

## GM Employee Who Works at Tech Center Enjoys Being a Part of Detroit's Comeback

by Jim Stickford

Alisyn Malek works at the GM Tech Center in Warren, but has made her home in the city of Detroit.

The 27-year-old grew up in Brighton and received her undergraduate degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Michigan. She joined GM in 2008, at a time when the future of the company was not considered bright.

"That's why I first got a place in the city of Detroit," Malek said. "The day I hired in, there was only one other person there as well. This was at a time of year when there would normally be 10 or 15 new hires. They have, of course, hired more people since then, but the times made me a little worried about the future."

Moving to Detroit, at first, was a purely practical matter. It was just less expensive to live there and for someone who wanted to save as much money as possible, it made sense.

"I had a friend who lived in the city and told me how affordable the rent was," Malek said. "But I found that after moving to Detroit for money, there were plenty of reasons for me to stay. I got involved in the art community. My boyfriend, Jake Chidester, and I had a space at the Russell Industrial Center off of Clay and I-75. There we produced work, me in fiber and Jake art made out of found materials like wood or pipes, bolts, things like that."

Malek said she started out in the New Center area, but about three years ago bought a place in the Brush Park neighborhood.

"The area in just the three years I've lived there, has changed a lot," Malek said. "We didn't used to see people on bicycles. Now we see them all the time. We didn't see people walking around the theater district, going from bar to bar or from restaurant to restaurant except when there was a sporting event. Now that happens all the time even when there isn't a Tigers or Lions game."

When people learn where she lives, Malek said she gets asked questions like, "Where do you go grocery shopping?"

"I tell them I shop at Eastern Market," Malek said. "It's only about three blocks from where my loft is. People forget that's where all the grocery stores get their produce."

And the real estate situation has also improved, Malek said. When she bought her loft, only 10 of the 62 units were filled. Now all have been sold and when one comes onto the market, there are multiple interested parties.

Malek said that the image of downtown Detroit in the minds of many is one of danger. While she admits that there is crime in Detroit, she hasn't been involved in any violent ones. The closest she's come is when she first moved into the city and a rock was thrown through her window.

"They came and stole some

burned CDs," Malek said. "I ended up feeling bad for them. I know crime is real, but there's been a real effort for people here to look out for each other."

Malek said that when she and Jake moved out of the Russell building, she opened a studio in the Corktown neighborhood.

"They have a neighborhood watch, and when someone sees a sketchy van, they take a picture of it," Malek said. "Crime is real and people have to be aware of it, but where I live is a lot safer than people give it credit for."

Malek's current duties at the Tech Center have her supporting executive Larry Mitz, who heads the company's Hybrid Engineering. In the past, she has worked on advanced charging technology for the battery-electric Spark.

"That was a ton of fun," Malek said. "I got to use the daydreamer part of my brain to try and help envision how people would interact with a vehicle, and create designs aligned with that envisioned concept."

Malek said she and her boyfriend Jake are involved in "Camp Detroit," which set up art installations downtown during the recent Electronic Music Festival and also places art in local neighborhoods.

Malek also works with a group of GM engineers who are involved with Green Place Detroit.

"We work with students from



Allisyn Malek works in Warren & lives in Detroit. photo by: Vanessa Miller

Southwest Detroit," Malek said. "The idea is to promote STEM education. They have after-school programs and we've built a community garden."

"We hope in the long-term to work with students on engineering education by restoring a

house. They'd learn where plumbing goes and why it goes where it does. We'd like to teach basic concepts like what a scale model is and what it's used for. Ultimately, I like being of the generation that is working to take GM and Detroit to the next level."



**Authentic Thai Cuisine**

**Lunch Prices start at \$7.00 + tax**

You can order our dishes with the following spice levels:

- No Spice - no chili pepper added
- Mild - a touch of chili
- Medium - comfortably hot
- Hot - for experienced diners only

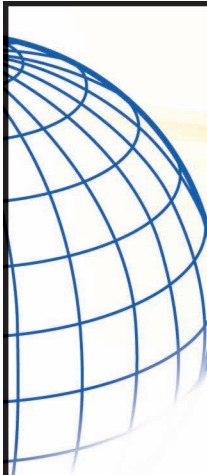
**Lunch or Dinner comes with Spring Roll & Soup**

**HOURS**  
M-F 11am-9pm  
Lunch 11am-4pm M-F  
Sat. 12:00 to 9 pm  
Sun. CLOSED  
No Dine-in after 8:30pm please, carry-out only.

*Our food is prepared using the freshest herbs, spices and ingredients for the delicious complex flavors unique to Thailand.*



**28841 Ryan Rd. • Warren**  
**586-751-1840 or 586-751-7623**  
*W side, just S of 12 Mile*



Central Michigan University's  
**Global Campus**  
in Metro Detroit & Online


Auburn Hills • Clinton Township • Dearborn  
Livonia • Southfield • Troy • Warren • Online

For over 40 years, the bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees from CMU's Global Campus in Metro Detroit have helped local students start new careers, get promotions, and change their lives. **Shouldn't you start today?**

- Adult-friendly formats let you earn your degree and still keep working
- Face-to-face classes and online options to help you manage your time
- No GMAT or GRE required
- 8-week terms so you can graduate in less time
- Excellent student services to help you every step of the way

**Master of Science in Administration degree**

Want to move to upper-level administration? You'll need a master's degree. With the MSA from CMU's Global Campus, in just 2 years, you can apply for jobs you couldn't even consider before. Choose from 9 concentrations, including General, Human Resources, and Health Services Administration.



Lorron James  
CMU Graduate

**Get it all at CMU's Global Campus in Metro Detroit.**  
**cmich.edu/Detroit • Toll-free 877-268-4636**

CMU is an AA/EQ institution (see cmich.edu/aaeo). cmich.edu/globalcampus CMUglobal@cmich.edu 36540 3/13

**CMU**  
CENTRAL MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY



31829 Mound Road  
Warren, MI 48092

Southwest Corner Mound & Chicago Rd. (13 1/2)

Mon - Sat 10 AM - 6 PM  
Sun - CLOSED  
Phone: 586-979-9400  
JustBakedWarren@Gmail.com

*Eat Cupcakes. Be Happy :)*



**GM EMPLOYEE DISCOUNT PROGRAM**

**10% off**, up to \$10.00, on ANY Purchase  
*Warren Location Only*  
Cannot Be Combined with Any Other Offer

- Gourmet Cupcakes
- Custom & Specialty Cakes
- Cookies/Snacks
- 50+ Cupcake Flavors!
- Parties/Weddings
- Meetings/Events
- Employee Recognition
- Gift Certificates

*Next Day Delivery to GM Tech Center, Warren and Surrounding Areas; Give us a Call!*