



Small to Mid-Sized Companies

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## 1 DiGiovine Hnilo Jordan + Johnson Ltd.

Naperville

### Reputation heads the parade for this "best place"

The values that the Naperville accounting firm of DiGiovine Hnilo Jordan + Johnson Ltd. adheres to are so imbedded in the culture of the organization that they are printed on the office mouse pads as a reminder to all employees.

"I'm looking at my mouse pad right now," Managing Director Thomas J. Jordan quipped as he talked about values that are more than pretty words but are at the heart of the firm's purpose.

"First, there is family and faith. Second is excellent client service and third is respect for one another," Jordan went on, explaining that the founding partners worked hard to set high standards for the organization and to use the three-point value statement to help create a teamwork environment among its more than 60 employees.

Still, Jordan was surprised and caught off-guard when the firm was named to the top spot as a "Best Place to Work in Illinois" in the small-to-medium category, especially as it won the honor in the midst of 20 deserving candidates. Not knowing that DHJJ earned the highest honor until the other 19 finishers were announced, Jordan joked that he took notes while listening to why the others were great places to work.

"I learned some things from the others and the information also helped confirm that we are going in the right direction," he said. "When we won, I realized I didn't really have a speech prepared."

Pride in the reputation of the company has much to do with the employees' positive attitudes towards the firm. Its 40 professional staff members and the balance of managerial, administrative and other

support positions know that the company is highly regarded among its 1,000 business and 2,800 individual clients.

They are particularly proud of the fact that for the past 15 years the firm has earned a perfect score from the peer review process through the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. Such reviews take place every three years and DHJJ has recorded an unblemished record five consecutive times.

The privately-held business is a full-service CPA and management advisory firm. Founded 33-years ago as a two-person, one-telephone operation by Frank Hnilo and Carmen DiGiovine, the firm directs its expertise to closely-held businesses and thinks of itself as a partner to small and medium-sized companies. In addition to the standard tax, audit and accounting services, it offers professional consulting ranging from business valuations and technical analysis to financial, estate and succession planning.

The other two partners, Jordan and Tim Johnson, were friends in first grade, college and later joined the original pair to become DiGiovine Hnilo, Jordan + Johnson Ltd. The firm has offices in Naperville and St. Charles. Recent growth has been in the double-digit range and gross revenue in the last fiscal year reached \$7 million. The vast majority of clients are in northern Illinois, but it also serves customers in places like New York and the southeastern states.

Jordan displays light-hearted humility when emphasizing that the firm hires people "who are smarter than I am."

"Our reputation helps with recruiting and I think a main benefit is the firm is very good at letting people go in the direction of their talents," adds marketing director Annmarie Siwik, who has worked at the firm for more than 25 years.

Even as a relatively small accounting firm, Jordan said it is big enough to have specialists in various service areas.

New employees are assigned mentors who coach progress for up to two years and management encourages community involvement and networking with other organizations and professions through a group called "The Young Rainmakers."

The firm funds continuing education programs on leadership and professional training. Employees also develop personal marketing plans and all participate in what has become a paperless office, Jordan said.

And here's yet another reason why employees rate the firm as a best place to work: As Jordan and Siwik discussed the growth and success of the business, a bus was approaching the office to take the entire staff to a Friday afternoon Cubs-Brewers game. It was one of several special events for employees the firm plans each year, including free lunches and Saturday massages during the busy annual tax seasons.

### Quick Facts:



DIGIOVINE HNILO JORDAN + JOHNSON LTD.

387 Shuman Blvd., Suite 170E  
Naperville, IL 60563  
www.dhjj.com

**Year Founded:** 1974

**CEO name:** Thomas J Jordan, managing director

**Status:** Privately held

**Number of employees in Illinois:** 56