

SBS IN THE NEWS

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New Arby's Hires 110 Employees With Help of Brooklyn Workforce Agencies 90 Percent of New Staff From Brooklyn

By Linda Collins
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DOWNTOWN BROOKLYN — Arby's first Brooklyn restaurant — scheduled to open tomorrow, Jan. 21, in the famous and historic Gage & Tollner space at 372 Fulton St. — has hired 110 employees with the help of several Downtown Brooklyn agencies.

An estimated 90 percent of the team is from Brooklyn, the other 10 percent is from the greater New York City area, according to franchisee Raymond Chera, president of RCNY Restaurants LLC.

As part of his commitment to the local community, Chera worked with NYC Business Solutions and the Workforce1 Career Center, both located in Downtown Brooklyn, to identify potential employees for the restaurant.

NYC Business Solutions is a suite of services offered by the city's Department of Small Business Services (SBS) to help businesses open, operate and expand; and the Workforce1 Career Center, operated in coordination with SBS, the state's Department of Labor and City University of New York to provide free job training, recruitment and placement services for jobseekers.

"On behalf of New York City, I'd like to thank Arby's for their commitment to hire local residents," said SBS Commissioner Robert Walsh. "It is my hope that the company continues to grow in the five boroughs, providing more and more jobs for New Yorkers."

And growth is anticipated, according to Chera.

"This location is the first of 31 Arby's restaurants we have committed to open in the New York area over the next 10 years," he said, adding, "Our family has been doing business in Brooklyn for more than 45 years, and we're proud to bring new job opportunities and economic development to the borough."

Chera believes he and Arby's are providing a unique

and better tasting alternative to everyday fast food with the signature items — the oven-roasted, freshly sliced roast beef sandwiches, Jamocha shakes and curly fries.

In addition to those, a unique feature of the Brooklyn Arby's will be the "Market Fresh To Go" section at the front of the store.

"Designed to help patrons of the Fulton Mall area grab a great-tasting meal on the go, the section will feature Arby's Market Fresh sandwiches, drinks, chips, cookies and apple turnovers, as well as boxed lunches," said an Arby's spokesperson.

As previously reported, the development and design team took care to return Gage & Tollner to its former glory and retain its landmark status.

"No permanent changes were made to the building's structure and several existing design elements were incorporated into the new space, including the original gas lamps, arched mirrors, pastry display case, and beverage bar," Chera said. "The fabrics and fixtures mirror the look and feel of the Gage & Tollner when it first opened in the 1890s. A custom menu board mimics the curves of the Bentwood Rocker, which was a fixture during Gage & Tollner's heyday."

The new restaurant, which will be open daily from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., will also offer free Wi-Fi service to patrons and, in the spring, will begin offering catering services.

MetroTech employees with ID cards or badges will receive a 10 percent discount as will members of the military and local police and fire departments.

Asked about the origins of the name Arby's, a company spokesperson confirmed that it stands for R.B. "Many have suspected the R.B. stands for roast beef," she said, "but company founders, food service veterans Leroy and Forrest Raffel, who opened the first Arby's in Ohio in 1964, chose the initials of the Raffel Brothers (RB).