



\$2.00 OCT. 20-26, 2011 / 22-28 TISHREI 5772  
A JEWISH RENAISSANCE MEDIA PUBLICATION

# Designation Detroit

## Urban Employment

Jackie Headapohl | *Managing Editor*



Quicken welcomed 2,500 more employees to their new home in the Chase Tower on Oct. 10.

If you work in Detroit, you may find your commute is getting a bit slower. That's because more and more people are working downtown.

The influx of workers is in no small part thanks to Quicken Loans, which this month began moving 2,500 additional employees from the suburbs.

Some 1,500 Quicken Loans team members stepped foot into their new offices Oct. 10 at the renovated Chase Tower in the city's central business district, bringing the company one step closer to its goal of relocating all of its Michigan-based team members to downtown Detroit.

Those employees join 1,700 colleagues who moved from the suburbs to Detroit just 14 months ago when Quicken Loans and several sister companies moved their headquarters to the Compuware Building, situated at the foot of Campus Martius Park. An additional 500 people are

## *Companies in downtown are bringing more workers into the city.*

expected to be hired from a job fair held last month.

"This marks the next step in the effort to transform downtown Detroit into a work, live and play epicenter where young professionals come to plant roots and grow their careers," said Dan Gilbert, founder and chairman of Quicken Loans, the nation's largest online home lender.

Gilbert, a leading Jewish businessman, also is working behind the

scenes to retain Jewish talent and help bring back young Jews who left Detroit for other opportunities.

Gilbert added to his downtown real estate portfolio, purchasing two more buildings on Woodward last month, which will be converted to creative office space for lease to startups.

An additional 1,000 team members from several of Quicken Loans' sister companies will move to downtown Detroit and occupy space in the Madison Theatre and First National buildings when renovations are completed in November 2011 and early 2012, respectively.

One of those companies is Troy-based MyInsurance Expert, which will be moving its 100 employees to Detroit early next year.

"We're in the middle of hiring another 100 people," said CEO Lorne

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Zalesin. "We'll be doing that over the next three months."

### **Hiring Along 'Webward'**

Quicken isn't the only company on Woodward Avenue bringing more people to Detroit. The street is quickly becoming a technology hub.

Take GalaxE.Solutions, a New Jersey-based IT company, which plans to put 500 IT pros to work in its Detroit office within five years. A 10-story banner on the side of the company's office at 1001 Woodward Ave., displays the company's name and "Outsource to Detroit" logo.

Tim Bryan, founder and CEO of the company that does IT work traditionally outsourced overseas here in Michigan, told Mlive.com that he expects 10-12 additional high-tech companies to come to Detroit in the coming years.

"What we saw in selecting Detroit was a growing nucleus of a verging IT cluster," he said. "The key to success here is you have a cluster of IT firms that are in a major American city that is the most affordable city in America."

### **Action At The RenCen**

Business consultancy firm Deloitte, in need of more space, recently moved out of the 500-600 Tower at the Renaissance Center and into Tower 200, signing an 11-year lease, according to Mark Davidoff, De-

loitte's Michigan managing partner.

"There was never a discussion about leaving downtown. Deloitte has been in Michigan 50 years and has a strong commitment to the state and the city of Detroit," he said, adding the average age of the Deloitte employee is 25-27. "This generation wants more urban experience. And there's clearly an incredible buzz in Detroit. All assets for its

resurgence are falling into place."

Davidoff is also a board member of the Jewish Fund, established in 1997 from the sale proceeds of Sinai Hospital of Detroit. The fund awards grants to expand health and human services to residents of Metro Detroit. He said he sees lots of Jewish 20-somethings active in the Isaac Agree Downtown Synagogue and living in Detroit.

Some of those young people might find themselves working for Deloitte. This fall, Deloitte will hire more than 100 young people off Michigan campuses as well as make strategic, experienced hires in four divisions: audit, tax, consulting and financial advisory.

"We'll be looking for accounting grads as well as MBAs with specialties in technology, strategy and marketing," Davidoff said.

The tower at the RenCen vacated by Deloitte won't be sitting empty. In May, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan began moving the first group of 3,000 employees from Southfield to its new offices in the RenCen. BCB-SM will have approximately 6,000 employees working downtown by 2012, when the entire move is complete. □



**GalaxE.Solutions unveiled its "Outsource to Detroit" banner last month at its Woodward Avenue location.**