



Alphonso O'Neil-White, left, president and CEO of BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York, shakes on the deal with Denny Oklak, chairman and CEO of Duke Realty Corp.

Righting the Ship

Even as troubles at Delphi and other area manufacturers contribute to the steady loss of manufacturing jobs in the state as a whole, a new generation of projects is regenerating Buffalo. Among them is the purchase of a 415,000-sq.-ft. (38,554-sq.-m.) plant by Toronto-based **Contract Pharmaceuticals Ltd.** to employ 230 in the manufacture of products for Bristol-Myers Squibb and other pharmaceutical companies.

(That doesn't mean Bristol-Myers Squibb is lying down: The company is in the midst of investing \$100 million in biotech manufacturing and chemical facilities on its Syracuse campus, first established in 1943.)

Back in Buffalo, further symbolizing a town on the re-make, a downtown brownfield was chosen from more than 130 reviewed sites by **BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York** for

the location of its new corporate headquarters and operations center, which will hold 1,300 employees and could have an economic impact of \$1.9 billion. Set for completion in 2007, the \$86.3-million project will contain 450,000 sq. ft. (41,805 sq. m.) of space. Duke Realty Corp. will develop the facility. BlueCross officials credited the location's suitability for construction, parking facilities, accessibility and ancillary services for employees as deciding factors in the site selection. Incorporated into the design is the landmark 1848 stone façade of the original Gas Works facility on the site

"We envisioned a landmark building that is distinctive, efficient, and flexible," said Alphonso O'Neil-White, president and CEO of BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York. "The result will be a building that recalls the golden age of Buffalo as the building's features reflect past works from Frank Lloyd Wright,

Louis Sullivan, Fredrick Law Olmsted, and design elements from Buffalo's City Hall, the grain elevators along the Niagara River, and the lighthouse."

Remediation of a different kind is behind another Buffalo company's growth. As documented early in 2005 by *The Buffalo News*, **West Metal Works** produces steel walls for the Bechtel Corp.'s \$6-billion cleanup operation at Hanford Nuclear Reservation in Washington state. As a result of the contract, which ended in September, West added 35 new jobs, and was expected to keep on a large number of those positions as the result of further work with Bechtel.

Another steel project is taking place in the Buffalo Lakeside Commerce Park, where **Delaco Steel Corp.** of Michigan will build an \$18-million, 100-worker plant to manufacture steel blanks for the automotive industry.