



*Small Companies*

NICK SIMONITE | ABJ

Richard P. Slaughter Associates is lean but hardly mean, with employees who are committed to clients and each other, and who give time to several worthwhile causes.

## COMMITMENT BY ASSOCIATION

Richard P. Slaughter Associates serves clients while taking care of its own

**TERRI SCHEXNAYDER | CONTRIBUTING WRITER**

Ask Ethan Luman, who joined Richard P. Slaughter Associates as an associate financial adviser in April, what he likes best about working for the wealth management firm. At the top of his list are not the company's many employee benefits or the quarterly team-building luncheons, during which everyone's input matters.

"What I am passionate about here is providing the level of client service I can be proud of. I am making difference in clients' lives and learning from the best," said Luman, who went through many job interviews to find the right fit after graduating from Texas Tech University.

Vice President Darby Armont, a nine-year employee, works closely with the Lubbock university's interns. She helps locate and mentor its financial planning students, and when a job opening arises, hires them. Armont sees Slaughter's core values — integrity, trust and expertise — in practice with these up-and-coming financial advisors.

Texas Tech gives students practical knowledge about financial planning, Armont said, but the thing she likes best about the graduates "is they are truly passionate about helping people. It's not just about selling financial products, but rather possessing a true commitment to helping people at every level."

In an industry that is often outsourced — and viewed with mistrust during the recent economic downturn — Slaughter's 10 employees strive to maintain the company's reputation for putting clients first. Every employee is asked to share in assuring a customer's

financial success, and every-one answers the phone or stuffs envelopes, as needed.

"We do whatever it takes to serve our clients," said CEO Brooks Slaughter, who joined his father's firm in 1994. In addition to company perks, such as outings for strategic planning and team building, reimbursed educational expenses, stock options in the company, Slaughter said employees are offered the same standard benefit plans that the firm recommends to its clients.

"We have to follow our own advice, so if we have suggested a client set up a 401(k) program, for example, we make the same commitment to our employees," Slaughter said.

Armont said the most fun days at the office occur when clients visit.

"We all know our clients so well, everyone is asking about how their vacation was or if the new baby is walking yet. The sound you hear from client conference room meetings is often laughter," said Armont.

Richard P. Slaughter Associates has won top honors from the *Austin Business Journal's* "Best Places to Work" in the small-companies category every year since 2004. The firm's culture extends beyond serving their external and internal clients to also focus on the well-being of Central Texas. Past and present board service by Slaughter employees includes the Greater Austin Youth Foundation, Texas Parent-to-Parent, Crime Prevention Institute and Council on At-Risk Youth. Employees mentor girls at the Ann Richards School during their lunch time, help with Junior Achievement

**RICHARD P. SLAUGHTER ASSOCIATES**

**LOCAL EMPLOYEE COUNT:** 10  
**ADDRESS:** 9606 N. MoPac Expressway, Suite 550, Austin 78759  
**PHONE NUMBER:** 512-918-0000  
**WEBSITE:** www.slaughterinvest.com  
**TOP LOCAL EXECUTIVE:** Brooks Slaughter, president and CEO

in the classroom, and seek opportunities with the Financial Literacy Coalition of Central Texas.

Vice President Bob Tabor spearheads the annual Richard P. Slaughter Golf Tournament, benefitting For the Love of Christi, Texas Parent-to-Parent and the Council on At-Risk Youth. He said the employees' efforts on behalf of these organizations are very rewarding for all involved. Stability, he believes, is the key to his company's success and what makes it a great place to work.

"In this industry, and many others, there is lot of instability about unemployment out there. We have the opposite of that, and, as a result, have a high client and employee retention," Tabor said. "We are not only going to be around, we're growing, and everyone knows that. Our clients appreciate that we have such stability in our employee base."