

Tour of Toyland

REAL ESTATE: Grand opening of MGA Entertainment's new 24 campus headquarters brings high hopes to Chatsworth.

By **MICHAEL AUSHENKER** Staff Reporter

Call it a ribbon-cutting and ground-breaking. The new headquarters of **Isaac Larian's MGA Entertainment** in Chatsworth opened its doors on Aug. 15 to some 300 guests. The live/work/play project, called 24, which promises to rejuvenate the northwest corner of the San Fernando Valley, even attracted L.A. Mayor **Eric Garcetti** to the opening.

Formerly based in Van Nuys at 16300 Roscoe Blvd., MGA Entertainment, the biggest privately traded toy company in the world, has relocated 430 employees to the site.

The 24-acre property, located at 9220 Winnetka Ave., will soon also have two levels and 255,000 square feet of creative office space joined by 660 residential units, ground-floor shops and services, parking structure, parking lot with electric vehicle stalls and shuttle to nearby mass transit. Officials on hand — including Congressman **Brad Sherman**, newly minted District 12 City Councilman **John Lee**, and Lee's predecessor, **Mitch Englander**, who, before re-entering the private sector helped shepherd the project through approvals and entitlements — deemed 24 a game-changer for both Chatsworth and the San Fernando Valley.

Developed by **Uncommon Developers**, led by Larian's son, **Jason Larian**, and son-in-law, **Ryan Hekmat**, the new office building also houses Uncommon's offices in a second-floor corner.

Also at the opening: **Clint Woesner** of **Linespace**, the design firm creating the signage at 24; and Project Manager **Jerry Nash**.

Prior to the grand opening party, Jason Larian gave the Business Journal a tour of the new expansive work facility, marked by wide-open collaborative floors, glassy walls and high ceilings, and ample natural light. Jason said will even have an onsite preschool for children of MGA's workforce; and village green open spaces and outdoor movie screen that will be accessible to the entire community at large beyond MGA employees. Also: three pool plazas, sports park, community gardens, yoga studio, citrus grove, bamboo forest, water features and pet-friendly amenities.

The new headquarters, made up of creative office space adapted in a building that used to house Los Angeles Times' printing press, has been in operation as MGA's new corporate headquarters since May, Jason Larian told the Business Journal. Amenities at 24 — designed by **KFA Los Angeles** and named because the idea is to create a 24/7 environment open to the extended community.

Phase I only took 18 months to adapt as creative office space, and Hekmat commended "the efficient and responsive department of Building and Safety here in the great city of Los Angeles" for making this project "meet and exceed schedules."

Garcetti took a walking tour of the property accompanied by Isaac Larian.

At the dedication, the MGA Entertainment founder admitted to his audience that while Chatsworth was "not the most convenient location for a toy company," the site signals an opportunity to stimulate economic growth in a community where "there were other industries here that I don't want to mention," Larian said, smiling.

From the podium, son Jason took pride in seeing MGA employees and their families and friends swelling the patio, which (like the headquarters' interior) is peppered with sculptures by his artist mother, **Angela Larian**.

"To see people appreciating (this new venue), it's one of the most rewarding feelings in my life," Jason Larian told the crowd. He praised Englander as "an excellent politician. I've never seen anyone as skilled as him to get things done."



Opening: Mayor Eric Garcetti greets MGA's Issac Larian.



Congrats: Jason Larian and Linespace's Clint Woesner.



Officials: Brad Sherman, far left, and John Lee, far right.



Campus: The patio outside MGA's headquarters.



Honored: The Larian family pose with Mayor Garcetti, third from left.



Resident Artist: Angela Larian created the workplace sculptures.

"We were so proud of this project of what it represents — a live/work/play model," added Lee, in his first public appearance since having succeeded Englander as District 12 City Councilman in an election victory only two days earlier.

Isaac Larian, who kept referring to Garcetti as "the next president of the United States," also reminded his sons and daughter-in-laws that MGA "needs more customers" before introducing first grandson, **Levi**. Garcetti spoke about how his excited

7-year-old daughter **Maya** wanted to be taken out of sleep-away camp in Griffith Park when she heard he was attending the opening event of "your friend who makes L.O.L. Surprise," the mayor said. "Sorry, maybe Phase II," Garcetti said was his reply.