

Former Tenant Of World Trade Center Makes Triumphant Return To Site 14 Years After 9/11



Teri Bloom/Courtesy of Greg Carafello

Greg Carafello ran a small color printing business out of the south tower at the time of the attacks. He has inked a deal for a new office at 1 World Trade Center.

By Katherine Clarke

He's been to hell — and now he's back.

A former World Trade Center tenant whose life and business was left in ruins after 9/11 is returning to the site, 14 years after fleeing for his life.

Greg Carafello, who ran a small color printing business out of the south tower at the time of the attacks, has inked a deal for a new office at 1 World Trade Center, he told the Daily News.

He plans to run his new venture, as a top franchisee for printing giant Cartridge World, out of the brand new tower.

"I'm attached to the building and I'm very proud to be doing this," he said. "It's one of the greatest places in the world to do business."

"It's the American way. You come back from it, you persevere," he said.

It's the kind of attitude that's brought Lower Manhattan back from the brink, said Andy Breslau, senior vice president for the Alliance for Downtown New York.

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“I’m attached to the building and I’m very proud to be doing this,” Carafello said.

Carafello's new office will be on the 85th floor.

“Resiliency is the story of Lower Manhattan,” Breslau said. “Greg’s determination to return and put his roots down in the neighborhood is synonymous with the neighborhood that claims his loyalty. People have chosen not to be cowed by the events of 9/11.”

Carafello, 55, is certainly resilient — but no one could blame him if he had decided to start over in another location.

Other 9/11 survivors have remained so affected by the events of that day that they barely ever set foot in Lower Manhattan.

A spokesperson for the Durst Organization, the building’s landlord, said none of the other original companies who leased space there have returned.

Carafello and one of his employees were just gearing up for another day at work on the 18th floor when the first plane hit the north tower on that sunny September morning.

“When the first plane hit, it was like a sonic boom,” Carafello said. “The windows shook and we heard an explosion. There was a lot of stuff falling outside

He and his employee quickly vacated the building, down the stairwell, and were just a block away when the second plane hit their own office tower, destroying their business and leaving them feeling lucky to be alive.

It’s an event that would haunt him for years.

“As soon as we saw the second plane, we knew everything had changed,” Carafello said. “We just started running after that. We ran all the way to the Waldorf-Astoria.”

Carafello, who relocated his offices to New Jersey after the attacks, said he’s satisfied that his new headquarters is the safest place in the world.

After all, the new 1 World Trade Center boasts an ultra-strong reinforced concrete base and is designed to absorb and deflect the blast from even the largest vehicular bombs.

He got his new office, on the 85th floor of the new tower, through Australian work space provider Servcorp, which rents out spaces to freelancers and others for as little as \$750 a month.

“It’s a premiere address for any company,” Carafello said.

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