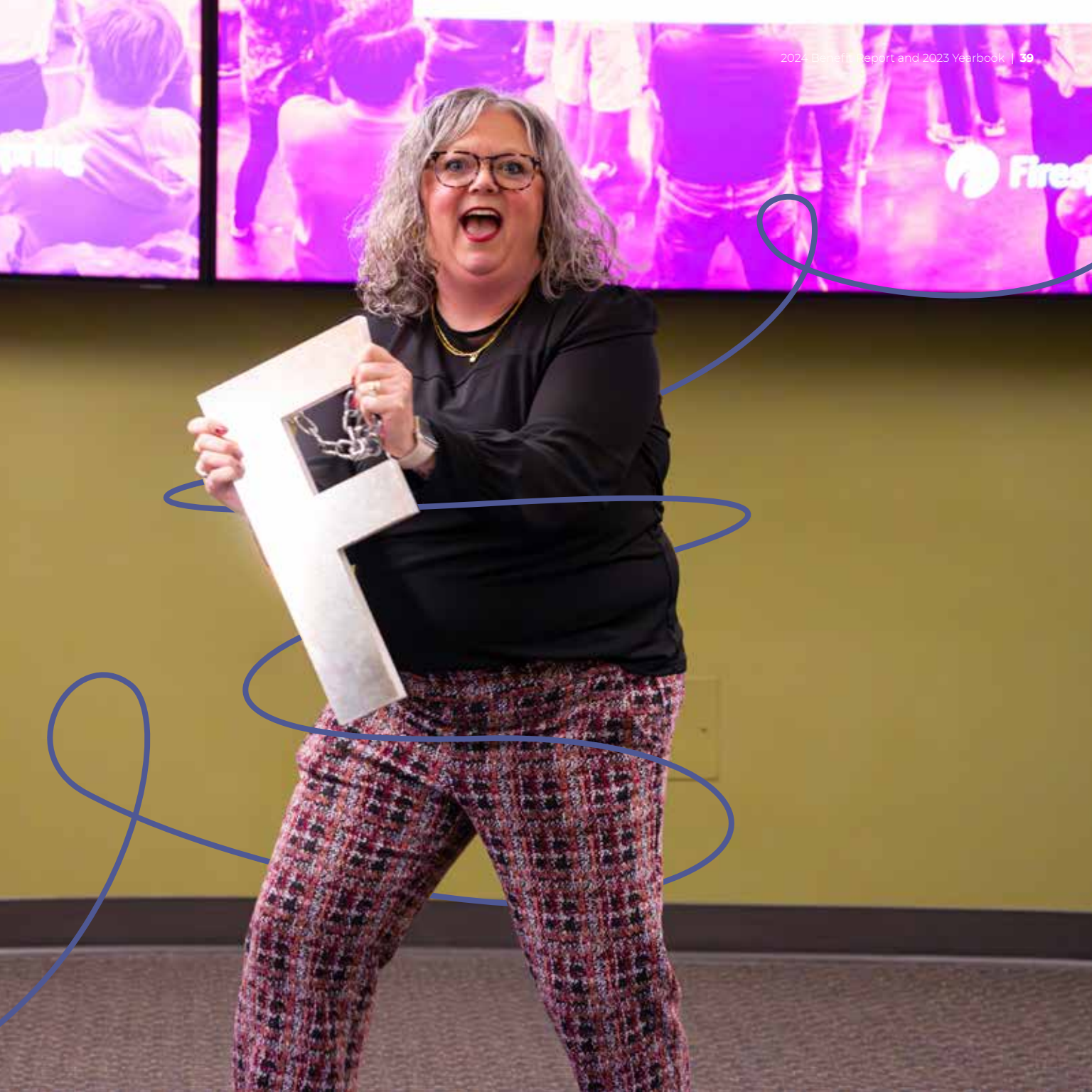
This week's **F** went to Donna Salas-Correa. Rebekah thanked Donna for always being a constant force. She is there for you no matter what or where you are.

Sally Grandick

from Donna Salas-Correa

Donna Salas-Correa awarded the **F** to Sally Grandick. Donna doesn't work with her often but sees that Sally lives all the Firespring values. She especially appreciates their ability to trade dirty jokes.





VALUES HALL OF FAME 2023 INDUCTEES

At Firespring HQ in Lincoln, everyone who receives the coveted F is considered for the Firespring Values Hall of Fame. At our other locations, team members are nominated by their peers for the prestigious HOF. No matter where they're located, these individuals are the embodiment of our Firespring culture. It's like the winningest you can get—and as shit-givingly back-having as we are, we are also notoriously competitive, so winning. is. everything.

Congrats to these Firespringers for achieving this honor.



Aaron Grauer

Senior Web Designer



INDUCTED BY NICOLE SWANSON

"Aaron is a great designer who works hard to create amazing and beautiful websites for Firespring's clients. As the Firespring song guru, Nicole appreciates his music knowledge and contributions to the Firestarter."





Q: What brought you to Firespring?

A: I joined Firespring and am still here because I want to be able to make a big impact on the community. It's important for me to be able to put my abilities to work for a good cause, not just to make a living. I don't know of any other place where I can have that sort of an impact.

Q: How have you grown personally and professionally here?

A: I've become a better designer through the years, but I've also learned about web development, accessibility and user interface. Thanks to all the great people who work here, I've learned about things outside my expertise, like content and strategy.

Q: What's the funniest thing you've seen at Firespring or a Firespring memory?

A: There have been great holiday parties, bowling nights, shuffleboard games and projects that went really well. I'm not super active on social media, so half of my memories on Facebook are from Firespring, which is pretty cool to look back on. Our team won the shuffleboard tournament last season and is in first place right now, so that's exciting.

Q: If you could travel anywhere, where would you go and why?

A: My first preference is always someplace close to the ocean. I'm never happier than when I'm sitting in a chair near the ocean.



Bridget Anderson

Retention Marketing Manager



INDUCTED BY LISA THOMPSON

"Bridget continually makes my job easier. Bridget is wicked smart, a great creative brief writer and truly gives a shit about her projects."





Q: Explain what you do here.

A: As the retention marketing manager, I develop campaign strategies designed to retain, educate, cross-sell and upsell our clients. I also serve on the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DE&I) team.

Q: How have you grown professionally and personally since you started at Firespring?

A: The Bridget who started at Firespring five years ago is not the same Bridget standing here today. I use my voice. I'm not afraid to share my ideas. I take ownership of my projects. And, most importantly, I've met some of my very best friends here.

Q: What's the funniest thing you've seen at Firespring or a Firespring memory?

A: Many of us went to Ramos Pizza after Gutterfest for drinks and karaoke, and I somehow found myself on a karaoke stage with three other girls singing "I Want It That Way" by the Backstreet Boys. I was definitely out of my comfort zone, but I had a great time!

Q: If you could travel anywhere, where would you go and why?

A: I would go to space. I think seeing the Earth, the moon, the stars from above would definitely be indescribable, and I'd be mesmerized by the view.



Kiersten Hill
Director of Nonprofit Solutions



INDUCTED BY MOLLY MCCABE

"I enjoy working with her and how she always WOWS Firespring's clients. Kiersten's involvement in the website projects significantly enhances the output. Firespring is fortunate to have her as a part of the team."





Q: What do you do here?

A: I get to work with clients, particularly nonprofit clients, on strategy and marketing campaigns. I also give most of the nonprofit-specific webinars that we offer as an educational piece on both our Firespring and partner platforms. I get to go out to conferences and speak, give breakout sessions, keynote presentations and promote Firespring.

Q: How have you grown professionally and personally?

A: I worked in marketing a while ago for a couple of years and coming back into it felt like part of my brain was cracking open, as I was able to use skills that I hadn't used in a long time. I get to combine my passion for nonprofit organizations with all of my previous experience and then learn new things to put it all to use for our clients. It's altogether been a great experience.

Q: What's the funniest thing you've seen at Firespring or a Firespring memory?

A: Every time we have a full house and there's a ton of people here, the energy is so great, and I love that. My favorite is when we did a scavenger hunt throughout the building and seeing all the people accomplish each of the different tasks and challenges was really fun, and it felt great to be a part of that.



Steve Schamp

Press Operator



INDUCTED BY DAN MORRISSEY

"If I ever need anything, Steve is always ready to help out."



Q: What brought you to Firespring?

A: I worked for Business Printing, which was acquired by Anderson Print Group in 2001, and then in 2021 by Firespring. I wanted to stay on and contribute, so I've been doing the same thing on and off for almost 25 years.

Q: How would you say Firespring is different from Anderson?

A: There are good things about both companies, and they melded well together. Firespring brought a little more structure, but also different clients and work. It was enjoyable to see the company blossom into what we have today.

Q: What would you say is the funniest thing you've seen happen here?

A: The St. Patty's Day Nerf War was a blast. It didn't go well for me because I was ambushed and had to leave early but it was enjoyable to watch. I need to be a lot more strategic next time.

Q: If you could travel anywhere, where would you go?

A: Domestically, Pensacola, FL, which my kids want to move to. Internationally, we've all wanted to go to Tokyo and see the sights and take in the culture. It's such a different culture between the food, arts, entertainment and social structure.



Lori Evers

Print Team Account Manager



INDUCTED BY KATIE WILSON

"Katie recognized Lori's care for her clients over the decades and noted that she is both caring and knowledgeable in everything she does."



Q: What got you started in printing?

A: Growing up, it never occurred to me to consider the opportunities available in the printing industry. I graduated from UNL with a degree in journalism, intending to begin a brilliant career in the advertising world. However, on November 4th, 1985, I walked into Jacob North Printing for my first day at work and my first day in a job that became my career.

Q: What brought you to Firespring?

A: I found work that I grew to love. I've been blessed along the way to meet coworkers who have become like family to me and clients that I've worked with for so long that they've become friends. Granted, there are always stressful days, but the good days make up for the bad ones. I've been at Firespring for 7 years now and feel so honored and grateful to be chosen for the Firespring Hall of Fame.

Q: What inspires you outside of work?

A: My husband, Kent, and I will be celebrating our 36th wedding anniversary this April. Farm kids for life, we are happy to be living east of Beatrice on the Evers family farm, where Kent grew up and we've lived for most of our married life.

We are still involved in farming and share a love for the peace and quiet of country life. Outside of our work life, yard work, gardening, fishing and all things Husker football are some of the things we enjoy together. I also like to find time for reading, cooking, being active in my church and taking care of way too many cats.



Jeff Norris

Properties/Construction Manager



INDUCTED BY CONNOR JOHNSON

"From tricky camera installations to cooling down an overheated server room, Jeff is always willing to help."





Q: What brought you to Firespring?

A: I was originally hired to be the construction manager here. As we moved into the current building, the opportunity to come on full-time came up and it seemed like a natural fit. I've been here for 9 years but was here on a regular basis for 3 years before that.

Q: What's your favorite project that you've worked on?

A: The most challenging was moving into the 75th St. building in Omaha. I actually lived in an apartment in Omaha during that time because it was about 8 months of construction and then moving everyone into the building.

Q: What's the funniest thing you've seen happen here?

A: One year we had a Christmas party at the train station and Culture Club hired a juggler. We remember the juggler pretty well because he didn't perform the best and as hard as it was to watch, it was a story to remember. So he left a good memory for all of us.

Q: Can you talk about the Wednesday rides?

A: Not too long after I started, Brophy and I went for a bike ride one day and found out more people enjoyed that, and it grew from there. Pretty much every Wednesday, we will go to a local restaurant and enjoy each other's company. It's something I look forward to most Wednesdays. If it's below 100 or above 30, we usually go.



Steve Schrodt

Data Specialist



INDUCTED BY LORI EVERS

"Steve provides a great attitude and attention to detail alongside his caring and fun personality."





Q: What do you do?

A: I do all the variable data programming setup, which takes print pieces and makes them individualized. The advantage of this is that someone gets a postcard in the mail with their name on it which goes further for them, as opposed to getting junk mail. I also go through mail list databases and look for errors. I'm also a postal regulation subject matter expert at Firespring.

Q: Do you have a favorite memory here?

A: I was working in Omaha at the time and on a Friday right at the beginning of COVID, I had gone out to lunch to give my mother an early Mother's Day card. I came back and everybody had left. I later found out that someone in our building tested positive for COVID, and everyone cleared out. It was very strange when I got back.

Q: What's your favorite hobby, or what do you spend your time doing?

A: I spend a lot of time with my granddaughters. My oldest granddaughter is 6½ and my youngest just turned 4 months old. My wife and I spend a lot of time with them, especially the oldest, Olivia. We have her over at our house probably once or twice every couple of weeks for the weekend.



Deb Brazau

Prepress Operator



INDUCTED BY DARCY LIJOODI

"Darcy Lijoodi gave the F to Deb, recognizing her for all the help she has provided in a realm of tasks."



Q: What brought you to Firespring?

A: I was with Anderson when the merger took place.

Q: Do you have a favorite project you've worked on?

A: I enjoy it all. I like seeing a project through, especially if I get it mailed to my house.

Q: What's the funniest thing that's happened at Firespring?

A: Probably the surprise baby shower we did for Emily. She left the building, and we had to call her back; that was pretty entertaining.

Q: Do you have a favorite book or movie?

A: I like watching Back to the Future; I watch it quite a bit. I love Hallmark movies, but my kids don't like it when I watch them. They're just entertaining.

Q: Do you have a favorite hobby, or how you spend your time?

A: I usually spend it with my two boys and the seven guinea pigs that are in our house now, along with three dogs and three cats. I love animals. When I was little, we had a couple of dogs, and then my dad brought home a calf from work, and we bottle-fed it and raised it and it thought it was one of the dogs.





Levai Alles

Shipping & Fulfillment Specialist



INDUCTED BY JAYDEN DENNING

"They bring it every day with positivity and hilarious jokes. Levai is quick to help and truly gives a shit."





Q: What brought you to Firespring?

A: I was looking for a more involved opportunity after high school and decided to give an internship at Firespring a shot. I then moved into my position in shipping because I liked working at Firespring but wanted something that allowed me to be more active and mobile.

Q: How have you grown professionally or personally since you've been here?

A: Professionally, my work ethic has improved. I really like seeing our finished products out in public. Personally, I think I've become more self-aware. Understanding my identity has made it easier to be confident and more comfortable with being myself.

Q: Favorite Firespring event?

A: Souptacular.

Q: Favorite memory?

A: In the shipping department we get a lot of weird and freaky bugs, especially in the summer, which keeps things interesting.

Q: Favorite holiday tradition?

A: My favorite tradition is that every year, sometime between Thanksgiving and Christmas, my sibling and I get a bunch of popcorn and blankets and cuddle on the couch and watch "The Sound of Music."



Amanda Wettlaufer

Print Team Account Manager



INDUCTED BY CHARLIE MCINTOSH

"Amanda is a true representative of Firespring and the account management team. She always asks great questions and ensures her clients have what they need."





Q: What brought you to Firespring?

A: I've been in printing since college and continued with it when I lived in Arizona. We moved back home to Nebraska, and my old manager actually knew Jay, and I got the job here and just love it.

Q: How have you grown professionally or personally since you've been here?

A: I've grown in how I work with clients. I've gained more patience and have been able to handle stress and uncertain situations with more grace.

Q: Do you have a favorite client or project you've worked on here?

A: I enjoy dealing with clients that are polite and invested in me and this company. As we have their backs, I feel that they also have ours. I enjoy doing baby shower invites or wedding projects. They're smaller jobs, but it's exciting to be a small part of their special day that they will remember forever.

Q: Favorite memory at Firespring?

A: Years ago we all went to a park down the road and picked up trash as a team. That's something I like to do in my spare time, so I thought it was fun that we were able to come together and do it as a company.



Stella Salas

Cleaning Specialist



**INDUCTED BY
AMANDA WETTLAUFER**

"Stella is the only person who is in a good mood while unloading the dishwasher! Her joy is contagious, and she lives all the valves. Stella's insanely delicious food is always well enjoyed."





Q: What brought you to Firespring?

A: My wife, Donna, was already at Firespring and said they were looking for someone to clean. They initially hired me as a vendor for about nine months, because I was pretty busy with my own clients. I was asked back full-time six months later and have been working here for four years now.

Q: How have you grown professionally or personally since you've been here?

A: I love the people here, and I was just amazed about the culture here when I was first hired. It makes me happy to come to work, and I've grown a lot by just being here. If I had been hired here 30 years ago when they first started, I think I'd still be here. That's how much I love my job. The people make it easy though, because everybody gets along.

Q: How did you get started with cooking for Firespring?

A: We have vendors coming in all the time. One day I offered to cook, and the rest was history. Depending on how busy the vendor schedule is, I cook once or twice a month.

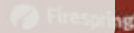
Q: Favorite holiday tradition?

A: My favorite holiday tradition is Christmas, because I love making things sparkle and shine.



Charlie McIntosh

Bindery and Mailing Specialist



INDUCTED BY MARY KAY HANUS

"Charlie is one of the hardest working folks around, has taught many on the team a lot about the printing biz. He's one of the first smiling faces you see in the morning. Thanks, Charlie!"





Q: How did you get started in the bindery business?

A: Through high school and college I did graphic arts courses and bindery became my favorite out of all the different departments. It has so many challenges and fun things to work with.

Q: Do you have a favorite project that you've worked on?

A: I enjoy projects that have multiple steps and not just once and done. You get to coordinate all the different phases of the project, and I really enjoy things like that.

Q: Do you have a favorite memory here at Firespring?

A: My favorite memory is a Firestarter cheer that I did. One day it was Oprah Winfrey's birthday, and because she was known for giving away cars to the audience, I gave everyone at the Firestarter a car. Of course, mine was a matchbox car, but I really loved doing that.

Q: Anything else?

A: Everybody at Firespring is like a family. And just like a typical family, there's arguing and getting along, laughing and crying.

2022 Values Hall of Fame Inductees



Keith Johnson

INDUCTED BY TROY OTTO

Keith cares about his work and truly gives a shit. He puts his work on a pedestal and cares about the client work. Congrats, Keith!



Alison Burgett

INDUCTED BY JIM WILLIAMS

Alison takes care of shit without complaining. Congrats, Alison!



Sean White

INDUCTED BY MARY KAY HANUS

Sean takes great pride in his work and jumps around to wherever he's needed. Plain and simple, Sean is a good worker and a really good coworker. Way to go, Sean!



Darren Moreno

INDUCTED BY TOM HANUS

Darren does a great job getting things organized and is a great guy to work with. Thanks, Darren!



Kasey Sendgraff

INDUCTED BY SOFIA FISCHER

Always having their backs, both Laura and I are so grateful for all of Kasey's assistance, and even assuaging our anxiety as we've been digging into our roles. THANKS, Kasey!



Julie Hull

INDUCTED BY WENDY SCHUMAN

Julie Hull is always going above and beyond every day, asking all the right questions, doing things without being asked to, volunteering to do more things, documenting and detailing along the way. Thanks, Julie!



Ron Gallagher

INDUCTED BY KASEY SENDGRAFF

Though I don't work with him directly, it's clear to see he really lives the values and gives a shit for his team and everything he works on. Thanks, Ron!



Garrett Anderson

INDUCTED BY JULIE HULL

Garrett truly embodies what it means to be a Firespringer. He is always the first to volunteer to help out with something, or give away a lead if it turns out someone is already working it. He always has a smile on his face and makes people feel good when they are working together. He really stepped up to the plate and jumped in head first on a big initiative that we're trying to get off the ground. I appreciate everything he's brought to Firespring since joining forces a year ago.



Craig McCoy

INDUCTED BY ADAM BROWN

Craig is so important to the Engineering and DevOps teams. He always considers what will be the best use of resources and the best experience for our team members. Craig is a huge reason the Springboard is where it is today!



Zach Hastreiter

INDUCTED BY BROPHY RINGDAHL

Most notably for his work on portals, making them much more useable. Also for herding all the cats while Katie was out on leave. Way to go, Zach!



Jennie Martin

INDUCTED BY SHANNON BORGES

Jennie has been a great mentor to me since I started at Firespring and that continues even now. I'm so grateful to Jennie for hiring me. Way to go, Jennie!



Jessica Templeton

INDUCTED BY TYLER HARDMAN

Jessica always brings her positive attitude, she takes initiative, lives all the values and it shows in her work! Way to go, Jessica!



Geoff Bogan

INDUCTED BY NATALIE JOHNSON

Geoff is often behind the scenes making the magic happen; he knows how to connect all the dots. Dependable and flexible, he's always willing to help (other people say this too). An asset to Firespring, I'm glad he's on our team!



Lindsay Kelly

INDUCTED BY GARY POHLMEIER

Lindsay and I used to work closely together on the Support team, and since then, Lindsay has been wearing several hats and has made contributions all over the company. Congrats, Lindsay!



Natalie Johnson

INDUCTED BY LINDSAY KELLY

I could list so many reasons why Natalie brings a wealth of knowledge to Firespring. She has had a lot thrown at her since she first started, and she has taken it all on and is a pleasure to work with. Thanks for all you do, Natalie!



Emily Lowe

INDUCTED BY NATE MCKEAN

Emily has been wearing so many hats now since our great friend needed to give God some amazing company in heaven. She deserves it so much for everything that she has been doing.

2021 Values Hall of Fame Inductees



Matia Ward

INDUCTED BY ALANNA METZGER

When she's working on custom WordPress sites for our clients, Matia always has a quick turnaround, is reliable and so great at explaining "techy things" in normal words.



Molly McCabe

INDUCTED BY SARAH ROBBINS

I've been working with Molly a lot to take care of clients and improve processes. I appreciate her work ethic, and her willingness to live all of our values. Thanks, Molly!



Carmen Knudson

INDUCTED BY JOE EBMEIER

Carmen embodies the Firespring values. She really "knows" our platform, is steady, consistent, leads by example and thinks things through in meetings before she talks. These are all such great qualities. Thank you, Carmen! Well deserved.



Chessa Clay

INDUCTED BY ZACH WETOVICK

Chessa was extremely helpful to me when Julie was out. I consistently threw her some balls, and she ran with them. Thanks, Chessa!



Lauren Simonsen

INDUCTED BY MIKAELA SHYBUT

Adaptability is Lauren's #1 strength. She uses it as she works nonstop for our clients and team. Lauren takes feedback constructively and uses her empathy in doing so. She has even helped me become a better account manager. Way to go, Lauren!



Mikaela Shybut

INDUCTED BY KIERSTEN HILL

Mikaela does so much for everyone she works with and makes sure our clients are getting the very best we can give. She is my "go to" for numerous things and has made working at Firespring a real joy. Thanks, Mikaela!



Ryan Simanek

INDUCTED BY LISA CONKLIN

Ryan lives the Firespring values all day, every day. He gets a lot of work thrown his way and never complains. Clients often mention how happy they are with the projects that he works on. Way to go, Ryan!



Agustin Tellez

INDUCTED BY KATIE WILSON

He is so positive and always keeps us in the loop about what clients say when he delivers projects (like, if they ask for M&Ms, for example, LOL). Plus, he's always willing to pick up or drop something off at a moment's notice.



Topper Yoakum

INDUCTED BY SAMANTHA BIEL

I want to give the F to an entire team, but since that's not a thing, I'm giving it to someone who is a huge reason as to why I want to do that. Topper does fantastic work and never hesitates to lend a hand.



Ronni Lanham

INDUCTED BY JEN BRUHL

Ronni is always coming into the office, is helpful to all and is an all around great person. Thank you, Ronni!



Graham Little

INDUCTED BY DONNA SALAS CORREA

I appreciate Graham's consistent willingness to help. He always stops whatever he's doing to lend a hand—even while at a doctor appointment.



Kristi Templeton

INDUCTED BY JEFF NORRIS

I feel so fortunate to work with the Omaha crew. I have had the opportunity to get to know them and have learned the answer to "Who knows what's going on?" The answer is Kristi! She always knows what's happening with client work and makes sure everyone is settled before she goes home for the day. Yay, Kristi!



Travis Gueret

INDUCTED BY JOSH MEYER

I appreciate how Travis always steps in to help solve problems and answer all of my questions, even the ones I think are silly. Go, Travis!



Zach Wetovick

INDUCTED BY JARED CLOUDT

Before passing on the F, I want to give a shout out to all of the silent and hardworking Firespringers. I challenge everyone to recognize the quiet and awesome people doing fantastic work. I'm passing the F to Zach, who is just one person on that long list but stepped in and stepped up while Julie was out. Thanks, Zach!



Josh Chmiel

INDUCTED BY MICHELLE BARTEE

For those who don't know Josh, he does all the things in Council Bluffs. He's a digital print specialist who directly helps clients and even shuttles projects from one place to another to speed the final delivery along. Thanks, Josh!



Kassie Templeton

INDUCTED BY STEVE SCHAMP

I'm presenting the F to Kassie for living all of the values and being an all-around great help. Way to go, Kassie!



Sometimes you can find us in the news.

We don't toot our own horn often, but once in a while it's nice to recognize the recognition. We were honored with these accolades and awards in 2023.



Top Impact Company by Real Leaders Magazine

For the third year in a row, Firespring was recognized by Real Leaders Magazine as one of the Top Impact Companies from around the world. Founded in 2010, Real Leaders is a membership community for impact leaders powered by a global media platform. The Real Leaders Impact Awards honor companies that are driving positive impact while achieving impressive business growth.

SBA Nebraska's Legacy Business Recipient

Last September, Firespring was recognized as the Nebraska Legacy Business by the SBA (Small Business Administration), commemorating the SBA's 70th anniversary. For 70 years, America's entrepreneurs have relied on SBA support to help start and grow their small businesses. Firespring depended upon SBA resources, helping us achieve success in the early growth stages of our business.



“Firespring has a long history in the city of Lincoln. We have known them as AlphaGraphics, Cornerstone Print and Marketing and Digital IMS. In 2007, they officially became Firespring, one of the midwest’s largest marketing communications firms. They were even named one of the 50 Best Workplaces in Inc Magazine. Over the years, they turned to the Small Business Administration to help meet their growth needs. We even helped them during the pandemic, so they could maintain their workforce and continue to help clients. Because of their growth, leadership and contributions to the Lincoln and Omaha communities, we honor Jay Wilkinson and his team with a Legacy Recognition as part of our 70th anniversary celebration.”

—Small Business Administration



In Honor of Our 70th Anniversary
(1952-2022)
The U.S. Small Business Administration recognizes
Firespring
As a Legacy Business
Thank you for all you do for your community.

PINNACLE AWARDS

AM > | Omaha



Firespring Wins Prism Awards for Top of the Mornin' Coffee Campaign



Top of the Mornin' Coffee is an online small business that sells gourmet coffee, tea and specialty merchandise. YouTube influencer Séan McLoughlin launched the company in partnership with Akira. In 2022, Top of the Mornin' and Akira Coffee approached Firespring with several goals, including customer acquisition and customer re-engagement.

Firespring determined Top of the Mornin' to be an ideal candidate for an omnichannel marketing automation (OCMA) campaign with an automated workflow featuring email, variable data direct mail, personalized landing pages, customer survey data collection and A/B campaign testing.

The results of this OCMA campaign exceeded expectations. Top of the Mornin' saw \$8,000 in sales directly tied to campaign conversions within four weeks, among several other notable achievements. The Omaha chapter of the American Marketing Association awarded Firespring a Best of Show and a Pinnacle award for "Communications, Not-for-profit" for this campaign.

Welcome to the Firespring Fam, Akira Coffee Co.

On January 1, 2023, Firespring completed a merger with Akira Coffee Co, making it a wholly owned subsidiary of Firespring, or a sister company.

Akira partners with digital publishers and creators to build their very own high-end coffee, home goods or custom product brands. They source responsible, ethical and sustainable products and only work with best-in-class specialty ingredients. Their goal is to build businesses with publishers that stand out from the crowd and are better for the planet. Akira Coffee was founded in 2017 to serve its partners, customers and the world we're in.

THE AKIRA TEAM

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT

Marissa Wilken
Michael Mahnken
Erin Sievers
Joni Clevenger
Tyler Engle
Baylee Bohannon

Miranda Palmesano
Tabitha Fischer
Mikaela Shybut
Kenzie McAndrew
Elise Peaslee
Matthew White

Caitlyn Beecher
Asha Sharp

PICTURED IN FRONT

David Sievers





Equality.
Peace.
Justice.
Love

We wear
our values

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Our Commitment to Equity

Every individual is unique. We acknowledge, accept and celebrate our team members' differences to ensure every one of us feels psychologically safe to be our true selves and ultimately, heard and understood.

Firespring is committed to offering the best possible workplace culture for all team members. The foundation of this includes providing equal employment opportunities to qualified individuals regardless of an applicant or team member's race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, marital status, gender identity, sexual orientation, family status, genetic information, disability or any other characteristic protected by law.

Meet Our Equity Team

Aligned with Firespring's commitment to the advancement of equity, we created an equity team that's dedicated to fostering widespread engagement in equity initiatives and cultivating intercultural competence. Their primary goal is to "enhance Firespring's ability to acknowledge and address differences, ultimately fostering more equitable outcomes for our organization and the broader community."

What They've Accomplished

- Developed Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) training courses for our team members, covering topics such as business ethics, how to lead with inclusivity and physiological safety.
- Revised policies, notably renaming maternity leave to postnatal leave, which now emphasizes infant care over the maternal or paternal relation. Additionally, the total paid leave time has been extended from 8 weeks to 12 weeks.
- Reviewed all internal and external communications to ensure inclusive language, supported by corresponding inclusive actions. This includes refining job postings, marketing materials and optimizing website accessibility.
- Implemented an Employee Assistance Program (EAP).
- Established a private room for nursing or pumping purposes, specifically designed to accommodate the needs of mothers.
- Incorporated Juneteenth as an officially recognized company holiday.
- Conducted a compensation analysis to align our salary budgets with the top competitive market rates for talent, reflecting our commitment to attract and retain skilled professionals.
- Initiated our inaugural Belonging Survey in spring 2023 to gauge team members' perceptions, feelings and experiences regarding Firespring's DEI efforts.

EQUITY TEAM MEMBERS

- Aaron Grauer
- Bridget Anderson
- Bruce Coufal
- Geoff Bogan
- Jennie Martin
- Julie Hull
- Kasey Sendgraff
- Molly Coke
- Tracie Alles



Firespring Culture Club

Our Culture Club is a group of Firespringers chosen to help create and nurture the type of company every team member wants to be a part of, whether they're remote, in-person or hybrid. They come together to represent their teams when planning events, activities and initiatives for the company, and they put in a bunch of time behind the scenes to make sure that every event goes off without a hitch and every program is rolled out flawlessly.

Hats off to these cool cats—we're forever grateful for their commitment to fostering our unique company culture.

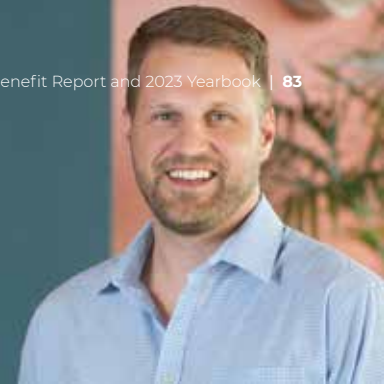
CULTURE CLUB REPRESENTATIVES

LINCOLN

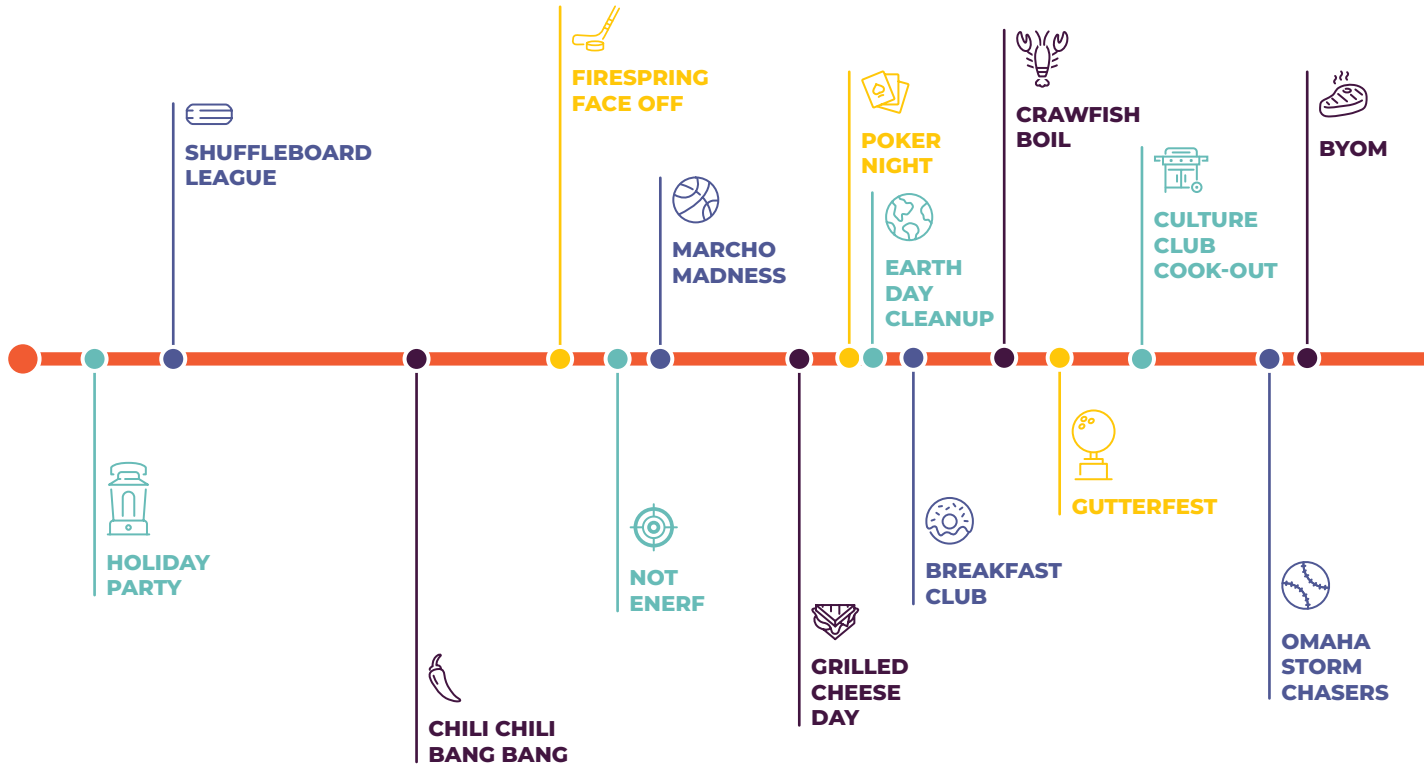
Allison Mellick
Ashley Kumpula
Brophy Ringdahl
DJ Dirksen
Kasey Sendgraff
Lindsay Kelly
Laura Virgl
Robert Leslie
Ronni Lanham

OMAHA

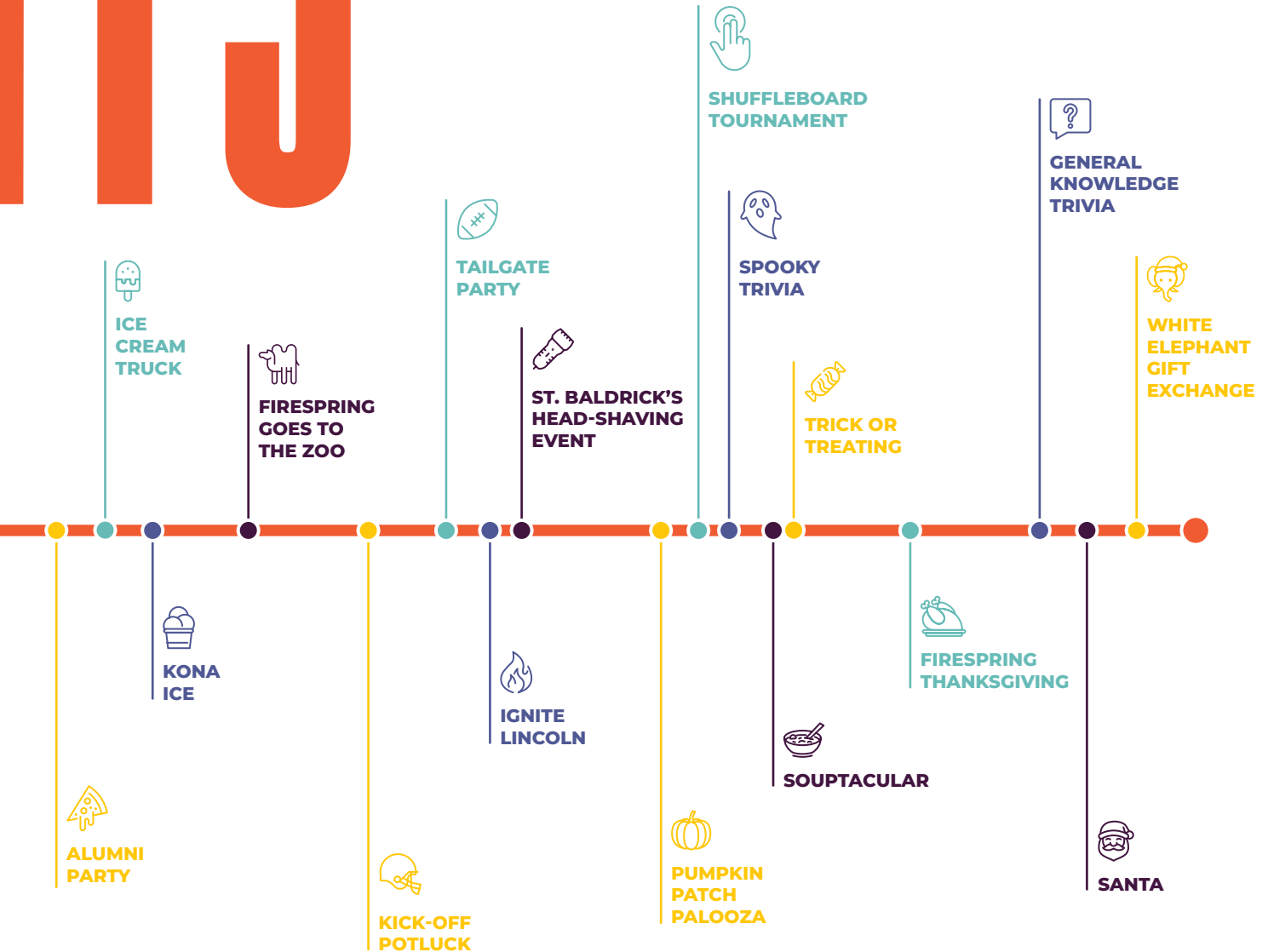
Dave Jensen
Emily Lowe
Jessica Templeton
Katie Wilson
Nate McKean
Nicole Lanspa



2023 EVEN



ITS







Robbers' Cave Holiday Party

We kicked off 2023 at Lincoln's oldest tourist attraction, Robber's Cave, with cocktails, dinner, dancing and tours of the famous sandstone tunnels. We clean up nicely when the occasion calls for it, and while it sounds like we went on a spelunking adventure, we actually donned our suits, ties and LBDs for this festive post-holiday celebration.









Shuffleboard League

The weather outside may be frightful in January, but things sure heated up inside with our 2023 shuffleboard league! We tend to be a competitive bunch, so we kicked off the year by asking everyone to grab a partner and join the league. **Shout-out to our winners, Biscuits & Gravy.**

*aka Aaron Graver
and Shelby Werts*







Chili Chili Bang Bang

“It is the official opinion of the International Chili Society that chili is not and should not be considered a soup.” So, it became the official opinion of the Firespring Culture Club that chili deserves its own special celebration, because when you’re sloshing through the end of a cold Nebraska winter, a warm bowl of chili can be your biggest comfort. A reprise of this much-loved 2019 event brought dozens of slow cookers and potential heartburn to the halls of Firespring. Spicy times were had by all (except for those who can’t stand the heat). **Congrats to our Chief Chili Officer, Dylan Matthews, for taking home the top prize.**









Firespring Face Off

This winter event is all about the ice, ice baby, when we head to the Ice Box together to cheer on Lincoln's hockey team, the Lincoln Stars. Plus-ones are welcome, and even if you hate hockey, there's beer and brawling to enjoy—plus we get our own section, so we can protect each other from the occasional flying puck and the drunk fans or ex-hockey players who want to pick a fight. (We've seen neither. But we're prepared if we do.)







Not ENerf & St. Patty's Breakfast

“We would not eat them here or there, we would not eat them anywhere”—we’ll pass on the green eggs and ham, but the Omaha team was stoked to celebrate St. Patty’s Day with green pancakes for breakfast, then tap into their best spy impersonations for a little in-office Nerf gun war. **Big ups to the spy with the best aim, Nate McKean.**



Group Results

RANK	BRACKET, OWNER	R64	R32	S16	E8	F4	NCG	CHAMPION	TOTAL	PCT
1	Kasey_Sendgraff, Kasey_Sendgraff	270	160	120	80	0	0	Houston	630	93.5
2*	DUKE is DUKE, Tmeader	230	160	120	80	0	0	Houston	590	91.2
2*	TWulfpack I, TWulfpack	190	160	160	80	0	0	Houston	590	91.2
4*	Natalie ESPN Johnson, Natalie ESPN Johnson	250	220	80	0	0	0	Kansas	550	87.2
4*	ESPNFAN5721136748 I, Nicole Lanspa	250	140	80	80	0	0	Houston	550	87.2
6*	SoJumpShipinTibet I, SoJumpShipinHongKong Mike	220	160	80	80	0	0	Houston	540	85.6
6*	March Mad(die)ness, Maddie Leblanc	260	200	80	0	0	0	Houston	540	85.6
8	JuliePlooster, JuliePlooster	250	160	120	0	0	0	Kansas	530	83.9
9*	Megan Money, Megan Guenther	240	120	80	80	0	0	Kansas	520	81.8
9*	meh..., ESPNFAN2083914153	260	180	80	0	0	0	Alabama	520	81.8

Marcho Madness

To participate in Firespring's Marcho Madness, you don't have to be a basketball aficionado or even a fan—heck, you don't even need to know what March Madness is (hint: NCAA College Basketball). You just need access to a computer or phone and the internet to make your picks, and you can base them on school names, mascots or even colors. The winner got a \$25 gift card, the last place loser got a \$10 one, and we celebrated the culmination of the event with pizza and basketball at Lincoln HQ.

1st Place: Kasey Sendgraff







Grilled Cheese Day

An ode to National Grilled Cheese Day, we broke out the griddles and served up piping hot grilled cheese goodness for lunch . . . because we're cheesy like that.





Earth Day Cleanup

Our Omaha crew rolled up their sleeves and got their hands dirty, literally, in an effort to clean up around their community and show a little TLC to Mother Nature. This is always a great way to both team build and do more good in our local neighborhoods—plus, workers got a free earth stress ball for pitching in to help.





Poker Night

Most of us are not professional poker players from Vegas (well, none of us, to be honest), but we'll pull up to the table and go all in any day if it means raising money for a favorite charity. We're not always sure whether to hold 'em or fold 'em, but we are sure that we love a fun night for a good cause, so we open this event up to both Firespringers and friends. The top player won money to give to the charity of their choice, along with bragging rights.







Breakfast Club

“Don’t youuuu forget about meeee” . . . hopefully you just sang that classic song in your head from the iconic 80s movie, “The Breakfast Club” (because it’s a jam), but our breakfast club was more of a potluck than a detention hall. This was the perfect opportunity for everyone to share some of their beloved breakfast items or traditions as the Culture Club invited everyone to have “breakfast” for lunch on this particular Tuesday. A slight departure from Taco Tuesday, but as they say, variety is the spice of life.





May the Crawfish Be with You

Mmmm, mudbugs! Our lovely Stella served up some crawfish (and jambalaya) for the Firespring fam this day, as we enjoyed some finger-lickin' Cajun cuisine at the Lincoln HQ.









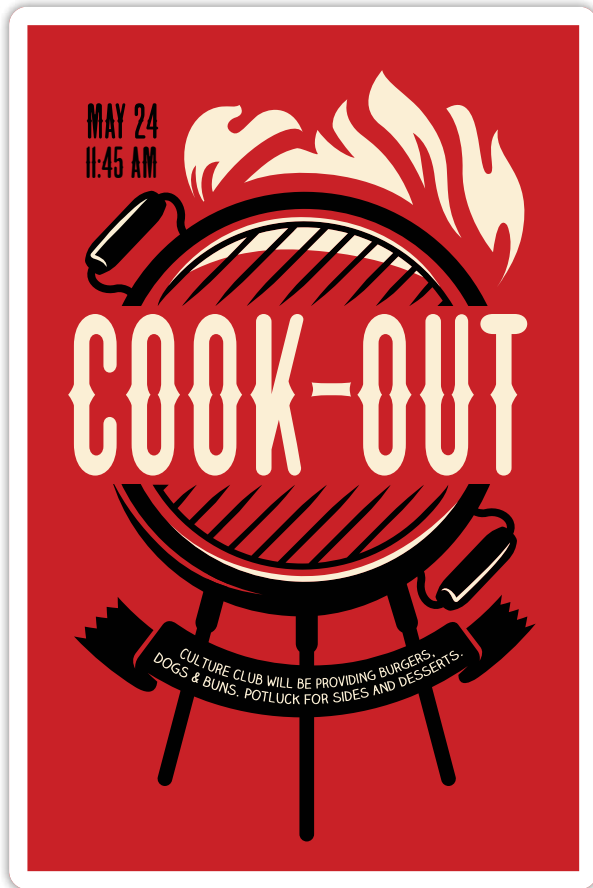
Gutterfest

This is the one night of the year that we encourage everyone to get their minds in the gutter. We're suckers for good, friendly competition among our team members, and Gutterfest is one of Firespring's most beloved traditions, when we dig out our fave bowling shirts and roll on down to a local bowling alley. Bowlers split into teams and take to the alleys to vie for coveted awards, including **Best Bowler (Dylan Matthews)** and everyone's favorite, **Worst Bowler (Allison Mellick)**.









Culture Club Cook-out

To kick off the end of school/beginning of summer, we fired up the grills in both Lincoln and Omaha, threw on some burger patties and hot dogs and enjoyed a big old cook-out. Gotta love barbecue season in Nebraska.





Omaha Storm Chasers

Hot dogs and Cracker Jack, anyone? The Omaha crew met up at the ballpark to watch the Omaha Storm Chasers play ball and nosh on some traditional baseball-lovers' snacks.





Firespring Potluck

A first for 2023, we commemorated Juneteenth (June 19) with a day off, and we started our three-day weekend with potluck lunch on Friday. Everyone was encouraged to BYOM (Bring Your Own Meat), we fired up the grill at noon and enjoyed a potluck lunch together on the patio.





Alumni Party

Once a Firespringer, always a Firespringer (at heart)! We hosted both current and former team members at our annual alumni event in July, complete with pizza from Dante Pizza in Omaha, yard games and our favorite jams. This is always a great opportunity to catch up with old coworkers while hob-nobbing with our present ones—like a fun family reunion without cheesy matching T-shirts and Aunt Lou’s carrots-in-JELL-O salad.







BEAT THE
SUMMER HEAT
WITH AN ICE CREAM
TREAT

One **FREE** item of your choice from
an ice cream truck courtesy
of Culture Club

Thursday • July 13th • 1pm



Ice Cream Truck

“You scream, I scream” . . . you know how it goes. The Omaha crew screamed, and voila, an ice cream truck appeared. This is how you beat the heat in the middle of a hot summer in Nebraska.



Kona Ice

There's no better way to chill out during the hot August temps than with a visit from the Kona Ice truck. Kona Ice came to Firespring HQ to dole out our favorite icy flavors, and we all breathed a nice sigh of relief from the heat while indulging in one of the best summer treats Lincoln has to offer.







Firespring Goes to the Zoo

Rated G for “Get (Your Kids),” we hosted a family night at Lincoln Children’s Zoo, because every once in a while we need to see each others’ kids to realize how old we’re all getting. JK (sorta), really we just love to hang out with each other and our families, and the zoo is a pretty cool place for all ages to enjoy a sweet summer evening before school starts up again—especially with unlimited train rides.





Football Season Kick-off Potluck

Husker Power, commence! Omaha kicked off football season with a potluck—the perfect way to share (and receive) new tailgating recipes for the next few months.







Tailgate Party

Nothing calls for a party more than a Husker-Colorado game, so Culture Club threw some burgers and dogs on the grill the evening before, and we had a tailgate party to get us all in the Husker spirit—including a rousing and competitive cornhole tournament, as every good tailgate party does. Good thing it was the day prior, because the final score of 14-36 (Colorado) had us reaching for a different kind of spirit after the game.





Ignite Lincoln presented by Firespring

Ignite is a global event organized by volunteers where participants get five minutes to talk about their ideas, opinions, personal and professional passions, with the help of just 20 slides. Ignite Lincoln originally began in 2010, but there are over 350 other locations that have held Ignite Talks since 2006. Firespring sponsors the Lincoln event among others and our very own Jay Wilkinson is a committee member. This year, Ignite Lincoln featured 12 speakers and raised \$7,000.

- 1st Voices of Hope | \$3,000
- 2nd We Can Do This - We Feed Kids | \$1,750
- 3rd VisonarYouth | \$1,000
- 4th ECHO Collective | \$750
- 5th Lincoln Literacy | \$500





Total Raised:

\$11,223

Total Shavees:

7

Top 3 Fundraisers:

Wendi Jensen

9th year as a shavee

\$1,792.36**Brophy Ringdahl**

10th year as a shavee

\$1,493.10**Dylan Matthews****\$981.00**

St. Baldrick's Head-shaving Event

On September 15, we hosted our 14th annual head-shaving event for St. Baldrick's at The Mill Telegraph. The success of this event is driven by those willing to part with their hair, at least temporarily—the shavees who agree to have their heads shaved in solidarity with kids who have cancer. Bald is truly beautiful, especially at an event like this.











Pumpkin Patch Palooza

Lincoln and Omaha teams unite! We met in the middle, literally, for a festive family friendly visit at Vala's Pumpkin Patch in Gretna. We picked pumpkins, played games, noshed on some comfort food and gathered 'round a cozy campfire to toast marshmallows, share spooky ghost stories and bask in the warmth with a favorite beverage. Fall in Nebraska, man. You can't beat it.









Shuffleboard Tournament

To encourage a little friendly (or frightful?) in-office competition during October, the Omaha office hosted a shuffleboard tourney. Partners Katie Wilson and Alexis Ritzdorf took home top honors (kudos to you, Shuffleboard Queens), and no Firespringers were harmed (that we know of) in the process.



Trivia Series: Spooky Edition

We love trivia contests and we love Halloween—mash those two together and you have what some of us might consider a national holiday: spooky trivia night! It was family friendly, so we didn't delve much into gory details, but we did stump a lot of people.

Big ups to winner, Kate Johnson, for knowing her spooky stuff and taking home the top trivia prize.

DIFFICULT QUESTIONS:

Q: Which Disney movie was banned in Denmark in 1931?

A: The Skeleton Dance

Q: What was the first film “Master of Horror” Wes Craven directed?

A: The Last House on the Left

Q: Which of these Halloween films was NOT directed by Tim Burton?

A: The Nightmare Before Christmas

Q: Where is “The Island of the Dolls” located?

A: Xochimilco Island (south of Mexico City)

Q: What is the highest grossing horror film of all time?

A: IT (2017)



Souptacular

It's the soupiest Halloween event ever! There's no tradition more beloved than Firespring's Souptacular, an event that dates back to the early days of the company. Firespringers break out their slow cookers, scour the internet and cookbooks for the most souplicious recipes and bring their best concoctions to the table to compete for the coveted Golden Crock-Pot award. It's highly competitive, utterly delicious and sure to bring out the fiercest competitors among us.



Lincoln Winners

- 1st Shane Thompson**
Bock Bock Oink oui
- 2nd Kiersten Hill**
Zuppa Toscana
- 3rd Stella Salas-Correa**
Voodoo Soup

Omaha Winners

- 1st Nicole Lanspa**
Cajun Sausage
- 2nd Darren Moreno**
Baked Potato
- 3rd Darcy Lijoodi**
Creamy Chicken
Gnocci







Halloween Trick-or-Treating

This one is for the kids! (Well, mostly.) Team members were encouraged to bring their littles to Firespring HQ to fill their bags with candy as they trick-or-treated at various stations throughout the building. (Thanks, Culture Club, for providing the sweets.) We also hosted a team member costume contest because, in true Firespring fashion, we need to make everything a competition.

Individual Costume Winners

- 1st **Shane Thompson**
- 2nd **Jeff Murphy**
- 3rd **Jeff Norris**

Group Costume Winners

- 1st **Natalie Johnson, Lindsay Kelly, Bridget Anderson, Kate Johnson, Nicole Swanson**
- 2nd **Kasey Sendgraft & Allison Mellick**





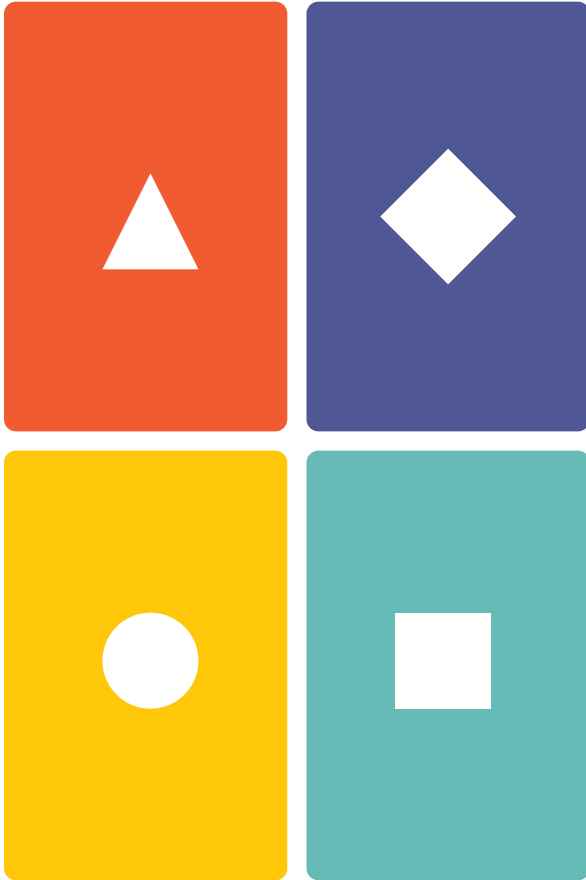
Firespring Thanksgiving

During the season of giving, we all love getting together to enjoy a hearty meal at our ever-growing tables (Lincoln and Omaha locations included). As always, Firespring provided the bird and mashed potatoes, and Firespringers provided the sides to share. So. Much. Food. Which was then followed by short naps and food comas under the table, as per tradition.









Trivia Series: General Knowledge

Again with the trivia! (What can we say, we're a wealth of fun-facts-to-know and somewhat useless knowledge.) This was an afternoon of fun, facts and friendly competition that included a variety of trivia questions covering a wide range of general topics. 'Tis the season to be busy and stressed (thanks, holiday season), and this was a great respite from all that.

Congrats to the winners:

1st Place: Kasey Sendgraff

2nd Place: Laura Virgl

3rd Place: Allison Mellick





Santa

Ho, ho, ho, this is the time to treat—or terrorize?—our mini Firespringers to a visit from the white-bearded big man himself, Mr. Claus. We invited jolly Ol' St. Nick to Firespring HQ so moms and dads could plant their wee ones on his lap and either: **a)** get an adorable Christmas card photo, **b)** give their kids an opportunity to share their holiday wish list or **c)** try to convince the littlest ones that he is not Scary Claus. For some families, it involved a little of all three.











White Elephant Gift Exchange

You know how they say, “One person’s trash is another person’s treasure?” That’s the motto for our annual White Elephant gift exchange, where both Lincoln and Omaha team members rifle through drawers, closets and basements to find the old, the absurd and, in some instances, the valuable to give to a fellow co-worker. This tradition started very early in the company’s history when the budget for holiday parties was . . . well, nonexistent. Some items seem to show up annually as a regift, and if there was ever a time and place for our inside jokes to shine, the White Elephant exchange is it.









HOME OFFICE



Sometimes we love to collab in person—other times it's nice to get in the zone and get things done from home. Fortunately, we get the best of both worlds at Firespring. Here's a look at some Firespringers' WFH set-ups, office spaces and views.

Pets of Firespring







We *#love* to rep our brand.

When you're a member of a winning team, the first thing you do after you pop the champagne in the locker room is put on a shirt that says you're a part of it. We typically forgo the bubbly in favor of a cold brew and we don't have a locker room. But we love our swag, baby, and we're not ashamed to show our team pride with a variety of wearables and gadgets emblazoned with our name and logo. We even have a store where team members can shop for the best styles for every season.





LEARN MORE AT

FIRESPRINT



ING.COM







LINCOLN

1201 Infinity Court
Lincoln, NE 68512
402.437.0000

OMAHA

6935 N 97th Circle
Omaha, NE 68122
402.930.0000

COUNCIL BLUFFS

295 W Broadway
Council Bluffs, IA 51503
712.322.2679

Nebraska's
First B Corp™

