

# Among the elite

## C. Valley grad named to Pittsburgh's leadership institute

By TOM LAVIS  
The Tribune-Democrat

David M. Mastovich has been in the right place at the right time in all aspects of his career.

He is the first to admit that his career track has been anything but planned, yet he has had one success after another.

Mastovich is director of public affairs at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh.

At age 37, he is considered to be a marketing and corporate communications expert. He also has been named to the city's premier leadership institute, Leadership Pittsburgh Inc. The organization accepts only the region's top professionals, seeking to cultivate and broaden leadership resources throughout the community.

"I didn't design my career path," he said in a telephone interview from his Bethel Park, Allegheny County, home. "There has been one common thread everywhere I have been and that is that I have been part of turn-around leadership teams bent on improving each situation."

From his first job involving Johnstown radio stations to later being named director of marketing and communications for UPMC Health Plan, Mastovich has generated three steps in turning things around: Strategic Planning, build a process and assemble a team.

"I found it advantageous to develop a vision, build new processes if necessary and find the right people to develop that vision," he said.

When Mastovich was only 21, he and his team took the former AM and FM radio stations of WJNL from a ranking of 13th and 14th to the top of the market place.

"We took the FM and made it KISS an adult contemporary station, which later became WMTZ, country sound," Mastovich said. "In our strategy planning, we knew that the twang of Hank Williams was being replaced with a much more contemporary country sound and we knew it would be big."

On the AM side, he developed WNTJ News Talk Johnstown, and introduced listeners to Rush Limbaugh, Larry King, a local talk show and a local sports talk program.

"I like to say we went from worst to first," Mastovich said. "When I left, I believe the stations were No. 1 and 3 in the market."

Mastovich is a 1983 graduate of Conemaugh Valley High School. He earned a bachelor's degree in marketing and management in 1987 and a master's degree in business administration in 1992 from Indiana University of Pennsylvania.



David M. Mastovich  
Duquesne's public affairs director

He is the son of Michael Sr. and Kathleen Mastovich of Franklin Borough. He and his wife, the former Darlene Page, are the parents of three sons: Alec, 7; Brevin, 5; and Carter, 3 months. His wife is the daughter of Lee and Karen Page of East Taylor Township.

Mastovich considers his election to the leadership institute as significant.

Established 20 years ago, the group has grown to involve 1,100 members seeking to cultivate and broaden leadership resources within the community

"The group is made up of mostly senior management people and we now have a good balance with many members in their 30s and 40s who have their eyes on the future," Mastovich said.

While considered a distinguished appointment, membership in the group has a practical side as well.

"We do a lot of strategic planning and spend 15 to 20 full days per year taking part in various sessions examining such avenues as regional vision, education, economic development and a combination of regional government and community outreach," he said.

Mastovich is working on a major project to standardize land development of industrial parks in an 11-county region surrounding Pittsburgh.

"If a company such as Microsoft is interested in establishing business in the region, it can be assured that all of the sites will meet their needs," Mastovich said. Everything from providing cutting-edge technology to expediting permitting, things should be the same at industrial parks in Butler County as they would be in Westmoreland County."

Mastovich said such development would have a spin-off effect to Cambria, Somerset and Bedford counties.

"Of our designated 11-county region, Indiana and Westmorland counties border the Johnstown area," Mastovich said. "If a large company comes to New Stanton or Latrobe in Westmorland, it is a reasonable commute for people in Johnstown to make."

Mastovich points to Baltimore or Charlotte, N.C., as good examples of municipalities working together for the benefit of their respective regions.

"We have to get away from parochial thinking when it comes to local governments," he said. "In many instances, companies moving to our region may have to deal with two municipalities to build one company and that is a drawback."

Mastovich is known for improving organizational efficiency and implementing cost-saving strategies across departments.

As director of marketing and communications for UPMC Health Plan, Mastovich developed and executed various targeted marketing plans, including programs that leveraged sports sponsorships with the Pittsburgh Steelers and Pittsburgh Penguins.

"For the Penguins, we developed a growth chart for UPMC using a life-sized cardboard cutout of Mario Lemieux on skates which stood 6 feet 7 inches," Mastovich said. "We used it as a giveaway and there are 400,000 of them in basements and family rooms all around Pittsburgh. They quickly became collectibles."

Jeremy Meyer, a principal partner with Co2 advertising in Carnegie, Allegheny County, has worked closely with Mastovich on several projects over the past eight years.

"Dave gains an overall vision of a business and how it can progress," Meyer said in a telephone interview from his office. "He does see the forest through the trees and studies all the different elements of business and fits them together. The way he defines marketing and implements programs is broader than most efforts and requires a much deeper thought process."

Mastovich served as vice president of marketing at Monongahela Valley Hospital from 1996-2000, where he built the hospital's marketing department from the ground up.

His strategic initiatives as director of marketing and planning for Armstrong Hospital in Kittanning resulted in a financial and operational turnaround from an annual loss of \$3.5 million to a \$350,000 profit in two years.

"There were a lot of flaws that needed attention there," Mastovich said. "The billing process was addressed from A to Z," he said.

### THEY STARTED HERE

#### David M. Mastovich

**What:** Director of public affairs at Duquesne University

**Where:** Pittsburgh

**Age:** 37

**Education:** a 1983 graduate of Conemaugh Valley High School. Earned a bachelor's degree in marketing and management in 1987 and a master's degree in business administration in 1992 from Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

**Hometown:** Franklin Borough

**Residence:** Bethel Park, Allegheny County.

**Family:** Son of Michael Sr. and Kathleen Mastovich of Franklin Borough. He and his wife, the former Darlene Page, are the parents of three sons: Alec, 7; Brevin, 5; and Carter, 3 months. Mr. Mastovich is the daughter of Lee and Karen Page of East Taylor Township.

"One staff physician's overhead was 69 percent, which resulted in a savings of \$80,000 in one year."

Mastovich also developed primary care centers featuring multi-specialty physician practices and recruited physicians to address unmet needs. He left the health care realm for Duquesne University for a variety of reasons, one of which was to spend more time with his family.

"The university promotes a balance of family and career," Mastovich said. "I didn't want to keep working 70 hours a week and the university doesn't want me working 70 hours a week."

Mastovich described Duquesne as a sleeping giant on the verge of becoming an acclaimed institution.

"We don't claim to be Harvard or Carnegie Mellon," Mastovich said. "What we do have is back-to-back record freshmen classes in the 125-year history of the university. These classes are also the smartest, with the highest SAT scores and ranked among the top 10 of their high school graduating classes."

Mastovich directs the university's marketing, advertising, public relations and corporate communications.

*"They Started Here" is a weekly series profiling people from Cambria, Somerset and Bedford Counties who have excelled at what they do. Suggestions for people to be featured can be sent to Renee Carthew, The Tribune-Democrat, 425 Locust St., P.O. Box 340, Johnstown, Pa. 1509-0340.*