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Blue Cross Employees on the Move

DETROIT (AP) - Nearly 600 Blue Cross Blue Shield workers are moving to their new offices in downtown Detroit.

Blue Cross says the employees will complete their move this week into the Renaissance Center's Tower 600.

The nonprofit health insurer is starting its final relocation from its Southfield campus as part of its workforce consolidation.

Blue Cross began its relocation last May. It marks the halfway point of Blue Cross' move to Tower 600. About 6,000 employees will be working downtown later this year, making Blue Cross one of the largest employers in Detroit's central business district.

Blue Cross covers 4.4 million of Michigan's 9.9 million residents.

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GM Now Using LEGO Blocks for 3-D Visualization

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block has an identification number and date of discovery, and the board shows its progress from root cause to solution to outcome. 3-D Visualization is applicable to any process that has volume and aging.

"3-D Visualization allows us to look at issues more holistically," said Jamie Pickett, GM senior manager of current program quality. "By visually representing a problem, it is easier to see the whole scope of it and where the opportunities lie. And, unlike a line of data in a spread sheet, seeing a problem as a block on a board is a strong motivator for finding a solution to get it

off the board."

In addition to warranty repair tracking, GM is deploying 3-D Visualization globally to track vehicle program engineering changes and program budgets. GM also has developed a digital version that is easily shared globally.

WellStar is using 3-D LEGO boards to improve on-time starts in a doctor's office, manage the Foundation's five-year fund development program, improve Quality of Care Measures, and one board has projected a \$1 million per year cost savings by improving the process for credentialing its physicians with payers.

"By partnering with GM on this innovative process, WellStar is proving that a healthcare system can be operated efficiently, and now others in our industry are learning from our example," said Reynold J. Jennings, president and CEO of WellStar Health System. "This process has the potential to be an invaluable tool for a wide variety of industries and organizations."

The collaboration between the two companies began when GM's crossover team invited WellStar representatives to give a presentation about triage practices in the Emergency Department as part of a GM leadership mentoring program.

Later, GM donated a simulated assembly line to WellStar's Development Center for

doctors and nurses to learn how to apply Lean methodologies across all of their healthcare practices.

The 3-D Visualization process resulted from a brainstorm between Herrick and Dennis Pastor, WellStar's executive director of performance excellence. A prototype was built within a week.

Prior to joining WellStar, Pastor worked at GM in manufacturing and quality roles, including production superintendent for general assembly at the assembly plant in Lord-

stown, Ohio, currently the U.S. home for the Chevrolet Cruze compact sedan.

"Discovering 3-D Visualization's usefulness has been transformational for WellStar, and a significant catalyst for pro-active improvement," Pastor said.

"GM's global manufacturing operation is definitely the finest Lean system in the world. The success of this Lean process in both the automotive and healthcare industries is evidence of that credibility."

Australia's \$288M Subsidy Keeps GM Manufacturing Down Under

By ROD MCGUIRK
Associated Press

CANBERRA, Australia (AP) - The government announced last week a 275 million Australian dollar (\$288 million) subsidy for General Motors Co. to guarantee it continues to make cars in Australia for another decade through its subsidiary Holden Ltd.

As part of the deal, U.S.-based GM said in a statement it has agreed to invest more than \$1 billion in car manufacturing at its Melbourne and Adelaide plants until at least 2022.

Holden will use the government assistance to design and build two new cars for the global market after 2015, the

statement said. Prime Minister Julia Gillard said GM had considered closing its entire design and manufacturing operations in Australia, costing 12,000 Holden jobs.

"This funding is not a hand-out. It is a strategic investment that will boost our economy, foster innovation, build new business opportunities and promote adoption of new fuel-saving and safety technologies," Gillard told reporters.

The government is not becoming a shareholder in Holden. Australian manufacturers including Holden have been losing exports due to the strong Australian dollar, which has been rising lately.

SHAP Facility Begins Building All-New 2012 Dodge Avenger SE V6 Mid-Size

AUBURN HILLS - Dodge last week announced the new 2012 Avenger SE V6 package, saying it's developed to be America's most affordable and powerful mid-size car, delivering unprecedented performance and value for driving enthusiasts.

The new Avenger SE V6 model has a starting U.S. Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price (MSRP) of just \$21,495 (excluding destination) and is powered by a standard 3.6-liter Pentastar V6 engine, one of Ward's "10 Best Engines," mated to a six-speed automatic transmission.

Avenger is built at the Sterling Heights Assembly Plant (SHAP) in Sterling Heights.

"The Dodge Avenger is one of the fastest growing mid-size cars in America, with sales up 112 percent this year," said Reid Bigland, president and CEO - Dodge Brand.

"We're building off this momentum with the introduction of the new SE V6 package, delivering a true no-compromise solution for the mid-size car buyer - 283 best-in-class horsepower, 29 mpg highway, 18-inch wheels and a rear spoiler - all for just \$21,495 MSRP. You get the power, the efficiency, the look and tremendous value that is unmatched in the segment."

The new 2012 Dodge Avenger SE V6 provides customers the most desirable features at an outstanding price, Dodge officials say.

Standard equipment includes a 3.6-liter Pentastar V6 engine mated to a six-speed automatic transmission that



Dodge Avenger sales have increased 112 percent in 2012 calendar year through February - making it one of the fastest growing mid-size cars in America.

produces a best-in-class 283 horsepower and 260 lb.-ft. of torque while delivering a best-in-class EPA highway V6 fuel economy rating of 29 mpg, 18-inch aluminum wheels, rear decklid spoiler, and dual exhaust with bright tips.

SE V6 models also include the rest of the comprehensive equipment list standard on all Avenger SE models, including among other features: LED taillamps, premium interior



The 2012 Dodge Avenger SE V6 is powered by the 3.6-liter Pentastar V6 engine mated to a six-speed automatic transmission, which produces a best-in-class 283 horsepower while also achieving a best-in-class V6 EPA highway fuel economy rating of 29 miles per gallon.

with soft-touch surfaces, four-wheel anti-lock disc brakes, electronic stability control with traction control and electronic roll mitigation, advanced multi-stage driver and front passenger air bags, side-curtain and front seat-mounted side airbags, and laminated front windshield and front-row side glass.

Auto Insurance Going Up \$30

LANSING, Mich. (AP) - Michigan drivers will pay \$30 more for auto insurance starting July 1 to care for accident victims who have brain damage, paralysis or other catastrophic injuries, raising the annual fee to \$175 per vehicle.

The Michigan Catastrophic Claims Association announced the 21 percent premium increase last week.

Lawmakers are discussing bills that would allow motorists to choose among various levels of personal injury

protection coverage, rather than mandating uncapped coverage. Opponents say that wouldn't guarantee lower rates.

Regular auto insurance policies handle coverage up to \$500,000, after which all insured motorists are assessed the additional fee to cover more severe cases.

The association covers medical bills for roughly 12,800 accident victims across the state. Last year, it paid out \$927 million for catastrophic injuries.

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