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25 LEADERS RESHAPING NEW YORK



DAVID SHAW
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Chief executive and chief scientist
D.E. Shaw & Co. and D.E.
Shaw
Research

David Shaw showed Wall Street the power of mathematics. By using complex algorithms on tiny stock market anomalies, he built one of the country's oldest and largest hedge funds, a giant with 1,500 employees in 12 offices in North America, Europe and Asia.

But Mr. Shaw's most

important contribution may lie in the future. The famously publicity-shy doctor of computer science has withdrawn from worldly affairs to try to find a cure for cancer.

Forty of the world's top scientists work for Mr. Shaw in his midtown office. Current projects include developing a supercomputer, Anton, to allow scientists to observe structural changes in proteins. Another project, Desmond, offers a computer code for pharmaceuticals that will be free for universities and nonprofits.

The look and feel of both D.E. Shaw

companies resemble academia more than Wall Street. Employees' shambolic attitude belies the gravity of their work. The companies are so committed to finding the best and brightest that they employ 100 people in human resources.

Quants are watching Mr. Shaw's work. "Finance is not a pure form of science—truth is not that important," says Ernest Chan, a quantitative trading consultant who worked at Morgan Stanley. "Computational biochemistry research can be more fascinating and complex." —JOYCE HANSON

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