

Fortune ranks Raleigh-Cary No. 3 for starting a business

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Another day, another "best of" list for this region.

Today's installment: Fortune Small Business magazine and the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation ranks the Raleigh-Cary area as No. 3 on its 2009 list of the 50 best places to start a business. Charlotte comes in at No. 7.

The list ranks large cities based on factors that help make entrepreneurs successful, including economic growth, labor cost, housing market and more. The rankers especially like Raleigh-Cary's weather, strong higher education and quality family life.

On FSB's list of mid-sized cities, Wilmington is No. 14 and Durham is no. 15.

This region makes so many similar lists that they tend to become routine. But economic boosters say the attention does help attract newcomers,

which supports future growth.

"Historically, fast-growing companies small companies have led the U.S. economy out of recession," writes FSB editor Jessica Bruder. "Location matters more than ever before."

The FSB list, out today, also includes an interview with Lou Jurkowski, left, who started Raleigh architecture firm BJAC in 1994. She moved to Raleigh from South Carolina partly because of the schools.

"North Carolina was very friendly to women business owners," she told FSB. "The perception of women was very much more sophisticated than you might find in other areas of the South at that time."

BJAC now has 35 employees, down from 43 before the economy slumped, Jurkowski said. The company provides design, planning and other architectural services for schools, health-care providers and more.

Read the [interview with Jurkowski here](#).

Ahead of this region on the FSB list of large cities: Oklahoma City at No. 1, and Pittsburgh at No. 2. Huntsville, Ala., was No. 1 among medium cities and Billings, Mo., was top for small cities.

Read the full [FSB report here](#), and the magazine's description [of Raleigh-Cary here](#).