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Insurance Plan HQ Changing Address

By [Carl Cronan](#)

(*Carl Cronan is editor of [Real Estate Florida](#).)*)

ST. PETERSBURG, FL—Universal Health Care Group Inc., an insurance plan management firm, has signed a lease for 31,000 sf at 100 Bay Central and will move from the nearby Wachovia Plaza office tower in November. It will be the first new tenant to occupy 100 Bay Central since Lutz Real Estate Investments bought the 135,000-sf space in 2006.

Universal Health, which occupies several spaces in its current location, will be able to consolidate its operations in Downtown St. Petersburg within half of a floor at 100 Bay Central, according to Adam Lutz, principal of Lutz Real Estate Investments. The Farmington Hills, MI-based firm bought the building's two-floor office segment for \$15 million.

"They are exactly the type of quality tenant we were looking for," Lutz tells GlobeSt.com. "It sets a new identity for the building."

The 18-year-old building, formerly known as 100 Central Station, was previously home to Progress Energy Corp., which moved to a new 16-story headquarters in Downtown St. Petersburg starting in 2006 and finally vacated the last of its space in May. Lutz says that left the last four months to complete renovations to 100 Bay Central, which allows additional prospects to examine space there without an existing tenant being in the way.

Office vacancy in Downtown St. Petersburg, which was previously in the single-digit range, has increased to 16.6% through the first half of this year, with class A space reaching at least 22%, according to GVA Advantis. A high renewal rate and lack of new buildings is helping to stabilize both vacancy and rents, which currently average \$24.53 per sf.

Lutz says he remains bullish on the St. Pete CBD, noting that city officials are strong supporters of revitalization. "The core is getting better. It's not receding like some areas," he says.

Chad Rupp of Jones Lang LaSalle represented Universal Health in the 100 Bay Central lease, while Claire Calzon and Jeff Tolrud of Colliers Arnold represented Lutz Real Estate.

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