

One World Trade Center Is Open For Business



One World Trade Center officially opened for business on Monday. *Photo: Andrew Burton/Getty Images*

BY WENDY JOAN BIDDLECOMBE

For the first time in 13 years, New Yorkers are going to work again at the World Trade Center.

About 175 workers from Condé Nast started working at One World Trade Center on Monday morning. The media company has leased about 1.2 million square feet on 24 floors of the tower, and is moving their global headquarters downtown from Times Square.

The sound of progress was in the air as workers welded in the distance and traffic blared from West Street.

Officials from the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, Condé Nast, leasing company The Durst Organization and the 9/11 Memorial Museum held a brief press conference with reporters Monday morning as the tower opened to about 175 employees.

Port Authority Executive Director Patrick Foye called One World Trade Center the “safest class A commercial building ... in the world,” and said numerous federal, state and local agencies, including the FBI and CBI consulted on the tower’s security.

Noticeably absent were elected officials. Gov. Andrew Cuomo held a rally in the early afternoon in Times Square with labor unions encouraging participation in tomorrow’s election.

The governor sent out a statement Monday morning, which said: “One World Trade Center serves as a symbol of the resilience of the people of New York. Today, as we open its doors for the first time, we remember that strength and courage will always conquer weakness and cowardice, and that the American spirit, defended by proud New Yorkers, will not be defeated.”

At 104 floors, the 1,776 foot tower is the highest building in the Western Hemisphere.

The building’s main entrance features a white marble lobby, with a large, colorful, urban mural across from the security desk by Brooklyn-based artist José Parlá.

Construction on the \$3.9 billion building began in 2006. The building is 60 percent leased, officials said, and other tenants include China Center New York LLC, a “business and cultural center to support Chinese firms doing business in New York,” Servcorp, KiDS Creative, U.S. General Services Administration, Cushman & Wakefield, Westfield and BMB Group.

Legends Hospitality Group, another tenant, will operate the tower’s 63rd floor observatory, which offers sweeping views of Manhattan, the Statue of Liberty and area bridges with floor-to-ceiling windows. The observatory is expected to open in the spring.

Steven Plate, director of WTC construction with Port Authority, said the tower is “truly a miracle, truly history in the making.”