

EMERGING LEADER

Grateful father gives back after overhauling career

By Marcela García
Special to the Journal

Andrés Treviño went through a father's worst nightmare. After learning his firstborn son had a rare and fatal genetic disease that weakens the body's immune system making it vulnerable to infection, the Mexican businessman and his wife embarked on a medical journey that brought them to Boston Children's Hospital in 2000 to find first a diagnosis, then a cure.

Their story has a happy ending. But not before the family spent nearly 1,000 days in seven different hospitals. After the ordeal, Treviño walked away from a \$10 million family business in Mexico's telecom industry and took a job raising money for the philanthropic arm of the hospital, Children's Hospital Trust. Being the only Hispanic in the organization, he was quickly tapped to lead Children's efforts to outreach to the Latino community in Boston through a campaign named "Milagros para Niños," or miracles for kids.

"I started volunteering at Children's after my son was officially cured; I ran the marathon in 2007, shared my family's success story in many of the hospital's events, etc.," Treviño said in a recent interview. "When I joined the trust three years ago, I searched the database to see if I could identify Hispanic donors and the only person I could find was my mother, and my wife's grandmother. We are not used to charitable giving."

But Treviño was undeterred. In the course of three years, "Milagros para Niños" has raised nearly \$2 million through individual and corporate giving and an annual gala.

"The important thing about this initiative is that it's a collective effort of a local board of Hispanic professionals and community leaders. This committee decides where the money goes inside Children's," said Treviño, adding that between 25 and 30 percent of the total patients at the hospital are Latino. "We have helped areas in the hospital that have high percentage of Hispanic patients, like the Martha Eliot Health Center in Jamaica Plain, where 85 percent of patients is Spanish-speaking."



ANDRÉS TREVIÑO
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What are your top three goals for the year?

The main goal this year is to raise half a million dollars, not counting individual gifts. Another goal is to expand the philanthropic programs under the umbrella of "Milagros para Niños," to have more than one program. Philanthropy is not only financial contributions but also, for example, blood donations. People who give blood are doing a philanthropic contribution (each unit of blood platelets costs \$500, according to Treviño). Another way to give is to participate in research protocols. Most researchers say that a lot of Americans are getting involved but Hispanics are not used to participating in medical research. It's important to get involved because of our genetic structure.

What are your guiding principles for good management?

Since my background is in family-owned business, I learned a lot of lessons from my grandfather and father. One of them is that I'm not afraid to take risks.

What is the toughest business decision you've made?

I met my wife at work. We met in Monterrey, Mexico. She was the manager of our office there. I asked her to resign and eventually we got married. That was actually the best business decision I made. In all seriousness, it was very tough to leave everything behind, the family business, and then to move here as a

last resort to save our son. That's the toughest thing I have done in my 41 years so far, this adventure to save my son's life.

Do you have a motto you follow in business or in life?

I always try to remember the words of the physicians who saved my son's life. I have many phrases that helped me back then that I continue to believe in. Some of the phrases, "Don't shoot from the hip," or "Absence of proof is not proof of absence." I'm also a very positive person.

Who were or are your mentors?

My biggest mentor is my son. His strength is amazing. Imagine being born with a weakened system and having all types of infection: in his blood, pneumonia, meningitis (which is an infection in the central nervous system), bone infection in his finger, skin, eyes, and almost in every part of his body. They were life-threatening infections and almost all involved pain, but he was always smiling.

For more with Andrés Treviño
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LESSONS LEARNED

How optimistic are you about the economy for the second half of 2012?



Laurie Klotzbach Curtis
1620 Associates

I believe that the Massachusetts economy will continue a slow but steady rate of growth throughout the rest of 2012. We are moving in a positive direction as both small and large businesses begin to hire again and our unemployment rate continues to decrease.



Mark Forrester
Marcus Myles Media

Very. We have a new Boston market for our 'about the house' radio show, and in general, business inquiries are up. People seem to understand the need to promote themselves in good economic times as well as slower times.



Heidi Solomon, POSH/Professional Organizing Services by Heidi

In these challenging times with many seeking to streamline their lives and increase output, the Professional Organizing industry continues to grow. When clutter and disorder are removed, clarity and insight explode. I am very optimistic about 2012.