



MEDIA RELEASE
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Columbia ranks 7th among "America's Top 25 Towns to Live Well"

Forbes Magazine evaluated towns on quality of life, business environment and labor force

Columbia, Maryland has been named seventh among "America's Top 25 Towns to Live Well", as determined by Forbes Magazine. Columbia ranked high among quality of life factors, such as schools, restaurants and access to music venues. Forbes also noted that venture capital comes to \$594 per capita and Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)-defined professionals account for 27% of the labor force, the fourth highest of towns measured.

To evaluate each town – defined as every city, town, borough or Census-designated-place under 100,000 people – Forbes looked at the following factors: median income; average commute; distance to highways and airports; per capita venture capital funding; per capita number of small businesses; sole-proprietorships and start-ups; the percentage of the population with bachelor's degrees or higher; the share of BLS-defined professional-level workers; the percentage of young and educated people, or those ages 25-34 with a bachelor's degree or higher; the percentage of foreign-born residents with a bachelor's degree or higher; and the number of restaurants, bars, museums and cultural institutions per capita. Data was provided by ZoomProspector.com, a San Francisco-based consulting firm specializing in corporate relocation. The full article on Forbes Magazine's "America's Top 25 Towns to Live Well" can be found at <http://www.forbes.com/2009/05/04/towns-cities-real-estate-lifestyle-real-estate-top-towns.html>.

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