

written by Tony Taglavore | January 25, 2025

## Davor Poljak's Goal to Help People



*Davor Poljak, managing director of Poljak Group Wealth Management at Steward Partners.*

### LOCAL WEALTH MANAGER INDUCTED INTO CENTENARY COLLEGE HALL OF FAME

You won't talk long with Davor Poljak before understanding what Centenary College of Louisiana means to him.

"It's a great institution. It has helped me and my family. It's changed our lives."

But Davor's feelings do not travel on a one-way street. Centenary College thinks highly of Davor.

So much so that recently, the school inducted Poljak and others into its Hall of Fame. (Davor and his brother, Denis, were previously inducted into Centenary's athletic hall of fame.) The 52-year-old co-founder, partner and managing director of Poljak Group Wealth Management at Steward Partners was recognized for his achievements and dedication to the Centenary community. Davor has been instrumental in establishing several scholarships at Centenary.

"It was a wonderful phone call that touched my heart," Davor said, hearing the plans for his Hall of Fame induction. "I know where (my brother and I) came from. We came with absolutely very little. To be honored in a way that so many people before me have and will be honored after me was an honor and a privilege. I felt very appreciative, honored and grateful."

Davor came to Shreveport in 1991 from his home country of Yugoslavia (now Bosnia and Herzegovina). His brother had come to Shreveport two years earlier. Both arrived on tennis scholarships.

"I came with one bag and two tennis rackets," Davor said.

The Poljaks' plan was not to stay here longer than needed.

"We grew up in a prominent family," Davor said. "Our dad was vice-chairman of one of the largest steel-producing conglomerates in Europe, which at that time employed over 65,000 people. My brother and I were going to come here, learn English, get an education, and go back and do what we were always thinking about doing. Then, the war came. It was very similar to when Russia attacked Ukraine. Things happened that people didn't dream about happening. Everything was turned upside down."

In fact, during much of the war, Davor didn't know if his parents were alive.

"There were days when my brother and I hugged each other and there were tears." We said, "Hey, let's make our mom and dad proud. Let's do the best work we can and help other people." (The elder Poljaks survived the war and eventually came to live in the States with their sons. Mrs. Poljak died five years ago. Mr. Poljak is 85 years old.)

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After graduating from Centenary with a bachelor's degree in business administration, Davor earned his MBA from LSU. He earned the designation of Certified Portfolio Manager from Columbia University.

"Our parents were instrumental in our lives. Since we were very, very little, they were always telling my brother and me to be a good human being. Be a good person. Respect everybody. Work hard. Try to do the best you can. If you make a mistake, apologize. We tried to get the best education and the most education we possibly could. Then, they would tell us, in whatever you do, try to be the best. Be better than everybody else. And help people."

The "help people" aspect of Poljak's life comes with managing more than \$730 million in assets of others.

"When we go to work, I don't think of it as work," Davor said. "It's a blessing, and it's a pleasure. I can't wait to go to work because we are helping families, and we know we are doing to make a difference in their lives — helping kids, grandkids and family members. That's a blessing."

Davor became a United States citizen in the early 2000s, another step toward establishing roots in America, particularly in Shreveport-Bossier.

"We are huge patriots. We are so thankful and appreciative of the rule of law. People can disagree on certain things, but they will find a solution. There is no perfect place. But to Denis and me, this is the best country on the planet. We wanted our kids to grow up where we think is the best place on the planet. That's why we decided to stay here."

And "here" has been the beneficiary of Davor's decision.

"It's our time to give back to the community. This is what we're doing. Not only with Centenary, but with other institutions and organizations. Giving back to the community, as they were so welcoming and open and wonderful to us. I will never forget that, nor will my brother or my family."