THURSDAY, January 13, 2005

CLOSING TO BAY AREA 1,900 JOBS

In the latest bad news, J.P. Morgan Chase & Co. will close its credit card call center by the end of the year. It hopes to keep some employees.

BY STEVE BOUGUEZ

Tampa Bay area's second largest financial services institution suffered another damaging blow when J.P. Morgan Chase & Co. announced that it will close its credit card call center by the end of the year and eliminate 1,900 jobs.

The news, long rumored, was denied by company officials for months until employees were notified in recent days following meetings with union representatives. The center just six months after Capital One did the same thing, closing its credit card call center in Tampa and releasing 1,100 workers.

But unlike Capital One, which said it had hired outside contractors to handle call center functions more cheaply, J.P. Morgan said it will spend the work being done by the 1,900 Chase employees on several inhouse centers operating in other cities, including Virginia and Wisconsin.

"Employees and community leaders have been bargaining for months to purchase the credit card division," said a Chase employee source. "This is a devastating blow to the community."

THE TIMES TODAY

See show dogs this weekend

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LOCAL

Center finds a safer spot

The Tampa Fire Rescue Department has found a new site for its animal control shelter after losing its home at the Westshore Mall.

Sports

Clearer grades for sports

In an effort to bring back "cleaner" and more fair, the NCAA introduced new grading standards for athletic programs.

NFL

Griev's waiting room

A 4-year-old girl from New York City has been waiting months for rising to make a decision on her case.

Court gives judges more say over jail time

The Supreme Court weakened federal guidelines affecting many pending cases.

U.S. rounds out food pyramid

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