



CRAIN'S

NEW YORK BUSINESS

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CRAIN'S 2022
**best
places
to work in
NYC**

INSIDE
See the full
lists of small,
midsize and
large companies
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DEFYING THE GREAT RESIGNATION

These employers are investing to attract workers and keep them feeling wanted

BY AARON ELSTEIN

Ever since the world of work got upended, employers have been feverishly trying to figure out how to keep staff happy and engaged.

Gallup galloped in with answers earlier this year. Turns out, workers most of all want to be paid more, according to the pollster. So employers complied: Nominal wages rose 6.7% in August, according to the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta, the highest since at least the late 1990s.

Trouble is, the 8.5% inflation rate devoured the gains.

Apart from money, workers told the Gallup Poll they prize greater work-life balance, and employers have become more generous with paid time off. But workers also said they want greater job stability, "the ability to do what they do best" and a diverse workplace.

6.7%

AMOUNT
nominal wages
increased in
August

See **WORKPLACE** on page 18



BEST PLACES TO WORK: (Top) LiveOnNY and (from left) Ordergroove, JFK International Air Terminal LLC and Good Apple are among the stellar employers that made this year's list.

CLIMATE CHANGE

\$52B plan calls for coastal barriers to protect New York

BY CAROLINE SPIVACK

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers wants to build a massive \$52 billion network of coastal barriers to protect the region from future storms. The proposal represents the only comprehensive effort to address flooding in the New York-New Jersey region

and would reshape coastal communities from Inwood to Flushing to those bordering Jamaica Bay.

Army Corps officials detailed the tentative Alternative 3B plan in a 569-page report, published Sept. 24, that seeks to construct 12 storm surge gates across several major inlets and bays. The project would also erect 31

miles of sea walls, land-based levees and elevated coasts. All told, the undertaking would annually save some \$6.2 billion in flood damage over 50 years, according to the draft estimates.

The project requires a lengthy series of federal, state and city approvals, but if given the greenlight by Congress, the federal govern-

ment would cover 65% of the cost. The state and the city would be on the hook for the remaining 35%. The public can weigh in on the design through Jan. 6 by email or mail. Officials expect to release a final project proposal in 2025 with construction to begin by

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NEWSPAPER

POWER CORNER
**DOCTOROFF
PREPS FOR
HIS BIGGEST
FIGHT YET**

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THE LIST
**NY's largest
accounting
firms**

PAGE 14

Why spotted lanternflies are bad for local business

BY JACK GRIEVE

You might have encountered them while dining outdoors or walking through Central Park. Since making their way into New York—they were first noticed in Clay Pit Ponds State Park Preserve on Staten Island in 2020—spotted lanternflies have been reported in all five boroughs and across the state as far away as Buffalo. Spotted lanternflies do not sting or bite humans, and there is no evidence to suggest that they are toxic to pets or livestock. So why are experts and state officials imploring New Yorkers to

“IT’S ONE OF THE **WORST INVASIVE SPECIES** WE’RE DEALING WITH RIGHT NOW”

squash the insects? “It’s one of the worst invasive species that we’re dealing with right now in terms of potential economic and agricultural impact,” said Carrie Brown-Lima, director of the New York Invasive Species Research Institute. **Wineries and vineyards** Spotted lanternflies wear down plants, sucking the sap out of them and excreting honeydew that leads

to sooty mold, which can harm plants’ growth. They can lead to crop loss, exporting issues and increased management costs, according to the state Department of Agriculture and Markets. The lanternflies pose a specific threat to grapevines, apple trees and similar plants. “They have caused significant damage to wineries and vineyards,” Brown-Lima said. In New York alone, the annual yield of apples and grapes amounts to more than \$350 million. There are more than 450 wineries across the state, with vineyards spanning 35,000 acres.

“If you are a vineyard owner and have to treat for lanternflies, your production costs are going to go up,” said Chris Logue, director of the plant industry division at the Agriculture Department. “There’s the day-to-day piece of it, but there’s also the broader economic piece.” Spotted lanternflies can be a nuisance for people outside, especially when the bugs make it into high-density areas. That’s particularly concerning for New York businesses that have pivoted to more outdoor offerings amid the Covid-19 pandemic and are already struggling with unpleasanties including rats, noise and garbage.

Logue said one of the big questions for his colleagues is how to approach containment. New York has experimented with new measures to contain the spread, including calling on volunteers to survey specific areas to identify infestation. Cornell University researchers have partnered with the state to study whether lanternfly-sniffing dogs can be used to detect the pests. The city Department of Parks and Recreation is pruning and removing trees that pose a risk—the lanternflies favor the ailanthus tree, also called the tree of heaven—and coordinating with other agencies to survey and treat infestations. It is not currently performing any widespread treatment “due to uncertainty of the success of chemical treatments and the prohibitive cost,” the Parks Department said. “We may treat limited high-value trees at risk of infection if it is deemed necessary,” the department said. It has proven difficult to slow the



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spread of the bugs. “They are really great hitchhikers,” Logue said, noting that they can travel on cars, trucks, trains and airplanes. **What’s their deal?** Lanternflies start as egg masses that are discreet, flat and almost camouflaged on trees. Once hatched, starting in the spring, the nymphs are black with white spots. They develop bright-red underwings as they grow. Adults are about an inch long and have wings

that can give a butterfly-like appearance. After the adults lay eggs in the fall, they die in the winter. The planthoppers are native to Southeast Asia and they first were identified in North America in 2014. Now they have been spotted all along the East Coast, from New Hampshire to North Carolina, and as far west as Indiana. “If you do see [a lantern fly], it’s important to report it and don’t transport it,” Brown-Lima said. “The hope is that we get some kind of long-term prevention.” ■



EVENTS CALLOUT
NOV. 3

HALL OF FAME LUNCHEON
Crain’s Hall of Fame honorees have had distinguished careers and have embarked upon exceptional civic and philanthropic activities that have had a transformative impact on the city’s economy. They will be recognized at a celebratory luncheon open to the public. Attendees will be able to network with the 2021 and 2022 honorees during an awards ceremony highlighting their esteemed careers.

DETAILS
Time: Noon to 2:00 p.m.
Location: Manhattan Manor
CrainsNewYork.com/HallofFame2022

COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE

SL Green’s stock revisits its spring of 2020 low

BY AARON ELSTEIN

SL Green Realty’s stock price has fallen to near its spring low from two years ago, underscoring the financial challenges of Midtown office owners. Shares in the city’s largest office landlord closed at \$39.27 last Monday, close to their May 2020 low of \$39.10 per share unadjusted for dividends. The stock had recovered about 6.5% by Wednesday. Meanwhile, shares in Vornado Realty Trust set a pandemic-era low earlier this year and remain below 2020 levels. Shares in two other big Manhattan office landlords, Empire State Realty Trust and Paramount Group, trade above their March 2020 lows, though they also have lost ground in recent weeks. After a Labor Day surge, office occupancy rates in New York crept down two weeks ago to 46.1% from 46.6%, according to Kastle Systems, a firm that tracks office ID swipes. With the return-to-office movement at least temporarily losing momentum and large tenants opting for less space, vacancies figure to remain elevated as prospects for

a recession grow. Landlords also are grappling with higher operating costs as interest rates march higher. “Record vacancy and risk of tenants reducing space demands creates cash flow growth uncertainty,” Morgan Stanley analyst Ronald Kamden said in a September client report, adding that office landlords trade at a 49% discount to other publicly traded real estate owners. Kamden warned that several landlords will “require debt and dispositions to fund operations.” Doing that at attractive terms would be tough when interest rates are rising quickly. The 10-year government bond briefly hit 4% Wednesday for the first time in more than a decade. **Hostile takeovers** The pressure could make landlords vulnerable to hostile takeover bids, such as the all-cash offer of \$12 per share that Paramount rejected in February. Its stock was trading for \$6.44 per share last Wednesday afternoon. Jonathan Adelsberg, co-chair of the real estate department at law firm Herrick, Feinstein, said hostile

takeover bidders would have a hard time persuading investors they could improve performance. Adelsberg added that landlords are redesigning offices to make them more attractive: “New York City real estate people are brilliant at repositioning older properties in a creative way.” While they reposition their offices, landlords must weigh whether to reposition their balance sheets and shed floating-rate debt, which gets more expensive to service as interest rates rise. At SL Green, 20% of liabilities are floating rate; at Vornado, it’s about 40%, down from 66% earlier in the year. On a conference call in August, Vornado Chief Executive Steven Roth said locking in additional fixed-rate loans could be a mistake because the Federal Reserve will start lowering rates once it’s clear

the economy is in recession. “We expect rates to come down, perhaps quite substantially,” Roth said, “depending upon what the depth of the business slowdown is.” ■



ONE VANDERBILT

BUCK ENNIS



THE HOTTEST DINNERS AND DEMOS AT NYC WINE AND FOOD FESTIVAL

BY CARA EISENPRESS

The wide-ranging, star-studded annual eating-and-drinking charitable event that is the New York City Wine and Food Festival returns to the city this month, with an array of parties, small dinners and tasting events.

The 15th anniversary of the New York event benefits God's Love We Deliver and will take place at Hudson River Park's Pier 76 and Pier 86, with some events at Industry City for the first time and another event at the Hard Rock Hotel near Rockefeller Center.

In 2019 the festival sold tickets to 45,000 guests, event founder Lee Schrager said. This year, Schrager said, he expects about 40,000. Typically, around 70% of ticketholders come from the metro area, and 30% are out-of-town visitors. Chefs from as far away as Bangkok and Tuscany, Italy, will head to the event, which runs from Oct. 13 to Oct. 16.

How the festival benefits the city

That well-known chefs keep signing up to participate in the festival reflects how the event can bring visibility to their brands or restaurants, Schrager said, and entice New Yorkers

with plenty of restaurant options to go out and try something new.

"People go to the grand tasting and try something from a restaurant they never heard of," Schrager said. "You take a bite and you say, 'What is that restaurant?'"

Although the precise economic effect of any single holiday or large event is hard to measure, New York has seen public transit ridership tick up on Labor Day, during Fashion Week and during the meeting of the U.N. General Assembly.

Select NYC Wine and Food Festival events

These are some of the hottest events at this year's festival, and tickets are going fast. Some events have already sold out.

- **Blue Moon Burger Bash** presented by Pat LaFrieda Meats, hosted by Rachael Ray, Thursday, Oct. 13
- **Dinner** with Cliff Crooks, Sohla El-Waylly and Oscar Gonzalez, Thursday, Oct. 13
- **Dinner** with Marcus Samuelsson and Lexis Gonzalez, Friday, Oct. 14
- **Taste of Asia**, Friday, Oct. 14
- **Cantonese-American Cooking Master Class** with Calvin Eng of Bonnie's, Saturday, Oct. 15
- **Brunch at Laser Wolf** with Michael Solomonov, Saturday,

"YOU **TAKE A BITE** AND YOU SAY, **WHAT IS THAT RESTAURANT?**"

Oct. 15

- **Cote x Dhamaka:** A lunch with Simon Kim, David Shim, Chintan Pandya and Roni Mazumdar, Saturday, Oct. 15
- **Master Class** with Breads Bakery & Smitten Kitchen, Saturday, Oct. 15
- **Vegan Dinner** with Lauren Von Der Pool and JJ Johnson, Saturday, Oct. 15
- **Caviar presents Tacos & Tequila After Dark** powered by Toyota, hosted by the cast of *The Kitchen* with special guests Elvis Duran and the Z100 morning show members, Saturday, Oct. 15
- **Backyard BBQ** presented by Pat LaFrieda Meats, hosted by Andrew Zimmern and Dario Cecchini, Sunday, Oct. 16 ■

Tusk, political strategist behind Bloomberg's third term and purveyor of novels, parts with a Gramercy Park pad

BY C. J. HUGHES

Bradley Tusk, who leveraged his work electing Mayor Michael Bloomberg into a successful career as a lobbyist and venture capitalist – and now bookstore owner – has sold his Gramercy Park pad.

The loft-style, columned co-op at 112 E. 19th St., No. 11F, sold for \$3.4 million earlier this month, records show. In 2012 Tusk paid \$3 million for the three-bedroom, two-bath unit, which has beamed ceilings, an open kitchen with marble counters and a den with a built-in desk. Compass listed the apartment in April for nearly \$3.4 million, meaning Tusk sold at a slight profit.

The unit's 12-story building, near Irving Place, is on a street that was described as "block beautiful" in an article in *American Homes and Gardens* in 1914.

Although a longtime fixture on Democratic campaigns, Tusk en-

\$3.4M

SELLING PRICE FOR 112 E. 19th St., No. 11F

taxi industry. Uber compensated Tusk for his strategizing with company shares, which reportedly were worth \$100 million after Uber went public in 2017.

In 2016 Tusk co-founded Tusk Venture Partners, a VC firm whose portfolio includes Coinbase Global. The cryptocurrency company made a big splash after its initial public offering in April 2021 but has since tumbled. At the start of the year, its stock price was \$250 a share but had fallen to around \$63 on Sept. 26.

The startup that has received the most attention for him as of late, though, seems to be P&T Knitwear, a 3,000-square-foot bookstore that opened this year on the Lower East Side, at 180 Orchard St. Featuring an amphitheater, a podcast studio and a cafe, the store is named after a clothing store that Tusk's grandfather owned nearby.

It's not clear where Tusk, 48 and a Brooklyn native, may be headed next. An interview request sent to Tusk Venture Partners went unreturned. And Henry Hershkowitz, the Compass agent who marketed his co-op, had no comment. ■



IN 2016 TUSK CO-FOUNDED TUSK VENTURE PARTNERS

listed in 2009 with Bloomberg, then a Republican, to lift him to an unprecedented third term as mayor.

After, Tusk formed a lobbying firm, Tusk Strategies, which waged a successful campaign on behalf of Uber against Mayor Bill de Blasio, who wanted a cap on the number of ride-share vehicles to protect the



UNIT 11F AT 112 E. 19TH ST. has three bedrooms and features beamed ceilings, an open kitchen and a den.



REAL ESTATE

Brodsky Org. sues to challenge city's method for cracking down on Airbnbs

BY C. J. HUGHES

Should landlords be responsible for tenants who sublet their apartments illegally?

That seems to be the question at the heart of a lawsuit that developer the Brodsky Organization has brought against the city. It comes after officials fined Brodsky for an apartment at 75 West End Ave. that

"It would be illegal as a matter of law for the landlord to simply throw the tenant out extra-judicially upon learning of the illegal conduct. Yet, that appears to be the only course open to the landlord," says the suit, filed last Monday in Manhattan's Supreme Court.

In fact, Brodsky did kick out the tenant, Alvaro Reinoso, after managers learned what was going on in his apartment, No. P12B, the suit says, an action it says should be applauded and not met with fines.

"The harm as a result of these violations was exponentially reduced because of the landlord's affirmative actions," says the suit, which is against the Department of Buildings and other city agencies.

For its part, Mayor Eric Adams' office said the law is on its side. "We will review the papers," a mayoral spokesman said, "but we are confi-

dent that the courts will continue to uphold the laws that protect our housing and our visitors."

Who's to blame?

Previously, officials claimed that Brodsky could have easily determined that No. P12B was being rented out for less than 30 days at a pop, which is illegal.

Indeed, as evidence in the case, investigators for the city produced online ads for No. P12B, which they claim was rented out on about 90 occasions.

Brodsky, however, argues that the ads were extremely vague, making it almost impossible to know any wrongdoing was taking place. In a bid to be secretive, perhaps, the ads stated that the apartment was actually located at a different address—at 60 West End, versus 75 West End—and listed "Laura" as a contact, instead of Reinoso, according to filings.

Renters would meet in a nearby park, to avoid detection by building

managers, before being escorted to the apartment, according to court papers.

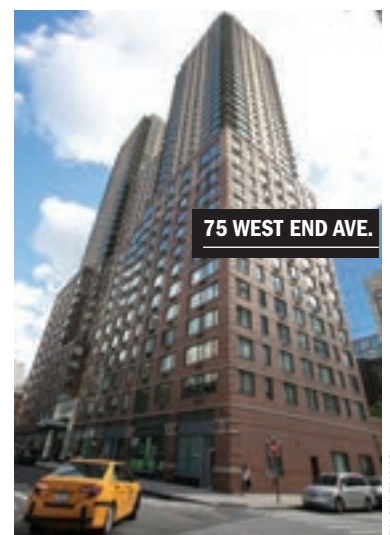
In April 2021 Brodsky moved to evict Reinoso, and by that summer he was out. In his defense at the time, Reinoso said a friend who was staying in his home while Reinoso was away in Europe was the one who was illegally renting the unit on Airbnb. Reinoso could not be reached for further comment.

In January of this year, a court ruled that Brodsky was to blame for allowing the sublet. Brodsky appealed the ruling, but in May a judge upheld the decision.

Now, for its second appeal, Brodsky is bringing what's known as an Article 78 case, a kind of suit that asks a state court to review a city law.

A Brodsky spokesman had no comment. And Dean Dreiblat and Phillip Wartell, attorneys for Brodsky, did not return calls for comment by press time.

The building involved, 75 West



"IT WOULD BE ILLEGAL FOR THE LANDLORD TO SIMPLY THROW THE TENANT OUT"

was used repeatedly as an Airbnb.

The fines at stake, around \$53,000, are not large, especially for a landlord like Brodsky, which owns apartment buildings across New York. But Brodsky seems to be bringing its case to point out flaws in how New York polices Airbnbs and other short-term rentals.

End, at West 63rd Street, which is known as West End Towers, has 973 apartments across 37 floors, according to tax documents. Last Monday a one-bedroom there was going for \$4,500 a month, according to Brodsky's site.

Since 2010 rentals of apartments for less than 30 days, when the owner is not present, have been illegal. In 2016 state lawmakers took the crackdown on short-term rentals even further and made advertising those kinds of stays off-limits as well. ■

Making the most of your health benefits with Empire BlueCross BlueShield

Navigating the health care system is complex. As president and CEO of Empire BlueCross BlueShield, Alan J. Murray has made it his mission to materially and measurably improve the health of all New Yorkers, and as part of this, his team is working every day to simplify health care for Empire's customers and members.

In June, Murray began leading a broader national team that is working to improve the health of diverse populations, such as students and labor groups, with custom-built innovative health plans. Before joining Empire, he was the founding president and CEO of Northwell's CareConnect Insurance Company Inc., the first provider-owned commercial insurance plan in New York state. He built the foundation of his career over the course of a decade in leadership roles including vice president, New York market lead at UnitedHealthcare and regional vice president, New York provider and ancillary network development at Empire.

Crain's Content Studio recently spoke to Murray about Empire BlueCross BlueShield's new programs, networks and innovations to improve the quality of care in the most efficient manner possible.



ALAN J. MURRAY

President and CEO, Empire BlueCross BlueShield

CRAIN'S: How can employers and insurers lower health care costs?

ALAN J. MURRAY: Lowering health care costs starts with supporting whole health, which means considering all the factors that influence health, including physical, behavioral and social drivers. The healthier people are, the more time they can spend enjoying their lives. Moreover, supporting the whole health of employees can also increase productivity. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, healthier employees are more productive, and they are less likely to call in sick or use vacation time due to illness. To achieve whole health, it's incredibly important to have the right networks. They are the key that unlocks benefits for members and gives them access to hospitals and providers.

CRAIN'S: What are the different Empire BlueCross BlueShield networks and how do they work?

MURRAY: At Empire, we simplified our network strategy to offer three commercial networks, each with distinct

benefits, so that our customers and members can pick a network matched to their needs.

Connection is our most affordable network. It delivers the greatest premium savings, while continuing to offer in-network access to the majority of key hospital systems in Empire's service area. Blue Access combines premium savings with broad in-network coverage. PPO/EPO offers the broadest in-network coverage, with nearly 100% hospital participation in Empire's service area. All providers in Connection are in Blue Access, and all providers in Connection and Blue Access are in PPO/EPO. In addition, all three networks give members access to the BlueCard network nationally, an important feature for members who either live or travel outside of Empire's service area.

At the one-year mark, the Blue Access network—which occupies the middle ground in terms of cost and coverage—accounted for 50% of new sales in the fully insured commercial segment. Blue Access introduces benefits across the system: it helps providers because most benefits in this product are designed to keep patients in-network within a given provider's existing health management programs. It's also beneficial to members by promoting better health outcomes, and to employers by offering savings.

CRAIN'S: What is the SydneySM Health app and how can members use it to maximize their benefits?

MURRAY: One of the most important tips for employers is to encourage their employees to download our Sydney Health app. Sydney is a free app that connects our members with instant access to their health insurance information. Think of it as the front door to care. Sydney gives members access to everything from their member ID card and claims information to a virtual visit

with a provider and well-being programs. Sydney offers many different resources to support members looking to improve their whole health. The latest innovation available through Sydney is access to virtual primary care, which is one of the ways we are working to close care gaps.

CRAIN'S: What is virtual primary care? Why should employers care about it?

MURRAY: There is a nationwide shortage of primary care doctors, and many people do not have an existing relationship with a primary care provider. At the same time, studies have shown that people who have a relationship with a trusted primary care provider are more

“To achieve whole health, it's incredibly important to have the right networks. They are the key that unlocks benefits for members and gives them access to hospitals and providers. ”

likely to have higher satisfaction with the health care system and are less likely to require care at an emergency room or an acute hospital admission.

With virtual primary care, available through Sydney, eligible members have access to a virtual care team that conducts an initial health check-in, creates a personalized care plan, and provides care services to help members improve their health and well-being at little or no cost. This is one of the many ways Empire offers access to affordable care while maintaining quality, and it helps to lower overall health care costs with preventative care.

Members can access virtual primary care for a wide range of services, from an on-demand urgent care visit to follow-up visits for wellness, prevention

and chronic condition care. It is also available for managing new prescriptions and refills, preventive tests, screening and labs. Some of our members can now do all or most of their primary care virtually, and it is also possible for members who have an in-person primary care provider to use this service to complement that care.

CRAIN'S: What about behavioral health? How can employers support members to save on these costs?

MURRAY: We encourage members to choose in-network options for behavioral health care, and make sure they are aware of everything that is available to them through Empire. The

we recommend employers offer this option. Plans with HSAs are paired with higher deductibles; that gives members the choice to pay lower premiums while setting aside money for medical needs as they work toward that deductible. Like a savings account, HSA funds don't disappear at the end of the year. In addition, the funds put into the accounts are tax-deductible and tax-free. HSAs do have eligibility requirements, so it is important for members to understand if they are eligible, based on the health plan they choose. This is where we partner with employers to educate members about their options.

CRAIN'S: If a customer or member needs more advice about how to maximize benefits, what do you recommend?

MURRAY: This question comes at a perfect time because it is Customer Service Week. Our best-in-class service teams are designed to support our customers and members. Our customers have access to dedicated account managers and account service coordinators, as well as excellent resources like our broker hub. When customers choose Empire, we encourage them to partner with us to create a service plan that will meet the needs of their employees. We recently started doing culture calls more regularly where we learn more about an organization's employees so that we're ready for them when they call for support.

Members looking for support should start with the number on the back of their ID card. We have a dedicated team that is ready to assist. The Sydney Health app is also a great resource for our members. ■

CRAIN'S: What are the advantages of setting up a health savings account and how does it work?

MURRAY: Health savings accounts give members more control over how they spend their health care dollars, and

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Cash-advance companies are flooding courts with claims of nonpayment by small businesses

BY CARA EISENPRESS

Three years ago New York outlawed a contested practice in which small businesses that took funds from a local group of cash-advance companies waived their legal right to defend themselves.

When borrowers defaulted, the lawsuits were clogging the courts, as both Bloomberg and The City reported at the time. Yet the outcomes were essentially predetermined because of the waivers. The state's judiciary urged the Legislature and the governor to end these contract terms, known as confessions of judgment, for out-of-state companies. New York passed a bill into law.

That might have been the end of the story.

But as the worst of the pandemic ebbed in 2021, state courts began filling up once again with cash-advance companies seeking judgments against small businesses. The businesses were struggling to cover operating expenses as federal pandemic programs dried up and labor shortages and supply-chain challenges mounted. As a result, businesses evidently turned to cash advances—and then ran into trouble with them.

Now, two years after the confession of judgment ban brought attention to predatory practices in the industry, merchant cash-advance companies have devised new

ple digits.

That's where businesses often get into trouble, because the MCA firms usually start taking receipts almost immediately.

If something goes wrong, cash-advance firms turn to the courts with perfected formulas for going after the companies' bank accounts. Because of New York's ban on confession of judgment clauses, the small businesses no longer waive their rights to a trial. But lawsuits are still frequently served without sufficient notice or with extremely tight deadlines, said Leslie Tayne, a Melville, Long Island, attorney. Tayne said she represents so many small-business clients in MCA cases that she has given up her other practice areas in the past year to focus solely on the issue.

"It's exploded," she said. "For the last year, it's all I do every day."

Although it's hard to quantify the total number of cases or the rate of growth, the cases have flooded all districts of the state Supreme Court. Although the MCA firms are usually in the city, the small businesses that contract with them hail from around the U.S.

Tough times

For a while in 2020 and 2021, around \$1 trillion in government relief programs kept small businesses relatively flush. As late as April of this year, the share of small businesses with at least three months of cash on hand was near its pandemic high, according to information collected by the since-discontinued Census Bureau Small Business Pulse Survey.

But as life got back to normal, access to traditional funding became more difficult for companies with fewer than 500 employees. The share of firms seeking traditional financing fell from 43% in 2019 to 36% in 2021, and they were more often looking for money for operating expenses rather than expansion, according to the Federal Reserve's Small Business Credit Survey 2022 Report on Employer Firms. Moreover, the share of applicants that received all the traditional funding they sought fell from 51% in 2019 to 30% in 2021, the survey found.

"It's a perfect storm," Tayne said. Tayne said her clients represent a wide range of industries: trucking, construction and landscapers, as well as farmers, retailers, restaurants, house cleaners, dentists and technology services. While some businesses—and their cash advances—are quite small, others have many millions of dollars in revenue.

The owner of a construction business in the New York metropolitan area said that he turned to cash advances around the time that business took off. Rapid growth in new-home building and renova-

tions from a hot housing market led to cash flow problems for the owner—who wished to stay anonymous out of concern that information about his finances could affect his ability to sign clients or make things worse with his MCA relationship. He said he has about 20 employees and annual revenue of about \$5 million.

Several large customers were stretching out their bills over a longer period at the same time that he took on five new construction projects that required a substantial cash outlay upfront.

Because he needed money fast, a traditional line of credit did not suffice, and government loan products like the Small Business Administration's 7a were too slow to apply for. As the owner of a fairly new business, he did not feel confident in being approved for a conventional bank loan, he said.

Supply-chain issues have made businesses particularly cash-hungry, said Heskin, the White and Williams partner. For example, a builder could end up in a bind because lumber prices soar after a fixed contract is signed with a client. Or a trucker might be awaiting payment because a delivery doesn't arrive from overseas for months after it was expected.

Egregious efforts

Once repayments aren't made, things get ugly.

In the case of the builder, the company that gave him the advance put out liens against him and the business. Because the MCA firm has access to company checking accounts, it could see his checking account and contacted his business and homeowner clients for payments. His receivables and online accounts such as PayPal and Venmo were frozen, he said. Next came threatening letters to his home.

The process of selling—and up-selling—the advances is also rife with ill intent, Tayne said.

Brokers pitch funds to desperate companies, and their commissions just add to the pile of fees to be repaid. Their sales lines sometimes include untruths, such as the idea that MCAs will help a business build its credit and lead to successful future loan applications, which is not the case.

After a successful advance, the companies will frequently pitch another exchange, she said.



ISTOCK

The local builder, for example, said he was successful in making all the payments on the first couple of advances. "But once you have a good track record," he said, "they give you more. It's a revolving door of money." He added that once he was about 60% paid down on one advance, companies approached him again to inquire if he wanted access to more money.

A city business, a jeweler on West 47th Street, was sold three successive advances totaling nearly \$1 million in two months, according to a complaint by Fox Capital Group, which sold the advance.

Frequent MCA companies in the state court system include Liberty Funding Solutions, Reliance Financial, Quicksilver Capital and Last Chance Funding Group. The companies sometimes dissolve and form again, attorneys say.

"It's very profitable," Tayne said.

It's when a small business empties its checking account or cuts off before full repayment that the MCA firms begin to tack on fees. Then the MCA firms head to the courts.

They file lawsuits quick and fast—"like a machine," Tayne said. "They're prepared to file on that exact day, and we file answers often on the day it's due." Defendants often do not even get notice or have time to find an attorney. The MCA firms get the judgments they need to freeze bank accounts or put liens on a defendant's assets.

Even with the confession of judgment ban, New York has a fairly favorable law that makes it easy to bring cases to court, said Julia Heald, an attorney at the Federal Trade Commission's Division of Financial Practices, Bureau of Consumer Protection.

"The original intent is that it is a quick and easy way to resolve pay-

ment of an undisputed amount," Heald explained.

Legal leaps

In addition to a handful of private lawyers, both the New York attorney general and the Federal Trade Commission have brought and won several cases against the MCA companies this year. In general, the government goes after the worst actors, Heald said.

Although it might not win whack-a-mole, one solid legal strategy appears to have emerged: If lawyers can show that the MCA is functioning as a loan, then the company selling the cash becomes subject to a great deal more federal and state regulation, Heskin said.

Three recent decisions in federal court in New York's Southern District found exactly that, with judges ruling that several infamous companies,

such as Financial District-based Richmond Capital Group, were deceiving and threatening small businesses. Those follow an April 2021 decision in the same court in favor of the FTC against Jersey City, New Jersey-based Yellowstone Capital, which had to pay nearly \$10 million in total to more than 7,700 small businesses. So far, 587 New York-based businesses have received \$778,512 in refunds from the case, according to the FTC's tracker.

The bottom line in legal terms, Heald said, is that MCAs' place in the financial system is to provide funds in exchange for taking on the risk that a business could fail rather than getting a guarantee that it can help itself to steady future payments regardless of the business's health.

"If the MCA provider was truly purchasing a share of the future income, which would rise and fall as business did, there is something in it for the business too," she said. ■

"THEY FILE LAWSUITS LIKE A MACHINE. THEY'RE READY TO FILE THAT EXACT DAY"

methods for finding clients and recouping advances, and they are clogging the courts once again.

"It's like whack-a-mole," said Shane Heskin, a partner at the Philadelphia office of White and Williams, who has argued several recent New York cases on behalf of businesses that have taken out merchant cash advances, known as MCAs. "There are so many bad actors, and there is not enough police power to regulate these things," he said. The resurgence of one such actor, Jonathan Braun, was documented earlier this year by Bloomberg's *Businessweek*.

A merchant cash advance is, at its core, a simple financial product, akin to certain kinds of accounts receivable financing, like factoring. A small business sells a specified quantity of its future receipts to the cash-advance firm at a large premium. For example, a construction firm in need of cash to pay suppliers before its clients pay their bills might pay back more than \$100,000 in daily or weekly automatic deductions for an advance of \$70,000. This—crucially—is not a loan. But if you play out the math as if it were a loan, interest rates can be in the tri-



HESKIN



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BLUE SLATE FILMS

City officials take heat for building migrant camp on flood-prone parking lot nicknamed ‘Lake Orchard’

BY CAROLINE SPIVACK

Construction is underway for a relief center in a remote parking lot at Orchard Beach in the Bronx, where the city plans to temporarily shelter thousands of Latin American migrants who have been bused from Texas and other parts of the country. Concerns linger about the coastal location and its vulnerability to flooding due to inclement weather.

The Orchard Beach area, which within weeks will house up to 1,000 migrants, chronically floods. The entire parking lot is designated a “special flood hazard area” by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Advocates and elected officials find that status troubling, particularly given that it is hurricane season. The lot is in the city’s highest risk for evacuation: Zone 1.

Work crews at the lot last Tuesday erected the metal frames for hangar-size tents around large puddles—the remnants of storms from the previous weekend—emphasizing that even relatively minor rains can pose an issue, said Matthew Cruz, district manager of Bronx

Community Board 10.

“That parking lot often floods after a very simple rainstorm, and it’s off the beach, so the wind is much stronger, cooler. It’s not the most comfortable place to be as we head into winter,” said Cruz, who added that the community board was told about the relief center shortly before the city announced it. “We want to be helpful, but we also want to hold the city accountable.”

Coastal concerns

For years neighborhood residents have complained to city officials about drainage issues that result in flooded roads including emergency routes. Some locals have dubbed the area, particularly the entrance to the beach at Park Drive, “Lake Orchard.”

The neighborhood’s flooding history has advocates questioning the wisdom of placing a relief center there.

“To be candid, it is mystifying,” said Eddie Bautista, executive director of the New York City Environmental Justice Alliance and a former director of the Mayor’s Office of City Legislative Affairs. “It’s hard for me to imagine that there aren’t other city-owned properties

that would not present the complication of being in a flood zone.”

Hurricane Ida, Bautista noted, has illustrated how unpredictable and devastating sudden heavy rainfall can be. He emphasized that an unexpected downpour could spur a scramble to relocate hundreds of migrants, who might speak little if any English.

“This speaks to a potentially larger problem with the Adams administration,” he said, “which is just how comprehensively are they integrating climate change adaptation, resiliency and mitigation measures into daily government decisions?”

The city, which said safety is its priority, noted it is crafting plans for inclement weather, including for heavy rains. In case of a severe storm, the Office of Emergency Management told *Crain’s* that migrants at Orchard Beach will be sent to evacuation centers across the five boroughs using a transportation plan in “partnership between the city and the state.” The details of the plan are unclear.

OEM said the tents are “hardened” to retain heat and cooling as well as to withstand winds up to 90 miles per hour.

City officials said they are in talks to design flood-protection measures that likely would include installing inflatable dams around the tents for additional protection.

Mayor Eric Adams acknowledged but downplayed the flooding concerns during a news conference last Tuesday.

“People live in flood zones,” Adams said. “So there’s nothing new here.”

Lingering logistical questions

The Orchard Beach site is one of several humanitarian relief centers scheduled to open in the coming weeks to temporarily support the more than 14,600 migrants who have arrived in the city this summer as part of political posturing by Republican governors in Florida and Texas.

New York’s problem-plagued shelter system has struggled to accommodate the influx of migrants. It is required by law to provide a bed to anyone in need of one.

The tents are among several options the city has weighed, including cruise ships and summer camps, to address the issue. A spokesperson for the city emphasized that the centers aim to con-

nect people with services for a one-to four-day period and not to serve as temporary housing.

City Council member Marjorie Velázquez, who represents the area—and said she also was not consulted in advance of the announcement—described the situation as “frustrating on a variety of levels.” She said, however, that she is confident officials can mitigate concerns surrounding the weather.

The city should have greater federal support to build out the site and assist those residing there, though, Velázquez said.

Fears about harsh weather are just one of a slew of unanswered logistical questions regarding the site. Access to transportation remains an issue in an area that lacks mass transit options. Migrants need transportation availability to ensure they can connect with services.

Velázquez noted that the Metropolitan Transportation Authority is in talks with the city about potentially boosting local service. The MTA declined to comment.

Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson has called it dangerous to house hundreds of migrants in a flood zone with limited access to transit. ■

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EDITORIAL

Putting a migrant camp just outside flood-prone Orchard Beach is a bad idea

It's a head-scratcher to say the least.

New York is building a tent city to house thousands of Latin American migrants on a parking lot at Orchard Beach in the Bronx with limited access to public transit, in a flood-prone area, during hurricane season.

The Orchard Beach site is one of several humanitarian relief centers in the works to temporarily support the more than 13,000 migrants who arrived in New York this summer as part of a political stunt by Republican governors to relocate migrants to sanctuary cities led by Democrats.

New York is required by law to provide a bed to anyone in need of one, but the city's crowded and poorly managed shelter system has struggled to accommodate the

A city spokesperson emphasized that the centers are designed to connect people with services during a one- to four-day period and not to serve as longer-term housing. But that has done little to quiet concerns from advocates and elected officials over the Orchard Beach tent city—which workers last week were constructing amid rain puddles in a parking lot that is designated a “special flood hazard area” by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

The location seems like an out-of-sight, out-of-mind approach rather than a solution for providing interim or permanent housing for the migrants.

“To be candid, it is mystifying,” Eddie Bautista, executive director of the New York City Environmental Justice Alliance and a former

director of the Mayor's Office of City Legislative Affairs, told reporter Caroline Spivack (see “City officials take

heat for building migrant camp on flood-prone parking lot nicknamed ‘Lake Orchard,’” page 7). “It's hard for me to imagine that there aren't other city-owned properties that would not present the complication of being in a flood zone.”



GETTY IMAGES

The city says safety is its priority and that it is crafting plans for inclement weather. The Office of Emergency Management told *Crain's* that in the event of a big storm, the migrants at Orchard Beach will be transported to evacuation centers across the city.

Mayor Eric Adams downplayed the flood concerns: “People live in flood zones, so there's nothing new here.”

It's clear there's no simple, straightforward solution to handle a tide of people coming to a city already struggling with housing at a time when the federal government isn't doing enough to help.

But New York of all places, a city built and reinvented over and over by immigrants, must ensure asylum-seekers have a safe place to stay and an opportunity to thrive. ■

THERE'S NO SIMPLE SOLUTION, BUT ASYLUM-SEEKERS NEED A SAFE PLACE

flood of migrants. The influx comes at a sensitive time for the city's recovery from the pandemic.

The tents are among several options the city has weighed, including cruise ships and off-season summer camps.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Our mental health system is not actually a system at all

I APPLAUD *CRAIN'S* REPORTER MAYA KAUFMAN on her “Fatal neglect” article for its comprehensiveness in describing the issues and outlining potential solutions.

The “mental health system” serving the homeless is commonly referred to as being broken. The system is not broken; it is not a system at all.

One definition of a system is an organized collection of parts that are integrated to accomplish an overall goal. The system has various inputs, which go through certain processes to produce certain outputs, which together accomplish the overall desired goal for the system.

There are many great government and nonprofit programs with committed staff providing excellent care. What is lacking is any mechanism to oversee what could be a wonderful orchestra.

Is there a comprehensive inventory of all programs in outreach, the mental health sector, the criminal justice sector, housing, etc., that serve the



homeless? Are admissions criteria for each supportive of smooth transitions between the various services? Does anyone collect data on bottlenecks to access because of restrictive criteria or a lack of capacity, or examine how “admission” criteria are used to exclude people from services?

Who will do that? We need

someone at both the state and city level with authority over all the homeless-serving organizations and the city and state departments that fund and regulate. The overseers would be charged with examining the components of the potential system and have the power to make contractual and, if necessary, licensure changes as

needed. All future funding and renewals of funding need to take into consideration the impact on the system.

Should there be an ongoing homeless commission to design a city-state agreement, the appointment of an empowered czar?

A system can be created if there is a will to do so.

ROBERT HETTENBACH
Forest Hills

Are we sure ‘brash’ doesn’t sell?

Bradley Tusk's op-ed “New Yorkers are terrible at running for higher office” was interesting and right on the money. However, he incorrectly states that “everything that New Yorkers want in their mayor—brash, combative, even arrogant—are traits the rest of the country hates.”

Although he was not a New York mayor, why did Donald Trump get elected president? He is more than brash, combative and arrogant.

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THE ALLIANCE
OF AREA BUSINESS PUBLICATIONS

New York needs to free public electric vehicle charging stations from utilities' 'demand charges'

BY JULIE TIGHE
AND TIM KENNEDY

The state Legislature passed the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act in 2019, acting to reduce carbon emissions, improve air quality and provide for the well-being of New Yorkers. In support of the plan, the state set far-reaching goals to decarbonize the transportation sector and transition the state's economy to net-zero emissions by 2050.

Electric vehicles are certain to play a pivotal role in transitioning the transportation sector to net-zero emissions. New York's Climate Action Council estimates 3 million zero-emission light-duty vehicles are required on the road by 2030, up from the approximately 50,000 in use today.

We are making strides toward deploying EV charging infrastructure through major federal funding from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act as well as state investments and private-sector investments. Other funding mechanisms, including a clean-fuel standard under consideration in the Legislature, could play a role. However,

barriers remain for charging infrastructure and widespread adoption of EVs.

Roadblock to an EV future

One of the obstacles is that utilities in New York continue to use century-old electric rate practices that unnecessarily set up a roadblock on the way to an EV future. The roadblock manifests itself in the form of electricity "demand charges," a way that utilities bill commercial and industrial customers. In an attempt to rightsize their systems by imposing higher rates on factories and office buildings with 9-to-5 use, the utilities have wrong-sized an entire new industry: public EV charging.

Charging your car at a public station could cost more than filling up a gas tank—which is saying a lot. Blame demand charges. Public charging stations require power for EV drivers at discrete but somewhat randomly distributed times of day, unlike the conventional manufacturing company imagined by demand charges—one that has high power needs during fixed, predictable hours.

Demand charges economically challenge the deployment of public

charging stations.

Homeowners, by contrast, aren't subject to the same fees on their utility bills. Homeowners with an EV might be able to charge it in their garage, but public charging is essential to support residents in multi-family housing and those traveling long distances. Equitable deployment of public charging cannot be overlooked.

We worked together on legislation to solve the problem and direct the state Public Service Commission to reform demand charges, enabling EV adoption to meet our climate imperative, as more than 30 other states have done. The Legislature passed our bill, and the governor signed it into law this year.

The Public Service Commission can now propel our state forward to a green transportation sector by implementing the law as designed. Its regulatory process must culminate in electric rates that make public charging affordable and charging stations sustainable.



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If we don't accomplish that, EVs will leave behind New Yorkers who can't charge at home. Such an uneven transition would be unfair to New Yorkers and unsustainable for our climate.

We need rate reform

Charging incentives and programs to change driver behavior can overcome some barriers to EV adoption, but as the Public Service

Commission considers its options, substantive rate reform that moves public charging stations off demand charges is an essential prerequisite.

Our state must seize the opportunity to deliver real cost relief and leave no one behind. ■

Julie Tighe is president of the New York League of Conservation Voters. Tim Kennedy is a state senator.

The city should leverage its market power to reduce municipal workers' health care costs

BY BARBARA CARESS

After failing to persuade 65,000 New York City retirees and a judge who ruled that they should not have to pay to keep their Medicare supplemental plan instead of a private Medicare Advantage alternative, the Adams administration has come up with a Plan B.

The plan could overturn a standard for retiree coverage that has been in the city administrative code for decades, and it could put future health benefits for active city workers on the chopping block too.

In March Judge Lyle Frank of state Supreme Court in Manhattan kept the city from imposing a \$191 monthly fee on retirees who rejected the private plan. Frank based his decision on an article of the city code that guarantees health benefit payments on behalf of employees, retirees and beneficiaries. The city's appeal is scheduled to be heard next month.

A workaround

To preempt a loss, Mayor Eric Adams' administration wants the City Council to change the code before the appeals court convenes.

The move to private Medicare was jointly sponsored by the city and a majority of the Municipal Labor Committee, a coalition of city worker unions. Retirees would be given a choice: Accept private Medicare or pay a monthly premium. Either way, the move was expected to reduce city costs by \$600 million (about 6% of health benefit spending). Many objected. Some 65,000 of the 250,000 retirees had opted out by April.

New York City employee health benefits predate union representation, so the city's contribution to those benefits is embedded in law, not in any collective-bargaining agreements.

The language of the administrative code is simple: "The city will pay the entire cost of health insurance coverage for city employees, city retirees and their dependents, not to exceed 100% of the full cost of the Health Insurance Plan of Greater New York HMO."

The proposed amendment adds a clause that allows for adoption of an "alternative" plan as the cost benchmark "for any class of individuals," provided the city and the MLC agree.

The HIP rate rises with the cost of

health care. The city and the MLC have bargained over managing cost increases within the HIP rate edifice—hanging benefits and programs, charging copays and deductibles—while ensuring the availability of premium-free plans. The past two rounds of municipal union bargaining set and met savings targets of hundreds of millions of dollars.

Change the system

Suppose the City Council votes to amend the code and add the alternative option, and the city and the Municipal Labor Committee agree to adopt a much lower city contribution for Medicare retiree health care. Does that solve the problem of the escalating cost of health benefits? Absolutely not.

If the council allows negotiators to maneuver around the HIP rate floor, the city has every incentive to demand—and the leverage to achieve—more health care cuts in future years, including an "alternative" not just for retirees but also for "classes" of active city employees.

The confrontation is not inevitable. Rather than shrink health coverage, the city and the MLC can engage in the difficult process of



GETTY

changing it. New York City has taken the first step by soliciting bids from other insurers for active employees. Other relatively straightforward steps are possible, including moving to self-insurance and cooperative drug purchasing among city unions.

New York hospitals charge commercial insurers 2.5 times what Medicare pays. Many states have

taken action to control hospital costs. New York state gave up its hospital price-control system 26 years ago. With 1.25 million covered lives, the city could leverage its market power to push down hospital prices on behalf of itself and millions of others. ■

Barbara Caress is an adjunct health policy professor at Baruch College.

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The mayor is stymieing a de Blasio success story

The overarching goals of Mayor Eric Adams, nearly a year into his tenure, remain mostly unclear. There have been few major policy pronouncements. It is hard to know sometimes how Adams wants to transform New York for the better.

What has become apparent, however, is that Adams is willing to walk away from one of the far-reaching ambitions of his predecessor, Bill de Blasio.

In recent days, education officials made clear to *The New York Times* that they were no longer prioritizing expanding free preschool to 3-year-old children next year. The plan would have benefited around 60,000 families across the five boroughs. De Blasio's so-called 3-K for All program was intended to be a follow-up to the city's successful universal pre-kindergarten expansion, a top achievement and a national model for such programs.

Instead, Adams has decided to focus on a much narrower goal: making child care affordable for poor families with children young-



ROSS BARKAN

er than 3.

Although that ambition is admirable, microtargeting such a program can help fewer families, especially those in the working class who might earn too much to qualify for help. De Blasio's pre-K program worked because it was universal. Federal programs such as Head Start help the poorest of the poor, but many others miss out on the social safety net. UPK filled significant gaps.

David Banks, Adams' schools chancellor, told the *Times* he would rather prioritize bolstering the "quality" of the current 3-K program, a more nebulous goal. Because Adams has always been coy about particular metrics, New Yorkers should be wary of the pivot. It's apparent the current Department of Education doesn't value universal pre-K in the same way de Blasio's did.

One easy way for Adams to dismiss 3-K is to claim there won't be money for an expansion, with a huge budget shortfall looming for the city as federal pandemic aid dries up. The program was expect-

ed to cost \$470 million this year and face a shortfall in 2026, according to the state comptroller's office. But the city can find money for 3-K because the costs of the program, and even its expansion, are relatively low. The Department of Education's budget now exceeds \$30 billion. In that context, an essential and popular initiative could easily be paid for if it's prioritized.

Adams did not champion 3-K on the campaign trail, and he's not terribly interested in being a steward for a de Blasio legacy item, no matter how important it might be. The division in DOE that oversees pre-K and 3-K has bled more than 100 staff members, and morale is low among those who remain. If the division is allowed to shrink further, Adams can begin to significantly choke off 3-K altogether and perhaps damage the city's pre-K program as well.

The issue is emblematic of the Adams governing style. City workers are leaving in droves because Adams won't allow any kind of remote work, and he empowers political cronies at the expense of seasoned experts. At the Department of Transportation, for example, officials are distressed that their boss



NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

3-K FOR ALL was intended to be a follow-up to the city's successful universal prekindergarten expansion.

is an ex-City Council member with limited qualifications for running one of the most prestigious such agencies in America.

Quick takes

- To address a looming budget shortfall, city officials should try to root out waste in the contracting and construction process. Infrastructure projects in other cities are not as expensive.
- With the vaccine mandate for private-sector workers getting lifted in November, is there any logic to enforcing the mandate for those in the public sector? The U.S. Supreme Court could strike down the mandates altogether. ■

Ross Barkan is a journalist and author in New York City.

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ADRIENNE ADAMS
New York City Council

INTERVIEW BY JACQUELINE NEBER

In January Adrienne Adams was elected to serve as speaker for the New York City Council, making her the first African American to hold the role. Adams, who has served on the council since 2017, is also the first woman to represent District 28, which encompasses Jamaica, Richmond Hill, Rochdale Village and South Ozone Park in Queens. Recently, the women-majority council announced a \$1 million commitment to bettering abortion access across the boroughs, the biggest municipal commitment so far in the U.S., as well as legislation aimed at improving maternal health care and access to monkeypox virus vaccines and treatments.

Has maternal health in the city hit a breaking point?
Well, even before the Covid-19 pandemic, maternal health was a longstanding issue that disproportionately impacted Black women and birthing individuals. While other similar countries’ maternal mortality rate has gone down, the United States’ numbers have actually increased, and each year approximately 700 American women die from pregnancy-related complications. New York City accounts for about 30 of those deaths. According to the city’s Health Department, Black women are eight to 12 times more likely than white women to die from a pregnancy-related cause. So for many people who give birth,

DOSSIER

- WHO SHE IS** Speaker, New York City Council
- EDUCATION** Bachelor’s in psychology, Spelman College
- GREW UP** Hollis, Queens
- RESIDES** Jamaica, Queens
- FAVORITE HOBBIES** In her spare time, Adams enjoys singing, cooking and reading.
- GOOD EATS** Adams’ favorite restaurants include Brooklyn Chop House, Capital Grille and The Door, which is located in southeast Queens.
- FRIENDLY SKIES** After she graduated from college, she worked as a flight attendant.

especially Black, Latino and Indigenous women, this issue is truly personal.

How will the council’s new laws and funding address the maternal health inequalities that Covid exacerbated?
Other bills in the package include education and outreach campaigns for polycystic ovary syndrome and endometriosis, city standards for respectful health care and patients’ rights, among other things. These are conditions that disproportionately affect women of color and increase their risk but are too often underdiagnosed because of a lack of appropriately listening to their symptomatic experiences. There is a

history of systemic racism embedded in health care, like in all society, and it has to be addressed. These bills are just a start to confronting those realities.

What is the oversight process?
We’re going to continue to do oversight hearings on the laws we pass and the issues they address to ensure the administration is complying and that the issues are being addressed. Our council staff also work to ensure that this is happening outside of hearings. The experiences of everyday New Yorkers guide our efforts as well.

Moving on to monkeypox, how does the council’s legislation around the virus address inequalities in how the city approaches it?
I would argue that we should have taken this virus more seriously from the beginning and not allowed it to infect so many New Yorkers. The spread of this virus has thus far been primarily within the LGBTQ+ community, and many members of the community have felt like they’re being neglected. And that’s a feeling reminiscent of the AIDS epidemic. The city’s initial response to this virus, especially the rollout of the vaccine, was really frustrating and disappointing. New Yorkers were rightfully upset by the lack of appointments and the confusion that caused. We noticed, in recent weeks, vaccine supply has picked up. And we’re seeing more New Yorkers get vaccinated. The Health Department is focused on these issues. And I do think our health commissioner, Dr. Ashwin Vasan, and his team are stepping up, but we still have a lot of work to do, especially when it comes to equitable distribution of vaccines for communities of color, immigrants and low-income New Yorkers. ■



NYC COUNCIL OFFICE OF SPEAKER ADRIENNE E. ADAMS



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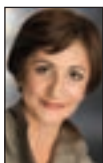
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ACCOUNTING

Aprio

Victoria Pellegrino joins Aprio, LLP as Financial Services Segment Leader in the firm's New York office. She has extensive audit experience serving financial services clients and has received multiple recognitions including the 2019 Women of Wall Street Award. Pellegrino will build a nationally recognized Financial Services group and expand Aprio's capabilities in alternative investment funds, registered investment advisors, and securities broker-dealers with a team dedicated to client impacts.



ARCHITECTURE

IA Interior Architects

Jim Camp, AIA, LEED AP, recently joined IA's New York Studio as a Project Director and Principal. Jim is an award-winning leader with over 30 years of experience in the architecture and design industry. He brings an impressive portfolio that encompasses a wide variety of markets as well as sustainable design. Jim will be focused on expanding IA's building repositioning and adaptive reuse opportunities as well as leading New York projects, overseeing the overall strategy, budget, and schedule.



ARCHITECTURE

IA Interior Architects

IA is pleased to share that **Margaux Jaffa** has joined the firm as Director of Client Services for our New York Studio. Margaux has over 20 years of experience in the architecture and design industry and is a board member of CoreNet's New York Chapter. She has successfully led business growth across a variety of corporate market sectors, working with executive leadership to realize strategic initiatives. She is an exceptional client liaison, working to ensure successful account management.



HEALTH CARE

COPE Health Solutions

John Perry joins COPE Health Solutions as its Principal & Chief Revenue Officer. Mr. Perry is a health care executive with over 20 years of experience and has a track record of high achievement in his health care endeavors aligning operational and financial incentives for better patient outcomes. Mr. Perry most recently led VBC & Prometheus partnerships at Change Healthcare, and before that was Vice President at Signify Health (Remedy Partners).



HEALTH CARE

COPE Health Solutions

Dan Serrano joins COPE Health Solutions as Principal & Senior Vice President focused on value-based care for providers and payers. He is a seasoned value-based care professional with 20+ years' experience and will be leading teams to engage with our provider, risk bearing organization and health plan clients through advisory, implementation and collaborative MSO co-source engagements.



LAW

Hodgson Russ LLP

Frank C. Sarratori has joined Hodgson Russ LLP's Albany office. He will significantly expand the firm's capabilities and depth in the areas of real estate, finance, and banking law. Frank has extensive experience representing public and private institutions throughout New York State. He most recently served as Pioneer Bank's Executive Vice President, General Counsel, Chief Administrative Officer, and Corporate Secretary.



LAW

Latham & Watkins

Marissa Alter-Nelson has joined the New York office of Latham & Watkins as a partner in the Complex Commercial Litigation Practice and member of the Litigation & Trial Department. As a trial lawyer, she focuses her practice on complex litigation in connection with a range of business, commercial, and financial disputes, including securities matters, breach of fiduciary duty and other business torts, post-merger claims, bankruptcy disputes, cybercrime, data breaches, and arbitration.



PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Jackson Lucas

Frick Jones has been promoted to Associate Managing Partner of Stamford within Jackson Lucas, a retained executive search firm specializing in investment banking, asset management & alternatives, real estate, technology, legal, and human resources. Frick joined Jackson Lucas in 2020 as an Associate Partner where he leads the Investment Banking practice based in Stamford, CT. His areas of search expertise include mergers and acquisitions, corporate development, restructuring, and debt and equity capital markets. Frick has over 12 years of experience in search with both corporate and executive search firms.



REAL ESTATE

New York State Builders Association

The New York State Builders Association (Nysba) is pleased to announce that **Michael Fazio** has been named Executive Director. He comes to this role after a long career as a New York City builder and real estate developer. He is a past president of Nysba. Mr. Fazio has also held various leadership positions at the National Association of Homebuilders (NAHB), including NY State representative, NY State PAC trustee, and chair of the Structural Inequities Working Group.



REAL ESTATE

Rockefeller Group

Gillian Murray has joined Rockefeller Group as Chief Risk Officer & Treasurer. Ms. Murray will be responsible for treasury operations, debt capital market activity, and investment risk management. She will also lead the Treasury Department, including cash management, cash forecasting, and short-term investments. She has spent her career with HSBC Bank, most recently as Senior Vice President and Team Lead. She earned her bachelor's degree from Elon University and her master's degree from NYU.



TECHNOLOGY

Modern Meadow

Modern Meadow this past week announced the appointment of industry veterans **John Frazier**, Senior Technical Director for Hohenstein Institute America, and **Steve Rochlin**, Founder and CEO of IMPACT ROI to their inaugural Impact Advisory Board. The launch of the Impact Advisory Board was timed to the company's 10-year anniversary to celebrate achievements and also firmly align on sustainability goals for the next decade. The Impact Advisory Board is committed to accelerating sustainable innovation, guiding strategic growth initiatives, and further empowering impactful partnerships.



TECHNOLOGY

Nfinite

Nfinite, the leader in next-generation visualization and e-commerce merchandising, has appointed **Peter McCall** its Global Chief Marketing Officer to accelerate the company's growth. He will lead Nfinite's global marketing efforts in the US, Europe, and Asia, overseeing the planning, development, and execution of the company's strategic marketing programs. He will focus on amplifying Nfinite's leadership in visual e-commerce to enable brands to create immersive customer experiences online.



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CRAIN'S
NEW YORK BUSINESS

THE LIST

LARGEST ACCOUNTING FIRMS

Ranked by number of New York–area professionals

AMANDA.GLODOWSKI@CRAINSNEWYORK.COM

Years-long trend of consolidation reaches city’s biggest accounting companies

The most prominent accounting firms in New York grew by nearly 34% this year, mostly driven by a slew of consolidations in an ongoing trend that finally has reached the largest players.

About a quarter of the companies on this year’s ranking of the area’s largest accounting firms were involved in some type of consolidation deal, accelerating work-force growth and shrinking the number of businesses featured on *Crain’s* annual list.

The city’s Big 4 accounting firms held their spots on the list from last year, followed by Marcum, Eisner-Amper and RSM US. The average firm size across the list, which is based on the number of New York–area accountants, is 2,191.

Midtown-based **CBIZ and Mayer Hoffman McCann CPAs** (No. 13) took the cake on growth, with the former firm’s local workforce more than tripling since last year after acquiring Marks Paneth in January.

The consolidation trend, which started among small firms following the 2008 financial crash, has been accelerated by increasingly complex client needs and firms’ need for capital, according to Jeffrey Weiner, chairman and CEO of **Marcum** (No. 5), which merged with Friedman in September.

“Our clients need a team with a deeper bench to service them,” Weiner said.

The industry faces headwinds when it comes to talent entering the field. The number of students with either a bachelor’s or master’s degree in accounting dropped by 9% in 2019–2020, compared with the 2015–2016 academic year, when nearly 80,000 graduated nationally, according to AICPA data.

“This trend is likely to continue for the foreseeable future,” said Alan Wolfson, Northeast regional managing partner at **CohnReznick** (No. 14).

Retaining talent is both an industry challenge and a factor in firms merging. Larger companies tend to have more flexibility for better pay, benefits and career growth, Wolfson said.

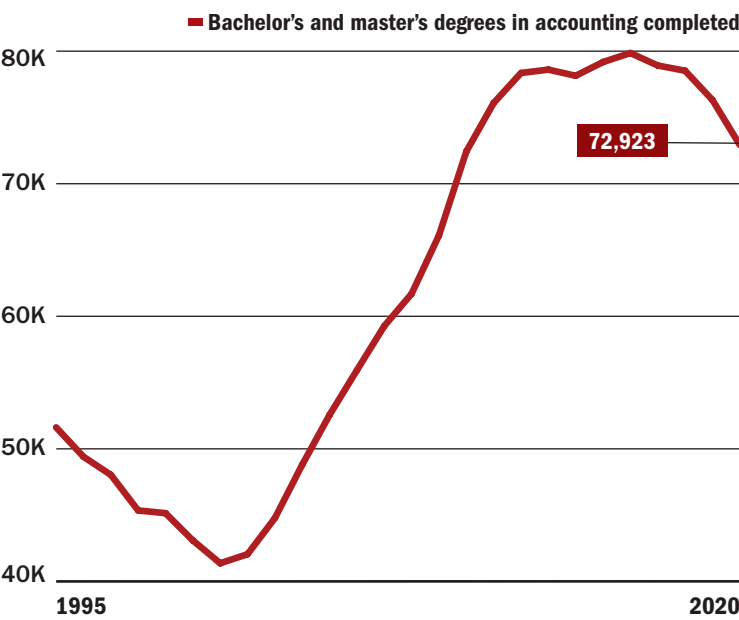
Along with consolidation, providing “à la carte” accounting, tax and advisory services to businesses has been another facet of growth, Wolfson said, especially as many companies have eliminated back-office functions during the pandemic.

Although consolidating can create the critical mass often needed to attract diverse talent and high-profile clients, the deals that entail combining major entities are not without their own challenges.

“There are always growing pains,” Weiner said. “Nothing is straight up in business.”

— Amanda Glodowski

THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS MAJORING IN ACCOUNTING PEAKED IN 2016



SOURCE: AICPA

34% AVERAGE GROWTH in workforce among the top accounting firms since last year

9% DECREASE in students majoring in accounting since 2016

RANK	FIRM/ ADDRESS	PHONE NUMBER/ WEBSITE	MANAGING PARTNER(S) IN NEW YORK-AREA OFFICE	2022 NEW YORK-AREA TOTAL ACCOUNTING PROFESSIONALS/ % CHANGE	2022 NEW YORK-AREA AUDITING AND ACCOUNTING PROFESSIONALS	2022 NEW YORK-AREA TAX PROFESSIONALS	2022 NEW YORK-AREA MANAGEMENT ADVISORY SERVICES PROFESSIONALS	2022 FIRMWIDE ACCOUNTING PROFESSIONALS/ % CHANGE	2021 FIRMWIDE REVENUE (IN MILLIONS)/ % CHANGE
1	EY One Manhattan West New York, NY 10001	212-773-3000 ey.com	Alysia Steinmann	13,524 +4.4%	13,524	n/d	n/d	365,000 +17.0%	\$45,000.0 +12.5%
2	PwC 300 Madison Ave. New York, NY 10017	646-471-3000 pwc.com	Brad Silver	13,223 ¹ +9.2%	n/d	n/d	n/d	n/d n/d	n/d n/d
3	KPMG US 345 Park Ave. New York, NY 10154	212-758-9700 kpmg.com/us	Yesenia Schecker Izquierdo	8,358 +5.0%	1,900	n/d	n/d	n/d n/d	\$32,130.0 +10.0%
4	Deloitte 30 Rockefeller Plaza New York, NY 10112	212-492-4000 deloitte.com	Roger Arrieux	6,737 +18.3%	6,737	n/d	n/d	81,184 +12.1%	\$22,931.0 -1.0%
5	Marcum ² 730 Third Ave. New York, NY 10017	212-485-5500 marcumllp.com	Jeffrey Weiner	2,000 +81.8%	n/d	n/d	n/d	3,000 +50.0%	\$799.1 +16.0%
6	EisnerAmper ³ 733 Third Ave. New York, NY 10017	212-949-8700 eisneramper.com	Charles Weinstein	1,506 +21.6%	744	505	257	2,647 +42.8%	\$456.0 +8.5%
7	RSM US ⁴ 151 W. 42nd St. New York, NY 10036	212-372-1000 rsmus.com	Stuart Taub	1,340 +58.6%	396	429	394	43,000 +5.7%	\$6,300.0 +9.8%
8	BDO USA LLP 100 Park Ave. New York, NY 10017	212-885-8000 bdo.com	Mathew DeMong Demetrios Frangiskatos	988 +3.0%	424	302	246	82,033 +15.5%	\$10,300.0 +7.3%
9	Grant Thornton 757 Third Ave. New York, NY 10017	212-599-0100 grantthornton.com	Matthew DiDonato	969 +15.5%	338	215	397	5,682 +12.6%	\$1,970.0 +2.6%
10	PKF O'Connor Davies LLP 245 Park Ave. New York, NY 10167	212-286-2600 pkfod.com	Kevin Keane	925 +27.6%	355	160	115	1,160 +25.4%	\$245.0 +11.4%
11	Citrin Cooperman Advisors LLC ⁵ 50 Rockefeller Center New York, NY 10020	212-697-1000 citrincooperman.com	Stacy Gilbert	708 +29.2%	163	n/d	n/d	1,275 +15.9%	\$350.0 +11.1%
12	Mazars USA LLP 135 W. 50th St. New York, NY 10020	212-812-7000 mazars.us	Robert DeMeola	585 ⁶ +8.5%	n/d	n/d	n/d	n/d n/d	\$218.0 0.0%

RANK	FIRM/ ADDRESS	PHONE NUMBER/ WEBSITE	MANAGING PARTNER(S) IN NEW YORK-AREA OFFICE	2022 NEW YORK-AREA TOTAL ACCOUNTING PROFESSIONALS/ % CHANGE	2022 NEW YORK-AREA AUDITING AND ACCOUNTING PROFESSIONALS	2022 NEW YORK-AREA TAX PROFESSIONALS	2022 NEW YORK-AREA MANAGEMENT ADVISORY SERVICES PROFESSIONALS	2022 FIRMWIDE ACCOUNTING PROFESSIONALS/ % CHANGE	2021 FIRMWIDE REVENUE (IN MILLIONS)/ % CHANGE
13	CBIZ and Mayer Hoffman McCann CPAs ⁷ 5 Bryant Park/685 3rd Ave. New York, NY 10018/10017	212-790-5700 cbiz.com mhmcpa.com	Jeff Gluck Abe Schlisselfeld	582 +301.4%	234	336	12	3,771 +37.2%	\$1,104.9 +13.6%
14	CohnReznick LLP 1301 Sixth Ave. New York, NY 10019	212-297-0400 cohnreznick.com	Alan Wolfson	557 +7.5%	262	207	88	2,825 +12.6%	\$808.0 +18.8%
15	Crowe 485 Lexington Ave. New York, NY 10017	212-572-5500 crowe.com	Kelly Frank	381 +22.5%	137	82	159	4,845 +22.2%	\$925.9 n/d
16	Baker Tilly ⁸ 1 Penn Plaza New York, NY 10119	212-697-6900 bakertilly.com	Craig Savell	367 +66.1%	159	143	65	4,694 +33.5%	\$1,005.6 +27.4%
17	Berdon LLP 360 Madison Ave. New York, NY 10017	212-832-0400 berdonllp.com	Mark Bosswick Stuart Kotler	366 +8.3%	144	122	100	366 +8.3%	\$125.8 +0.6%
18	Grassi 750 Third Ave. New York, NY 10017	212-661-6166 grassicpas.com	Louis Grassi	336 +3.1%	197	100	20	356 +3.2%	\$99.6 +8.3%
19	Prager Metis CPAs 14 Penn Plaza New York, NY 10122	212-643-0099 pragermetis.com	Stuart Mayer	325 +1.6%	36	n/d	n/d	519 +0.8%	\$123.9 -9.6%

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THE LIST

LARGEST ACCOUNTING FIRMS

RANK	FIRM/ ADDRESS	PHONE NUMBER/ WEBSITE	MANAGING PARTNER(S) IN NEW YORK-AREA OFFICE	2022 NEW YORK-AREA TOTAL ACCOUNTING PROFESSIONALS/ % CHANGE	2022 NEW YORK-AREA AUDITING AND ACCOUNTING PROFESSIONALS	2022 NEW YORK-AREA TAX PROFESSIONALS	2022 NEW YORK-AREA MANAGEMENT ADVISORY SERVICES PROFESSIONALS	2022 FIRMWIDE ACCOUNTING PROFESSIONALS/ % CHANGE	2021 REVENUE (IN MILLIONS)/ FIRMWIDE % CHANGE
20	Anchin Block & Anchin 1375 Broadway New York, NY 10018	212-840-3456 anchin.com	<i>Russell Shinsky</i>	272 +8.8%	117	155	n/d	272 +8.8%	\$144.0 +5.1%
21	UHY 1185 Sixth Ave. New York, NY 10036	212-381-4700 uhy-us.com	<i>Shelby Haydu</i> <i>Michael Mahoney</i>	188 +52.8%	110	61	9	1,249 +48.9%	\$221.5 +17.1%
22	FORVIS ⁹ 1155 Sixth Ave. New York, NY 10036	212-867-4000 forvis.com	<i>Ryan Reiff</i>	156 +90.2%	59	n/d	n/d	5,000 +103.5%	\$758.1 n/d
22	Withum 1411 Broadway New York, NY 10018	212-751-9100 withum.com	<i>Bill Hagaman</i>	156 +4.7%	71	52	0	1,172 +7.2%	\$318.2 +23.6%
24	Janover 100 Quentin Roosevelt Blvd. Garden City, NY 11530	516-542-6300 janoverllc.com	<i>Mark Goodman</i>	127 -5.2%	16	84	0	138 +3.0%	\$35.4 +1.2%
25	Goldstein Lieberman & Co. LLC 1 International Blvd. Mahwah, NJ 07495	201-512-5700 glcpas.com	<i>Phillip Goldstein</i>	107 +2.9%	35	52	10	107 +2.9%	\$0.0 n/d

New York area includes New York City and Nassau, Suffolk and Westchester counties in New York and Bergen, Essex, Hudson and Union counties in New Jersey. *Crain's New York Business* uses staff research, extensive surveys and the most current references available to produce its lists, but there is no guarantee that the listings are complete. To qualify for this list, firms must have an office in the New York area. n/d-Not disclosed. **1**-Crain's estimate, based on other Big 4 average percent change. **2**-Merged with Friedman in Sept. 2022. **3**-Merged with Raich Ende Malter & Co. in June 2022. **4**-Merged with Parthenon Capital in Jan. 2022. **5**-Acquired Untracht Early in Aug.2022. **6**-Figure from *Accounting Today*. **7**-CBIZ and Mayer Hoffman McCann are associated through an alternative-practice structure. CBIZ acquired Marks Paneth on Jan. 1 2022. **8**-Acquired Bader Martin in May 2022. **9**-Previously listed as PBKD CPAs and Advisors.

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CRAIN'S 2022 best places to work in NYC

**best
midsize
company**
GIANT
MACHINES



**best
large
company**
COCKROACH
LABS



Businesses have spent the past few years attempting to shower employees with perks in an effort to offset the dismal circumstances brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic. Just when it seemed employers had (mostly) made it through the war, a new foe emerged: the Great Resignation.

Workers who had hunkered down to weather the storm increasingly discovered their bargaining power, demanding higher pay and more benefits.

Leading organizations have been responding. Every company featured on *Crain's* list this year allows for remote work. Seven out of 10 pay for health and wellness programs. More than half will help foot the bill for further education. A quarter offer unlimited paid time off.

Are those measures enough? The median voluntary turnover rate, or quit rate, across companies on the list is just 13%, so such tactics certainly aren't hurting.

Even at the best firms, retention remains a priority, and there's stiff competition for the top talent that such companies attract. It turns out, the best firms are the ones that simply let employees do their jobs well, *Crain's* senior reporter Aaron Elstein found.

Crain's once again teamed up with the Best Companies Group, an independent research firm, to find the top 100 employers in New York City that have held onto their workforce during the pandemic. The rankings are divided into small (1–50 city employees), midsize (51–100 employees) and large (more than 100 employees) companies. They are based on extensive employee surveys and audits of benefits, human resources, policies and perks.

The full list begins on page 19.

— Amanda Glodowski, data editor



GIANT MACHINES
employees have volunteered at the Frank White Memorial Garden in Hamilton Heights.

WORKPLACE

FROM PAGE 1

"Is your organization 'selling' what employees want to buy?" Gallup asked.

It's a tricky question that the Best Places to Work in New York have all found a way to answer.

This year's list features companies from all sorts of sectors, but what most of them have in common is resources to attract people and keep them feeling wanted.

Thought Machine, a Midtown software company and newcomer to the *Crain's* Best Places to Work list, has raised \$500 million from backers, including JPMorgan Chase and Morgan Stanley, and was valued at \$2.7 billion in May.

"We see the other side of the Great Resignation," said Brad Steele, Thought Machine's general

manager for the Americas and a former Amazon Web Services executive. "If you want to help build a new rocket ship, here's where you can do it."

THE BEST PLACES OFFER HAND-HOLDING AS MUCH AS EMPLOYEES DESIRE

Yet to a once-unimaginable degree, workers can pick and choose whose rocket they want to build.

The percentage of workers leaving their job due to resignation instead of termination came in at 70.5% of departures in July, according to the U.S. Department of Labor. This indicator, known as the "take this job and shove it" index, stood at just 60% at the pandemic's onset. In addition, there were 5.6 million more job openings than workers in July, not far from March's record high of 5.9 million. Between 2000 and 2017, there were always more unemployed Americans than job openings, according to DataTrek Research.

Human Sherpas

At cloud database firm Cockroach Labs, new employees are given a "roachmate" to help them acclimate to their new workplace during the first 30 days. An actual human Sherpa to communicate culture and expectations is crucial because most staffers come to the Flatiron District office no more than a few days a week, and some work entirely remotely. Cockroach's workforce has grown to 460 from just 90 in 2019, and the firm trains workers to run effective meetings with an eye toward developing management-level staff.

"At the same time, we understand it's important to develop people who don't want to be managers," said Lauren Weber, director of people operations.

Annual worker turnover at Cockroach is about half the tech industry average, pegged at 23% by Everest Group. The stability is helpful, considering the market for cloud services jumped by 29% last year, to more than \$400 billion, according to International Data Corp.'s data.

Apart from offering a friendly vibe, flexible conditions and participation in a fast-growing sector, an exciting mission is helpful.

At financial software developer Thought Machine, the mission is to free large banks from old computer systems used to process transactions. The London-based firm's New York office in Rockefeller Center has grown to 60 people since opening last year—and staffers are expected to come to the office.

"We are reinventing how banks do business, and that's exciting," Steele said.

Orchard, a residential real estate broker, offers "A Day in the Life" presentations in which employees

explain what they do to coworkers on other teams.

"This programming helps our employees build empathy toward colleagues and explore other areas of interest or opportunities available at the company," said Mandy Menaker, communications director at Orchard.

Above all, the Best Places to Work trust employees to do their job and let them do them.

"As long as we get our work done, we have the freedom to work wherever we want," said Keysha Bobbitt, an executive assistant at accounting firm Ryan.

Foosball tournaments, talent nights, office parties and nights at the ballpark still have their place. These perks not only help foster team spirit, but they also cost much less than the other thing employees want most from employers besides more pay: better benefits.

Since 2015 this item has risen from No. 4 on the Gallup list, when 41% of employees said better pay and benefits were "very important" when taking a new job, to No. 1 this year, with 64%. Workers today often have multiple offers and are more confident asking for a better package.

However, the pendulum may be starting to shift again. Job openings posted their third-largest monthly drop on record in June, at 605,000, behind only March and April 2020. Even so, "data does not yet indicate a meaningful shift in the balance of power from employees back to employers," DataTrek co-founder Jessica Rabe said.

Looming costs

Another looming complication: Inflation is now coming for employee health insurance plans, which have been spared the brunt so far, thanks to multiyear contracts.

Costs of health insurance plans are expected to jump by 5.6% next year, up from this year's 4.4%, according to an August report from consulting firm Mercer. The 6.1% increase in 2021, a reflection of the



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COCKROACH LABS
pairs new employees with a "roachmate."

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pandemic's strain, was the highest single-year move since 2011. For most of the past decade, plan costs rose from 2% to 4% a year, a reflection of the era's tame inflation and the acquisition of health insurance by more Americans, thanks to the Affordable Care Act.

"In what remains a tight labor market, employers are absorbing most of the health care cost increases," Debbie Ashford, a senior

actuary at insurance broker Aon, told the Society for Human Resource Management. "Employers are budgeting higher due to uncertainty and the anticipation that inflationary pressures will increase the cost of health care services."

Managing all that while remaining a flexible and well-paying employer is going to present a big challenge to even the top places to work in New York. ■



SMALL COMPANIES

50 or fewer city employees

RANK	COMPANY NAME/ INDUSTRY	YEAR FOUNDED	NYC EMPLOYEES	U.S. EMPLOYEES	% MALE/ FEMALE EXECUTIVES	% VOLUNTARY TURNOVER	COMPANY PERKS				
							MATCHES RETIREMENT PLAN CONTRIBUTIONS	PAYS 100% OF MEDICAL PREMIUMS	PAYS FOR COST OF HEALTH/ WELLNESS PROGRAMS	OFFERS TUITION ASSISTANCE FOR ADVANCED DEGREES	OFFERS UNLIMITED PTO DAYS
1	Thought Machine Technology	2014	31	31	67%/33%	6%					
2	Digital Remedy Advertising/PR/marketing	2000	46	102	82%/18%	17%					
3	Ryan LLC Corporate tax advisory services	1991	39	2,015	77%/23%	12%					
4	RF Binder Advertising/PR/marketing	2001	41	51	50%/50%	28%					
5	January Fintech	2016	32	40	60%/40%	15%					
6	Corra Technology	2002	25	111	47%/53%	25%					
7	HHM Hospitality/travel/tourism	1979	35	35	66%/34%	4%					
8	Pariveda Solutions Consulting	2003	43	741	33%/67%	18%					
9	Runway Technology	2018	30	30	60%/40%	12%					
10	Yieldmo Advertising/PR/marketing	2012	30	149	75%/25%	18%					
11	Marx Realty Real estate	1915	33	33	75%/25%	3%					
12	Henderson Engineers Engineering	1970	29	965	60%/40%	66%					
13	Arkadium Technology	2001	25	25	33%/67%	18%					
14	Myriad360 Technology	2003	34	101	83%/17%	10%					
15	Peppercomm Advertising/PR/marketing	1995	29	31	25%/75%	18%					
16	Altvest Personal Wealth Management Financial services	1983	43	43	66%/34%	11%					
17	Homefield IT Technology	2012	43	43	80%/20%	17%					
18	Alan Margolin & Associates Engineering	1981	25	25	66%/34%	20%					
19	Benhar Office Interiors Services	2002	49	49	43%/57%	88%					
20	Sequence Hospitality/travel/tourism	2011	35	35	25%/75%	11%					
21	Los Ninos Services Inc. Education	1998	26	87	40%/60%	4%					
22	Flex Marketing Group Advertising/PR/marketing	2007	48	48	71%/29%	22%					
23	Adam Leitman Bailey PC Legal	2000	40	41	64%/36%	35%					
24	Grassi Accounting	1980	44	390	90%/10%	17%					
25	Columbia Property Trust Real estate	2003	38	91	55%/45%	3%					
26	T.P. & Partners Insurance (non-health care)	2003	30	30	30%/70%	0%					
27	Smart Choice Communications Telecommunications	1998	40	66	60%/40%	35%					
28	Burns & McDonnell Engineering/architecture/construction	1898	45	8,500	91%/9%	5%					



CRAIN'S 2022
best
places
to work in
NYC

MIDSIZE COMPANIES

51 to 100 city employees

RANK	COMPANY NAME/ INDUSTRY	YEAR FOUNDED	NYC EMPLOYEES	U.S. EMPLOYEES	% MALE/ FEMALE EXECUTIVES	% VOLUNTARY TURNOVER	COMPANY PERKS				
							MATCHES RETIREMENT PLAN CONTRIBUTIONS	PAYS 100% OF MEDICAL PREMIUMS	PAYS FOR COST OF HEALTH/ WELLNESS PROGRAMS	OFFERS TUITION ASSISTANCE FOR ADVANCED DEGREES	OFFERS UNLIMITED PTO DAYS
1	Giant Machines Consulting	2015	91	91	60%/40%	4%					
2	Catalyst Software Technology	2017	79	102	50%/50%	6%					
3	Index Exchange Technology	2001	78	113	80%/20%	21%					
4	Dynamic Yield Technology	2012	62	62	74%/26%	22%					
5	Atrium Staffing Staffing	1995	54	302	60%/40%	35%					
6	Logicworks Technology	2011	81	200	88%/12%	16%					
7	Ribbon Health Technology	2016	83	83	50%/50%	15%					
8	VHB Engineering	1979	74	1,719	50%/50%	11%					
9	Mitchell Martin Inc. Staffing	1984	61	232	99%/1%	14%					
10	Basis Technologies Technology	2001	69	781	69%/31%	19%					
11	Pragma Financial services	2003	57	57	84%/16%	6%					
12	Janover LLC Accounting	1938	51	168	80%/20%	11%					
13	Amsive Digital Advertising/PR/marketing	2006	62	139	54%/46%	9%					
14	Direct Agents Advertising/PR/marketing	2003	66	88	75%/25%	24%					
15	CompStak Inc. Technology	2011	67	86	69%/31%	0%					
16	Allison+Partners Advertising/PR/marketing	2001	95	347	56%/44%	29%					
17	Star Mountain Capital Financial services	2010	57	57	95%/5%	7%					
18	LMC Certified Public Accountants Accounting	2010	72	72	100%/0%	18%					
19	Ordergroove Technology	2010	78	96	67%/33%	12%					
20	Arlo Hotels Hospitality/travel/tourism	2016	75	150	50%/50%	20%					
21	Good Apple Advertising/PR/marketing	2008	94	104	30%/70%	17%					
22	The Agency Real estate	2011	78	161	53%/47%	17%					
23	American HITT Construction	1937	51	1,372	Not disclosed	13%					
24	Capitolis Technology	2017	75	75	70%/30%	3%					
25	Argo Real Estate Real estate	1952	73	73	60%/40%	5%					
26	Chelsea Lighting NYC LLC Distribution	1994	60	61	100%/0%	31%					



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The 24/7 lifesaving act of organ and tissue donation and transplantation—meet LiveOnNY



The LiveOnNY Executive Leadership team, featuring CFO Jim Aranda, CAO John D’Abbraccio, CCO Dr. Connie Kristine, President And CEO Leonard Achan, COO Chad Ezzell and VP, Hospital Services Annabel Henry.

Just recently the U.S. recorded 1 million organ transplants since 1954—more than any other country in the world.

More than 41,000 transplants were performed in the U.S. in 2021, the largest annual number yet, according to the United Network for Organ Sharing, the nonprofit that manages the nation’s transplant waiting list and matches donors to recipients 24/7.

Organ procurement organizations work with UNOS to match and place organs. OPOs are the not-for-profit organizations responsible for the recovery of organs. OPOs are organizations legally permitted to recover organs from deceased donors, provide support to donor families, provide clinical management of organ donors, and provide professional and public education about organ donation.

of the organs and the transporting of them whether it is by train, plane, automobile or a combination thereof, so they may reach the recipient safely. Sometimes the organs may go to more than one place. One donor can save up to eight lives. Tissue donations can prove critical in situations such as spinal surgery, help for a burn victim or reconstructive surgery for a breast cancer patient.

“The New York community trusts us with these precious gifts of organ donation,” says LiveOnNY President and CEO Leonard Achan, a nurse and nurse practitioner for 24 years, who notes that the organization was recently recertified by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services through 2027.

“The New York community entrusts us to deliver these gifts of life to

and recovery is among the best in the world. No nation recovers more organs from deceased donors than the U.S. The LiveOnNY staff contributes to the nation’s continued success. In the first six months of this year, LiveOnNY has managed a 33% increase in organ donors, a 40% increase in organs transplanted and a 32% increase in tissue donors. LiveOnNY has been busy staffing up to keep pace with these increases, which reflect the inherent generosity of the New York community.

“To date in 2022, thanks to the tireless efforts of the LiveOnNY staff, and those of our donor and transplant hospitals, and our broader New York community, LiveOnNY has changed and saved more lives than ever before in our history,” Achan says. “This achievement would not be possible without the organ donor heroes and

expertise—an expertise that begins with the phone calls we receive from one of the many hospitals introducing a potential gift-of-life donor, to the hospital waiting room conversations we have with grieving family members who are saying goodbye to their love one, to coordinating the surgical recovery team and transporting the gifts of life safely to the transplant centers where the recipient is waiting for their chance to live on.

“Everything we do is leading to saving someone’s life.”

Along with professionalism, caring and compassion, LiveOnNY prioritizes inclusion and belonging. “We encourage our staff to bring their whole selves to work each day,” Vice President and Chief People Officer Samirat Rivers says. “Our recruitment and retention strategy goes beyond offering competitive compensation and benefits. Sponsoring a sense of belonging, a place for being, is key to the compassion we must deliver to each other and those of the communities we serve. We strive to reflect the people of the communities we serve: The entire LiveOnNY team is 60% nonwhite, 60% are women, with an executive leadership team that is 43% nonwhite.”

organization recently engaged with a mobile app company that uses gamification to reduce anxiety and stress in the workplace. Even the headquarters—an open and inviting space—is designed to mitigate stress.

LiveOnNY encourages candid and open communication. Employees are encouraged to provide feedback about their experiences at LiveOnNY through an annual survey. Questions include topics such as diversity, equity and inclusion, and causes for burnout.

The 24/7 dedication of the LiveOnNY management team and staff is equaled by dedicated leadership of its governing board of directors. LiveOnNY has been granted the public trust to manage organ donations and secure organs for lifesaving transplantation. It is respect for this public trust that characterizes the governing board of directors.

“Most companies will tell you their greatest asset is their people,” says Lee Perlman, chairman of the board of LiveOnNY. “Our greatest asset is the people: the people who wear the LiveOnNY badge, our staff; the people who work with us bedside in the donor hospitals and transplant

“Everything we do is leading to saving someone’s life.”

- Leonard Achan, President and CEO, LiveOnNY

The U.S. has 58 OPOs; each is mandated by federal law to perform this lifesaving mission in its assigned donation service area. Each state has its own OPO requirements, along with other industry accreditation requirements.

The New York metropolitan area is home to one of the largest OPOs in the nation. That OPO is LiveOnNY.

The LiveOnNY staff is the front line of organ recovery in greater New York. A 300-person team speaking more than 30 languages works 24/7 with decedents’ families in concert with more than 100 donor hospitals and transplant centers to facilitate these gifts of life.

For every successful match, the LiveOnNY staff facilitates authorization, testing, the recovery

strangers. They are enabling another human being they have never met to live on,” Achan says.

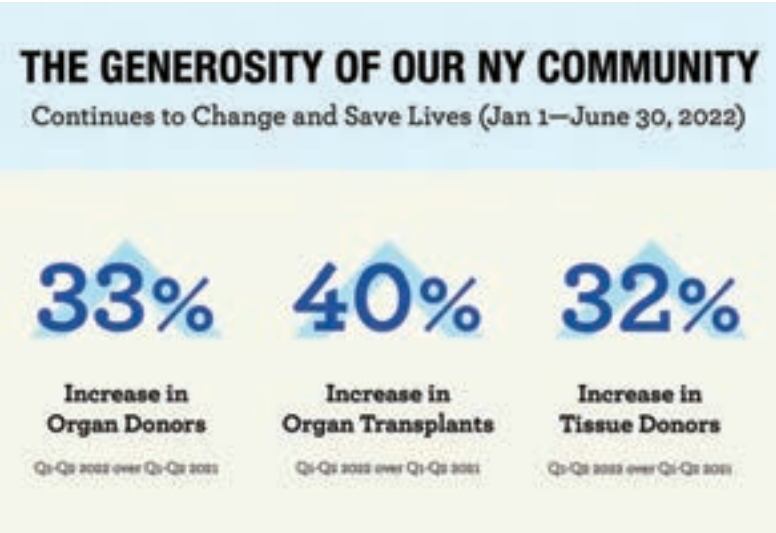
“While you’re stuck on the LIE and see a car flying by or a team of people in scrubs jumping out of a car at JFK and carrying a cardboard box, there may be a kidney in that box” says Achan, who’s known to rise many days at 3:30 or 4 a.m. to make sure things go smoothly. “In that helicopter you see flying over the FDR, that could be a heart leaving New York City from the loved one of someone you know who is giving that heart to a stranger in Washington.”

Those moments are the results of the LiveOnNY staff that show up every day as the stewards of donors and their family’s gifts of life.

The U.S. system for organ donation

their selfless families who make the decision to give the gift of life to others. We are humbled to be the stewards of these precious gifts.”

The president and CEO adds: “Building a mission- and purpose-driven culture where talented professionals want to work and thrive is critical to staging and managing our accelerated growth—a trajectory we expect to continue for some time. Our priority is understanding our purpose and making meaning of it every day with people, the people who choose to serve, their talents and job fit. Caring is the central element in everything that we do, and we are each accountable for building and sustaining a culture of compassion in the work that we do. Combining our professional practice with compassion comprises our subject matter



LiveOnNY has saved and changed more lives than ever before in the first six months of 2022.

Given the pressures that come with working in the 24/7 field of organ donation, the company offers staff members access to a free mental health counselor to help them manage stress. “We have a counselor available to our staff at all times,” Achan says. “It’s about compassionate leadership coupled with accountability.” The

centers; and, most importantly, the donor heroes and their families. All the people who comprise the New York communities, the neighborhoods where we work and live. We are honored and privileged to represent the generosity of the New York communities in the work that we do. We are all LiveOnNY.”





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#26 NUMERIX



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More than 100 city employees

RANK	COMPANY NAME/ INDUSTRY	YEAR FOUNDED	NYC EMPLOYEES	U.S. EMPLOYEES	% MALE/ FEMALE EXECUTIVES	% VOLUNTARY TURNOVER	COMPANY PERKS				
							MATCHES RETIREMENT PLAN CONTRIBUTIONS	PAYS 100% OF MEDICAL PREMIUMS	PAYS FOR COST OF HEALTH/ WELLNESS PROGRAMS	OFFERS TUITION ASSISTANCE FOR ADVANCED DEGREES	OFFERS UNLIMITED PTO DAYS
1	Cockroach Labs Technology	2015	167	368	89%/11%	5%					
2	Orchard Real estate	2017	152	897	68%/32%	11%					
3	National Financial Network Financial services	1951	109	109	90%/10%	12%					
4	Schrödinger Inc. Technology	1990	312	547	68%/32%	3%					
5	AdTheorent Advertising/PR/marketing	2012	189	311	59%/41%	13%					
6	Greenhouse Software Technology	2012	220	631	64%/36%	11%					
7	The Trade Desk Technology	2009	513	1,854	71%/29%	11%					
8	Perkins Coie LLP Legal	1912	135	2,542	40%/60%	0%					
9	Stellar Health Technology	2018	182	182	45%/55%	11%					
10	Global X ETFs Financial services	2008	105	141	75%/25%	9%					
11	Fortis Lux Financial Financial services	2016	142	145	55%/45%	2%					
12	DeepIntent Advertising/PR/marketing	2016	131	131	75%/25%	14%					
13	Fenwick & West LLP Legal	1972	196	931	53%/47%	14%					
14	UHY LLP Accounting	2003	102	1,400	80%/20%	9%					
15	J.T. Magen & Company Inc. Construction	1992	420	452	70%/30%	3%					
16	Shawmut Design and Construction Construction	1982	176	837	90%/10%	0%					
17	Fluent Advertising/PR/marketing	2010	205	205	72%/28%	22%					
18	Bombas Retail	2013	213	213	60%/40%	8%					
19	24-Seven Talent Staffing	1999	108	334	70%/30%	80%					
20	West Monroe Consulting	2002	220	2,100	83%/17%	16%					
21	Anchin Accounting	1923	382	382	100%/0%	13%					
22	Reed Smith Legal	1877	244	2,056	62%/38%	22%					
23	Clune Construction Construction	1997	134	590	76%/24%	6%					

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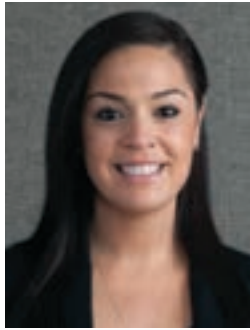
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LEE M. COHEN
CPA, Managing Partner



EPHRAIM FISHMAN
CPA, Partner



SARAH FORSYTH
Director of HR

The name of the accounting firm— LMC Certified Public Accountants — lets you know right away that Lee M. Cohen is the man at the top. But Cohen himself has never forgotten that it wasn't always that way.

"I used to be an employee too," Cohen recalls. "And when I worked at other firms I learned what I didn't want. I said when I have my own firm, I'm going to try and make it the best place to be and build a family environment."

Cohen acknowledges that over the years some of his personal attention to those efforts waned, but the pandemic served as a reminder to him what he really wanted his company to stand for.

"I realized how important my employees are," he says, "and once we got back to the office I made

a conscious effort to do more in creating the best possible workplace.'

The company is one of Crain's Best Places To Work because of its efforts in three areas: LMC takes the idea of an open and communicative workplace seriously, the firm has made post-pandemic office life more fun, and it has taken crucial steps to enable employees to maintain a healthy work-life balance.

"We foster an environment that empowers the employees to collaborate organically with each other," says Sarah Forsyth, director of human resources. "We went from closed cubicles to an open workspace to allow people to communicate more easily."

Forsyth says new hires get assigned a "buddy," someone to train them on technical details of the work and

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help them learn about mundane things such as where to go for lunch. The firm has teams that do collaborative training, and it will send people to conferences to increase their knowledge. LMC sponsors a CPA review program in which staff members study for the CPA exam together.

"We get great feedback because people like having the support of a team," she says.

The company does surveys throughout the year about everything from training to new processes to office events. "It's really important that we know what employees want and what's not working," Forsyth says, adding that employees voted recently in the surveys to return to having tax teams to create more collaboration and cohesion, so the firm implemented the change. It's not just human resources that emphasizes communication. "The partners are always willing to listen," says Ephraim Fishman, an LMC partner.

Cohen himself holds a series of companywide meetings, "15 Minutes with LMC." The meetings may include discussions of new clients or spotlight an employee.

"It's very important that I stay in front of everybody," Cohen says, adding that he does this on a more intimate scale by having lunch with an employee once or twice a week. "It's very informal," he adds. "We order in and talk about the firm but also about their lives. It's another way to bring in some personal attention."

But all work and no play makes for a dull office life. and since the pandemic struck, LMC has spiced things up.

"We make a conscious effort," Forsyth says. "We want to create a balance of work and fun because it leads to a less stressful and more productive atmosphere. We offer a lot of office events, especially during the busy season, to break up the workday."

Fishman says the firm stepped up its game to get people to overcome their hesitancy about coming back to work after the lockdown. Beyond safety protocols, he says, "we added a level of fun."

"We started doing things on a weekly basis, having someone come in to make ice-cream sundaes or crepes or sushi or to give chair massages," he says.

After getting a positive response from the staff, Fishman says, the company kept it up, even after safety issues waned.— "We just re-booked the massage vendor," he says. "It's become part of our culture."

Sometimes LMC goes beyond bringing the fun in—the firm recently sent employees to a Yankees-Mets game. Everyone first gathered in a conference room for pizza, refreshments and beer.

employees create a solid work-life balance. "Pre-pandemic we didn't focus on that enough," he says.

Fishman notes the firm has stepped up on this front in two areas. It used to offer three Fridays off during the summer, but it required employees to put in their hours for the week and to give notice by Monday that they would be out. Then it expanded it to the entire summer and ditched the Monday deadline. Then the company decreed that employees could take any Friday off outside of the busy season—about half the year—as long as people put their hours in and got their work done.

In addition, this year LMC introduced unlimited paid time off. "I'm a big fan of that," Fishman says. "It's a great benefit and it shows we trust our employees and treat them as professionals by saying, 'Do what you have to do here, but if you need to take off, we'll work with you.'"



LMC employees participated in the JP Morgan Corporate Challenge 5K run in Central Park on Thursday, June 2, 2022.

"This has been a tough couple of years," Cohen says, "and we really wanted to show our employees that we care about them and this is a great place to be."

The firm took that one step further in April, when it made Cohen's idea to offer every employee a seven-night, eight-day trip to a Mexico resort a reality. It added a gift card to help cover the airfare.

Fishman says the company emphasized that this was meant to be a getaway. "We told people not to bring their laptops or to call in," he explains. "We said, 'You work very hard and we want you to refresh.'"

Cohen adds that the pandemic was a "wake-up call" for him to help LMC

From pizza to PTOs, the firm's efforts keeps employees "engaged and happy," Fishman says, while making LMC attractive to new hires. Because the firm has increased their presence on social media about what they are doing, he adds, he frequently hears from clients who are impressed by the work environment.

"People want to be associated with us, which makes us feel really proud," Fishman says.





























































Cohen adds another layer to the reaction the company has received from clients: "They say, 'It's amazing what you do, and it makes a difference, and we're learning from you and will follow what you do.'"



LMC employees enjoyed a team outing after work at Yankee Stadium on Tuesday, August 23, 2022.

LARGE COMPANIES

More than 100 city employees

							COMPANY PERKS				
RANK	COMPANY NAME/ INDUSTRY	YEAR FOUNDED	NYC EMPLOYEES	U.S. EMPLOYEES	% MALE/ FEMALE EXECUTIVES	% VOLUNTARY TURNOVER	MATCHES RETIREMENT PLAN CONTRIBUTIONS	PAYS 100% OF MEDICAL PREMIUMS	PAYS FOR COST OF HEALTH/ WELLNESS PROGRAMS	OFFERS TUITION ASSISTANCE FOR ADVANCED DEGREES	OFFERS UNLIMITED PTO DAYS
24	Tarter Krinsky & Drogin Legal	2001	149	149	43%/57%	5%					
25	TuneCore Technology	2006	112	128	50%/50%	32%					
26	Numerix Technology	1996	132	149	69%/31%	17%					
27	Conductor Founders Inc. Technology	2007	163	218	43%/57%	17%					
28	Langan Engineering Engineering	1970	254	1,545	88%/12%	13%					
29	TripleLift Advertising/PR/marketing	2012	142	348	66%/34%	15%					
30	Sharebite Inc. Technology	2015	177	177	66%/34%	2%					
31	Slalom Consulting	2001	326	12,665	73%/27%	19%					
32	JRM Construction Management Construction	2007	425	471	Not disclosed	0%					
33	Bluecore Technology	2013	219	284	67%/33%	22%					
34	C.A.C. Industries Inc. Construction	1991	372	374	90%/10%	2%					
35	CBIZ New York Accounting	1987	139	6,100	76%/24%	27%					

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CAC Industries, Inc. started with around 50 employees, with president, Michael A. Capasso greeting each employee every morning. Those daily “good mornings” aren’t practical now that the company has grown to a team of 400+ people across multiple locations. To maintain its unique culture, CAC has identified the organization’s Core Purpose (“To Offer Unlimited Opportunities”) and four Core Values (1. It’s Always We, 2. Be Green & Lean, 3. Be Humble and Kick Ass, 4. Educate to Transform) and actively recognizes the employees for following them.



Since employee development is central to *unlimited opportunities*, CAC offers a mentoring and shadowing program, job site tours, a rotation program for employees to expand their skills, continual training opportunities, and more. CAC repeatedly shows dedication to upskilling employees and promoting from within. The company is expanding its training and development program and is always looking for new ways to enhance the employee experience.

The organization understands the importance of work-life balance, and there are frequent team outings and events for employees to attend. The biggest event is ‘Family Day’ that CAC hosts every other year. In August 2022, CAC had a carnival theme Family Day where everyone got the chance to meet their colleagues’ family members while enjoying obstacle courses, races, dunk tanks, face painting, music, great food, and more. CAC’s culture is what prepares the team to “bring it every day” and complete challenging projects on time and under budget.



Construction isn’t always popular. Noisy machines and closed streets interrupt daily routines. To show respect to the communities, CAC ventures into the neighborhoods to see what the community needs

before a project begins. Some of CAC’s community initiatives include playground repairs, computer donations, community gardens, back-to-school backpacks filled with supplies, toy drives, and Thanksgiving meal giveaways. The CAC team believes in putting in the effort and time to make it happen.



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CAC’s multi-year plan is to turn the company into an ESOP (Employee Stock Ownership Plan), so employees can become owners and share the wealth. The move exemplifies CAC’s “It’s Always We” and it honors the workers who’ve driven CAC’s success.



RANK	COMPANY NAME/ INDUSTRY	YEAR FOUNDED	NYC EMPLOYEES	U.S. EMPLOYEES	% MALE/ FEMALE EXECUTIVES	% VOLUNTARY TURNOVER	MATCHES RETIREMENT PLAN CONTRIBUTIONS	PAYS 100% OF MEDICAL PREMIUMS	PAYS FOR COST OF HEALTH/ WELLNESS PROGRAMS	OFFERS TUITION ASSISTANCE FOR ADVANCED DEGREES	OFFERS UNLIMITED PTO DAYS
36	Empire BlueCross BlueShield Health care and insurance	1934	372	70,937	62%/38%	9%	Offered	Offered	Offered	Offered	Offered
37	JFK International Air Terminal LLC Transportation	1997	104	104	25%/75%	8%	Offered	Offered	Offered	Offered	Offered
38	American Arbitration Association Legal	1926	207	635	43%/57%	9%	Offered	Offered	Offered	Offered	Offered
39	Rockefeller Group Real estate	1928	229	275	72%/28%	8%	Offered	Offered	Offered	Offered	Offered
40	ING Americas Banking	1978	523	581	78%/22%	11%	Offered	Offered	Offered	Offered	Offered
41	LiveOnNY Nonprofit, health and human services	1978	223	223	44%/56%	20%	Offered	Offered	Offered	Offered	Offered
42	Mazars USA LLP Accounting	1921	392	998	86%/14%	22%	Offered	Offered	Offered	Offered	Offered
43	Frankfurt Kurnit Klein & Selz PC Legal	1977	139	161	67%/33%	90%	Offered	Offered	Offered	Offered	Offered
44	Schimenti Construction Company Construction	1997	182	278	80%/20%	21%	Offered	Offered	Offered	Offered	Offered
45	AMA Group Engineering	2000	105	213	86%/14%	15%	Offered	Offered	Offered	Offered	Offered
46	RAND Engineering & Architecture DPC Engineering	1987	103	103	70%/30%	10%	Offered	Offered	Offered	Offered	Offered

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Labor Department finds \$11M in unemployment insurance fraud in August amid crackdown effort

BY BRIAN PASCUS

New York state is cracking down on unemployment insurance fraud. Gov. Kathy Hochul's office announced last Monday that an investigation by the Department of Labor identified more than \$11 million in fraudulent unemployment claims in August. The state is on pace to identify at least \$110 million in fraudulent unemployment benefits by the end of the year. The Department of Labor's Office of Special Investigations is leading the investigation, which has focused on individuals who collected unemployment benefits during the

"IT WILL TAKE SOME TIME, BUT WE WILL GET THIS MONEY BACK"

pandemic while still working. "August was just striking because we noticed, prepandemic, in all of 2018 we wrote about \$11 million in overpayments: those working while collecting [benefits]," Jacqueline

Kagan Dupiche, director of the Office of Special Investigations, told *Crain's*. "This is not something that begins and ends. We regularly, and for decades, have done quarterly wage-benefit cross-maps," she added.

Addressing discrepancies

The fraudulent payments represent only a tiny fraction of the overall payouts. The agency experienced peak unemployment claims requests of 2.48 million the week of Aug. 1, 2020, and 2.49 million the week of March 27, 2021. In total, New York state paid out \$105 billion in unemployment claims between March 2020 and March 2022, according to the Department of Labor.

Individual claimants have an opportunity to account for any discrepancies, but the state will review each case and establish a 36-month repayment plan that includes the threat of referring any alleged nonpayment to law enforcement.

Alternative methods of payment

retrieval include intercepting claimants' tax refunds and collecting new unemployment benefits from individual claimants and using those to pay off existing debts.

"It will take some time, but we will get this money back," said Kagan Dupiche.

The Department of Labor has relied on updated fraud detection technology as part of a modernization effort that began under the Cuomo administration and has continued under Hochul.

But targeting pandemic-era unemployment insurance fraud is just one of the changes made at the department in recent years. Over the last two years, the Department of Labor has worked with the Office of

Information Technology Services to improve existing inefficiencies and streamline the unemployment benefits application process. These initial improvements have included new chatbot technology, a cloud-based claims application in

partnership with Google, a DocuSign certification system that makes backdating certifications less cumbersome and an automated text and email process that keeps applicants up to speed on the status of their claims. ■



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Andrew Kimball
President & CEO
New York City Economic Development Corporation

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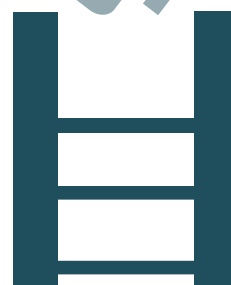
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Notice of Formation of **JPSF Ventures LLC**. Arts. of Org. filed with NY Dept. of State on 8/2/22. Office location: New York County. NY Sec. of State designated agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served, and shall mail process to The LLC, c/o The Clark Estates Inc, One Rockefeller Plaza, 31st Fl, New York, NY 10020. Purpose: any lawful activity

Formation of **EP Pilates LLC** filed with SSNY on 07/13/22. Office: NY County. Business address: 245 E 93rd St. #14F, NY, NY 10128. SSNY designated as agent upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail a copy of any process against the LLC to registered agent: United States Corporation Agents, Inc. at 7014 13th Ave. Suite 202, Brooklyn, NY, 11228. Purpose: Any lawful purpose.

Notice of Formation of **LONDON OAKS ACQUISITION, LLC**. Arts. of Org. filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 09/20/22. Office location: NY County. Princ. office of LLC: 30 Hudson Yards, 72nd Fl., NY, NY 10001. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to Corporation Service Co., 80 State St., Albany, NY 12207. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

Notice of Formation of **Construction Bae LLC**. Arts. of Org. filed with the SSNY on 06/28/2022. Office: Brooklyn County. United States Corporation Agents, Inc. designated as agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail copy of process to United States Corporation Agents, Inc. at 7014 13TH Avenue, Suite 202, Brooklyn, NY 11228. The principal address of the LLC is 557 Grand Concourse, Suite 6046, Bronx, NY 10451. Purpose: Any lawful purpose.

Notice of Formation of **CHARTER VILLAGE PRESERVATION GP, LLC**. Arts. of Org. filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 09/20/22. Office location: NY County. Princ. office of LLC: 30 Hudson Yards, 72nd Fl., NY, NY 10001. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to Corporation Service Co., 80 State St., Albany, NY 12207. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

Notice of Formation of **PERRY STREET 6 LLC**. Arts. of Org. filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 11/22/21. Office location: NY County. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to the LLC, 347 5th Ave., Ste. 300, NY, NY 10016. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

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Contact Suzanne Janik at 313-446-0455 or email: sjanik@crain.com

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Head of Learning (Citadel Enterprise Americas Services LLC – New York, NY); Mult. Pos. Avail. Define & execute Citadel's Learning and Development ("L&D") strategies across Citadel, and Citadel Securities. F/T. Requires a Bachelor's degree (or foreign equiv) in HR Management, Training & Development, Organizational Development, Executive Coaching, or a rel field & 3 yrs of exp in the job offered or in human capital management, recruiting, training & human learning dvlpmnt expertise. In lieu of a Bachelor's degree, the employer will alternatively accept an additional 2 yrs of exp in the job offered or in human capital management, recruiting, training & human learning dvlpmnt expertise. Education, experience, or training must include the following: Design & rollout of modules & workshops embedded in Early Careers, manager, leadership & transition programming; Content expertise across all areas - technical skills (e.g., finance & markets), prof skills (e.g., communication skills), mngmnt, (DEI & leadership); Facilitation of learning sessions for all audiences (small and large groups, staff, & senior level executives); Creating & implementing programs for sr leaders covering key competencies e.g., strategy, storytelling, driving team performance through feedback & coaching, & being a steward of talent; Content guidance to existing programming e.g., New Hire Orientation; Coaching exp & familiarity with / training on different executive assessments; Senior stakeholder mngmnt, including direct coordination executive-level positions; & Advising external clients on learning curricula, interventions, & strategy. Exp may be gained concurrently. Send resumes to citadelrecruitment@citadel.com. Reference JobID: 6264851.

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Site Reliability Engineer (Citadel Enterprise Americas Services LLC – New York, NY); Mult pos avail. Collab with cross-functional teams, includ'g trad'g, quant, & sftwre engin teams, to support & enhance Citadel's core suite of trad'g apps with the latest, most cutting edge tech in order to proactively diagnose & resolve production issues. F/T. Reqs a Bach degree (or foreign equiv) in CS, Comp Engin, Electrical Engin, Math or a rel tech field. Edu, train'g, or exp must include: Unix/Linux based systems; shell script'g; SDLC workflows; programm'g with SQL; & support'g large-scale distribut'g apps. Resumes: citadelrecruitment@citadel.com. JobID: 6233720.

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PUBLIC & LEGAL NOTICES

Notice of Formation of **3923 CARPENTER AVE II LLC**. Arts. of Org. filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 06/30/22. Office location: NY County. Princ. office of LLC: Zachary Hering, 10 Cuttermill Rd., Ste. 400, Great Neck, NY 11021. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to the LLC at the addr. of its princ. office. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

Notice of Formation of **3923 CARPENTER AVE I LLC**. Arts. of Org. filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 06/30/22. Office location: NY County. Princ. office of LLC: Zachary Hering, 10 Cuttermill Rd., Ste. 400, Great Neck, NY 11021. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to the LLC at the addr. of its princ. office. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

Notice of Formation of **CANOPY STAFFING LLC**. Arts. of Org. filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 08/08/22. Office location: NY County. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to the LLC, 307 5th Ave., 12th Fl., NY, NY 10016. Purpose: Staffing services business.

Notice of Formation of **HER INCLUDING THEM LLC**. Arts. of Org. filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 02/11/22. Office location: NY County. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to Corporation Service Co., 80 State St., Albany, NY 12207-2543. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

Notice of Formation of **PERRY STREET 7 LLC**. Arts. of Org. filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 11/22/21. Office location: NY County. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to the LLC, 347 5th Ave., Ste. 300, NY, NY 10016. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

Notice of Formation of **CHARTER VILLAGE DEVELOPER, LLC**. Arts. of Org. filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 09/20/22. Office location: NY County. Princ. office of LLC: 30 Hudson Yards, 72nd Fl., NY, NY 10001. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to Corporation Service Co., 80 State St., Albany, NY 12207. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

Notice of Formation of **PERRY STREET 5 LLC**. Arts. of Org. filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 11/22/21. Office location: NY County. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to the LLC, 347 5th Ave., Ste. 300, NY, NY 10016. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

Notice of Qualification of **BEDFORD BRIDGE LLC**. Appl. for Auth. filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 08/26/22. Office location: NY County. LLC formed in Delaware (DE) on 08/22/22. Princ. office of LLC: c/o Bridge Funding Inc., 641 Lexington Ave., 20th Fl., NY, NY 10022. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to c/o Corporation Service Co., 80 State St., Albany, NY 12207-2543. DE addr. of LLC: 251 Little Falls Dr., Wilmington, DE 19808-1674. Cert. of Form. filed with DE Secy. of State, 401 Federal St., #4, Dover, DE 19901. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

2030 and wrap in 2044, according to the Army Corps.

Fiery debate

The plan is set to rekindle the often fiery debate among planners, environmental advocates and residents about how best to defend the region’s coastal communities, several of which remain poorly protected from floodwaters 10 years after Superstorm Sandy pummeled their shores. Robert Freudenberg, vice president of energy and environment at the Regional Plan Asso-

mer President Donald Trump cut funds for the effort, complaining on Twitter that an earlier version exploring a sprawling flood gate across New York Harbor from the Rockaways to Sandy Hook, New Jersey, would be “a costly, foolish & environmentally unfriendly idea that, when needed, probably won’t work anyway.” He instead suggested the region’s residents get their “mops & buckets ready.”

President Joe Biden’s administration restored funding for the study last year, allowing the planning process to restart last October following more than two years of delays.

The draft proposal, which was selected from six potential plans, would build 12 movable gates that would draw to a close in case of a powerful storm. The intent is to protect communities from devastating storm surges, not

from the inland flash floods of tempests like Hurricane Ida.

Under the plan, gates would rise at Newtown Creek, Flushing Creek, Coney Island Creek, Gerritsen Creek, Hawtree Creek, Gowanus Canal, Sheepshead Bay, Jamaica Bay, Shellbank Basin, the Arthur Kill and Kill Van Kull between Staten Island and New Jersey, and the Hackensack River in New Jersey.

On-land coastal defenses would integrate with the network of barriers, including miles of engineered



“THIS IS A LONG-AWAITED VISION FOR RESILIENCY FOR THE REGION”

ciation, called the proposal’s release “a major milestone.”

“This is a long-awaited vision for resiliency for the region,” said Freudenberg. “There’s a lot of projects where you don’t know if the funding is coming. This is a project where you can be pretty confident that the funding is there, if communities end up embracing it.”

Planning for the project, focused on New York and New Jersey, had been underway since 2016 until it was abruptly paused in 2020. For-

floodwalls, seawalls and levees, along with nature-based solutions that would allow wetlands and other plantings to better sop up floodwaters.

More to do

Environmental advocates who have raised questions over the plan say the proposal’s release is an encouraging step but argue that more must be done to decrease the plan’s emphasis on built structures that could destroy marine habitats and ironically spur inland flooding

by trapping stormwater runoff.

Environmental watchdog Riverkeeper has warned that storm surge barriers could have “catastrophic consequences” to New York Harbor and the Hudson River. Advocates say the prospect of building gates is particularly troubling at three of the waterways, which are toxic Superfund sites each in the midst of decades-long cleanups by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

In a statement, the Waterfront Alliance, an environmental nonprofit,

said it is pleased that the Army Corps has shifted away from a storm surge barrier at the mouth of New York Harbor to “a more hybrid approach of green and gray infrastructure solutions” but stressed that officials should take a closer look at buyouts, restoring wetlands, relocating key infrastructure and other less-intrusive solutions.

“We continue to echo our support for a phased approach that incorporates more natural and nature-based features,” said the alliance’s statement. ■



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How Dan Doctoroff reshaped the city and why he’s not afraid of his biggest fight yet

INTERVIEW BY BRIAN PASCUS

Daniel Doctoroff has had a storied career. As first deputy mayor for economic development and rebuilding during the Bloomberg administration, he oversaw the redevelopment and renaissance of New York following the 9/11 terrorist attacks in 2001. He founded NY2012, an organization that pushed to have the Summer Olympics in New York City, as well as Sidewalk Labs, which applies technology to urban policy problems. Now he faces a new challenge: He announced in December that he has been diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, known as Lou Gehrig’s disease. The illness killed his father in 2002, and his uncle developed it in 2008.

Doctoroff, one of the most important New Yorkers of the past 20 years, sat down with *Crain’s* to talk about success, failure and what he’s most proud of.

You began your career in investment banking. What did the world of Wall Street teach you to prepare you for your years in government?

It was all about telling a great story, whether you were doing an IPO for a company or selling a company or merging two companies or buying a company. Whether it’s to your partners, lenders or investors, you have to be able to tell a coherent and compelling story. I actually think that if I look over the course of my career, that ability is often rooted in numbers, and it’s one of the things that’s been a consistent advantage to me over time. I’m a big believer there’s truth in numbers.

You tried very hard to bring the 2012 Olympics to New York City. Why do you think New York hasn’t hosted an Olympics yet?

It’s hard to do in New York. There are limited sites, and it’s hard to galvanize New Yorkers. New York’s only tried twice: once for the 1984 Olympics and then for 2012. And I think we got very close. If the decision had been made two years before, I think we would’ve won, because there was a lot of sympathy for New York after 9/11. By the time the decision was made, we were at war in Iraq and Afghanistan. Obviously, we did some things to make it harder on ourselves, like the stadium battle [on Manhattan’s West Side].

I don’t think New York will ever host the Olympics, in part because too many of the sites on which to build things are now gone.

How does one succeed in running this city?

There are four things that are necessary to get things done. You need a catalyst; in our case, it was 9/11, but also sometimes that catalyst can be a leader saying we need to do something. The second thing is you need to have a philosophy of government that is consistent. We had a philosophy that I call the virtuous cycle of the successful city: Your job is to grow the city in terms of residents, visitors, jobs. The more you grow, when you have fixed assets, if you will, you have money left over to invest in quality of life. As quality of life improves, more people want to come, and the cycle continues. Third thing is you’ve got to have a strategy and know what you want to do.

Takeaway for business professionals

Doctoroff was former Mayor Michael Bloomberg’s deputy mayor and chief economic and development officer. He oversaw the transformation of all five boroughs in the early 2000s, including Hudson Yards, the High Line, the waterfront in Brooklyn and Queens, and the groundbreaking growth-and-sustainability initiative PlaNYC.



DOSSIER

NUMBER OF YEARS IN THE PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTORS 35, including six in government at City Hall

ON HIS RÉSUMÉ Lehman Bros. (1984–1987); Oak Hill Capital Partners (1987–2002); deputy mayor for economic development and rebuilding (2002–2008); president and CEO of Bloomberg (2008–2014); founder and CEO of Sidewalk Labs (2015–2021)

BORN Newark, New Jersey

RESIDES Manhattan

EDUCATION Bachelor’s in government, Harvard College (1980); J.D., University of Chicago (1984)

BREAKING THE MOLD Doctoroff’s civic career started with his impassioned desire to have New York City host the Summer Olympics, which he said would act as a catalyst to remake the city’s economy for the 21st century. The idea came to him as he stood in Giants Stadium during soccer’s World Cup semifinal in 1994.

people lose power? I think their motives change. It’s incredibly difficult to get things done in government. Everything is a struggle. I like to say, you have to operate on two speeds at the same time, at least with respect to government. You have to be patient and urgent at the same time, and it’s really exhausting. So I think people lose their drive. And when you lose your drive, you’re not going to be able to execute effectively, and therefore you lose power.

What is your best life advice? This actually comes from Mike Bloomberg, who told me, “Show me someone who’s never lost and I’ll show you a loser.” You’ve got to take chances.

Is there anything your current health battle has taught you? What’s been surprising to me is how positive I’ve been about this whole thing. Since I was diagnosed, maybe cumulatively, I’ve had one down hour. I’ve tried to understand why that is. As soon as I was diagnosed, I stopped focusing on the future and just focused on today. And when that happens, you enjoy life a lot more. You’re more present. You’re more patient. I think you’re kinder. You have more time for people, and you don’t think about what’s to come. This isn’t something I tried to do. It just happened, maybe as a defense mechanism. Maybe it’s a result of my natural optimism. ■

The major insight I had about the Olympic bid was to use the Olympics, and the fact that there were deadlines for hosting the Olympics, as a catalyst to get things done that seemed politically impossible or financially infeasible. Fourth, you’ve got to have the capacity to execute. Execution is all about communication.

You oversaw the development of the High Line, Brooklyn Bridge Park and Governors Island. What do you consider your greatest success and why? I actually think it’s Hudson Yards because it was an area of the city that everyone thought was impossible to develop. We figured out a way to finance it at a time when the city didn’t have any money. We rezoned it. We found developers to focus on the core of it. At the end of the day, I think the city invested \$350 million in it, net. [The city] will get, over time, about \$20 billion in tax revenues out of the development—which can pay for education, health care,

housing, police protection and other city services.

What are you most proud of in your government career? It’s not one thing; it’s the scope of what we did. It’s the fact that we looked at the city as coming out of 9/11 and coming out of the 20th century, and we thought: What does a 21st-century New York need? We had a canvas of all five boroughs and aggressively pursued hundreds of initiatives to prepare the city of the future.

What are the benefits of holding power? If you’re in it for the right reasons, as opposed to satisfying your own ego or suppressing the people, it’s the ability to get things done that help other people. Not everyone sees it the same way. Many people pursue it out of ego or out of a desire to create advantage for themselves versus other people.

In your opinion, why do some capable

ASHLEY HOLT



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