



M
DEARBORN

Legacy

A Publication for Alumni and Friends of the University of Michigan Dearborn
Winter 2006 Volume VIII Number 2

*Anthony Viscogliosi:
'I wake up full of
energy to make the
world a better place'*


THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN-DEARBORN

Tony Viscogliosi

won't let success go to his head; he'd rather feel it in his bones

By Stephen Rosoff

Photographs by Maria Melin

A photograph of Tony Viscogliosi, a man in a dark pinstriped suit and pink tie, sitting at a large wooden desk in his office. He is smiling slightly at the camera. The desk is cluttered with various items, including a computer monitor displaying a website, a telephone, a small American flag, and a blue flag with a gold fringe. In the background, a window shows a view of a city building, and a row of international flags is visible on a shelf. A framed picture hangs on the wall behind him.

Viscogliosi, a Wall Street analyst turned merchant banker, has spent his career researching, developing, and building companies that specialize in innovative products for the musculoskeletal industry. In the process, he's improved the lives of patients with severe trauma and pain from bad bone breaks or disease while enriching his personal fortunes as well as those of colleagues, family, and friends.

After 13 years as an analyst on the Street, Viscogliosi founded a family of businesses with his younger brothers, John and Marc. In 1999, he established Viscogliosi Brothers, LLC, the first firm ever to invest exclusively in musculoskeletal healthcare. The three brothers oversee a worldwide enterprise that includes investment banking, asset management, private equity development, orthopedic services and real estate holdings. "We focus only on one field and diversify by asset class," says Viscogliosi, explaining that he and his brothers cover all aspects of the industry and build businesses from the ground up.

Not content simply to own companies, Viscogliosi actively seeks out the innovators in the field to create, incubate, and deliver new products to market. These include: Raymedica, Inc., the leader globally in spine disc nucleus replacement; Paradine Spine, LLC, a leading posterior non-fusion spine company; and Small Bone Innovations, LLC. The latter develops and markets trauma fixation and joint replacement implants for patients with injuries in the small bones of the body.

Viscogliosi is a specialist's specialist. He has published 6,000 pages of musculoskeletal investment research, personally invested or been involved in financing more than 150 companies in the field, and has observed more than 300 cutting-edge operations at hospitals around the world. Few CEOs can claim to have done such extensive homework. But Viscogliosi

appreciates the business he's in on a different level, one born of personal pain and suffering.

"At 13, I was hit by a car and nearly killed while riding my bike on the way to the golf course where I worked as a caddy," says Viscogliosi, whose auto-bike collision left him in a recovery process for two years. The painful memories of those days are still with him. The accident left him with one leg shorter than the other. It also left him with plenty of time to contemplate what he might do with his life.

At 18, Tony built a deejay business called TVL Sound Co., which provided entertainment for parties, weddings, and social functions. The business did well enough to finance his college education. Then he ran it as a second business while he built his career in finance.

In 1984, while a UM-Dearborn senior in Professor Richard Roehl's U.S. economic history class, he had a revelation. After he read *The Age of the Moguls*, by Stewart Holdbrook, a 1953 book about U.S. economic leaders, Viscogliosi's goals fell into place. The book speaks of the five ways to accumulate wealth: inherit it, marry into it, invent something that creates a new era, invest in real estate, or invest in the stock market. "I wasn't going to inherit it and I wasn't good looking enough to marry into it," says Viscogliosi. He couldn't find a connection between real estate and orthopedics so that left the stock market and innovation. Not an inventor himself, he decided to search out those who

were. "That's how I combined two of the five [ways] to create hundreds of millions," he says.

"It took me years to understand why I survived," says Viscogliosi, who immediately after graduating from UM-Dearborn went to work for Michigan National Corporation where he was the youngest portfolio manager by two decades. He quickly realized that, "If I was going to be smart in the stock market, I had to be an analyst." That meant eventually moving to New York City. Ten days before the market crash of 1987, Viscogliosi went to work as an analyst, first at a Detroit area-based investment bank, Roney & Co., Inc., and then onto New York-based investment banks. He followed the healthcare industry in the belief that it would grow for the next 50 years. It's a prediction that so far has proven accurate, especially in musculoskeletal healthcare. Viscogliosi cites some impressive statistics: "One hundred percent of Americans will suffer some kind of orthopedic injury in their lifetimes. More than \$254 billion is spent on musculoskeletal conditions, one percent of the Gross Domestic Product. Back pain is the number one reason for doctor's visits in this country, and chronic back pain is the number one medical expense." Following his earliest successes on Wall Street, Viscogliosi figured out what he was meant to do. "I understood what the rest of my life would be about," he says.

If faith, optimism, and family were the cornerstones that sustained him as a teenager in recovery, those same tenets inspire and fuel him today.

"Growing up we always learned, from our parents, to do good first, so that you can do well later," says Viscogliosi. By any yardstick, he has done very well indeed.

"The thing I'm most happy about in my life so far is the fact that we've supported the opportunity for the livelihood of nearly 500 employees while more than 85,000 patients have been implanted with products we're responsible for developing," says Viscogliosi. He also points out that "We've been able to share our success with others financially. In our last transaction, we made nearly 40 millionaires." In 2003, Viscogliosi sold one of his companies, Spine Solutions, to the Swiss firm Synthes for \$350 million. That same year, his firm invested in and directed the efforts of Spine Next, S.A. in Bordeaux, France. Eleven months later, he sold that company to Abbott Laboratories for \$80 million.

Not all of Viscogliosi's business interests, however, are close to the bone. He owns an antiques business, which acquires important antique European furniture, specifically 13th to 19th century religious wood sculptures concentrating on figures of French and German saints.

He has a financial interest in men's fashion products, hair care, facial care, and a salon called John Allan's located inside the old Roosevelt Hotel near Grand Central Station. There you can get a hot towel, shave, shoeshine, haircut, a cigar and a game of pool. "It's like a men's club with a splash of

nostalgia," says Viscogliosi.

Viscogliosi's father emigrated from Italy to Dearborn when he was 19 and learned to speak English at the Berlitz language school. He learned auto body repair at trade school and fixed cars for a living before starting his own construction company. After he sold in his interest in that business, he and his wife bought a pub on Michigan Avenue in Wayne, renaming it "Ann's Pub"—"a shot, beer and burger joint" says Viscogliosi—that his parents ran for 20 years before retiring. Tony helped his parents run the place when he could. "I grew up at the bar," he recalls. "I'd go in at 6 a.m., clean for an hour, in time for the first shift to come in at 7 a.m., then come back after class at the end of happy hour to tend bar." The old neighborhood taught him some lasting lessons. "At the pub, I learned how to deal with all people; it was an invaluable aspect of my growing up."

Viscogliosi says that he and his brothers have gone from one family business to another. Both John and Marc have worked with him since 1992; Marc was only 15 at the time and he would become the youngest analyst ever quoted in *Barron's*. Today, John focuses on strategic operations, while Marc concentrates on deal structuring. The younger brothers are also the CEOs of two companies owned by the parent company, Viscogliosi Bros., LLC. Tony refers to the family venture as an "odyssey" where work is play even if the days are long and 80-hour work weeks are the norm. His philosophy remains simple. "We always

try to stay grounded, remember our roots, and leap forward."

Several of Viscogliosi's companies are based in France and Germany, which means that he travels overseas 50 percent to 70 percent of the time. He speaks fluent Italian, having grown up with it at home, and he dabbles in what he calls "taxicab" French. One prominent reason why several of his businesses were developed in France is that the French tax code rewards inventors for their innovation by taxing their royalties at a much lower rate. "The U.S. should learn a lesson from that," he says.

Away from the bulls and the bears, Viscogliosi maintains a string of polo ponies in South Hampton. "I have a lot of fun playing polo," he says, although at the moment he's recovering from injuries sustained from a "T-bone" collision. "An opponent ran into me at a 90-degree angle, both horses fell, and the riders fared worse." Viscogliosi was knocked out, suffered torn finger ligaments, three fractured ribs, a cracked pelvic bone, and a bruised hip. "Fortunately, I knew a good orthopedic doctor," he quips. Luckily, he didn't require any of the products his companies manufacture. His brothers kidded him for not contributing to the monthly financials.

Viscogliosi also serves in the U.S. Navy Reserve as a lieutenant commander. He has been on active duty in Kuwait, Bahrain, Korea and Jordan, and he served in Bosnia in 1995. He continues to train as a reservist as well. "I believe in service to others," says Viscogliosi. Service in the mili-

tary is just one way of giving back.

He and his brothers have donated \$250,000 to the Dearborn Public Schools. He has also pledged \$100,000 to his alma mater and says, "There's more on the way." He's the sponsor of the Viscogliosi Economic Leadership Seminar at UM-Dearborn, which will bring nationally prominent scholars and industry leaders together in a forum with southeastern Michigan business leaders in order to stimulate innovative problem-solving in the area of manufacturing. His companies have also employed 14 interns, several of whom are from UM-Dearborn, as well as students from Germany and France.

He is also leading the capital campaign for the 100th anniversary of the Hospital for Joint Diseases where he and his brothers have endowed a spine care center as well as a small bone and joint institute. They also founded the World Spine Society, the Spine Arthroplasty Society and other non-profit organizations to promote research in orthopedics. New York University and the Hospital for Joint Diseases are bestowing upon him their Industry Leader Award this year for his work in founding and creating so many companies in the field.

"From a personal point of view, I wake up full of energy to make the world a better place," says Viscogliosi, who considers himself a spiritual and religious person as well as an optimist. "I believe that opportunity is on every corner, all we have to do is recognize it." ♦



Legacy

WINTER 2006

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN-DEARBORN

Daniel Little, Ph.D.
Chancellor

Robert L. Simpson, Ph.D.
Provost & Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

Robert G. Behrens, M.A.
Vice Chancellor for Business Affairs

Stanley Henderson, M.A.
Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management
and Student Life

Edward Bagale, M.B.A.
Vice Chancellor for Government Relations

Thomas Baird, M.Ed
Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement

Academic Deans

Kathryn Anderson-Levitt, Ph.D.,
College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters

Paul Zions, Ph.D.
School of Education

Subrata Sengupta, Ph.D.
College of Engineering and Computer Science

Bruce Bublitz, Ph.D.
School of Management

Regents of the University

David A. Brandon, Laurence B. Deitch, Olivia P. Maynard, Rebecca McGowan, Andrea Fischer Newman, Andrew C. Richner, S. Martin Taylor, Katherine E. White, Mary Sue Coleman, ex officio

Citizens Advisory Committee

Ismael Ahmed, Stephen T. Economy, Linda P. Kughn, Patricia Mooradian, Timothy J. O'Brien, Jon Pepper, Michael C. Porter, Maria Leonhauser, Shirley R. Stancato

Legacy

Editor: Terry Gallagher

Public Relations Representative:
Jennifer Sroka

Senior Art Director: Janis Ward Ney

Office of University Relations

4901 Evergreen Road
Dearborn, MI 48128-1491
(313)593-5555

The University of Michigan, as an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer, complies with all applicable federal and state laws regarding nondiscrimination and affirmative action, including Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The University of Michigan is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination and equal opportunity for all persons regardless of race, sex*, color, religion, creed, national origin or ancestry, age, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, or Vietnam-era veteran status in employment, educational programs and activities, and admissions. Inquiries or complaints may be addressed to the Senior Director for Institutional Equity and Title IX/Section 504 Coordinator, Office for Institutional Equity, 2072 Administrative Services Building, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109-1432, 734-763-0235, TTY 734-647-1388. For other University of Michigan information call 734-764-1817.

*Includes discrimination based on gender identity and gender expression.

INSIDE THIS EDITION

FEATURES

- 14 **Alumnus Anthony Viscogliosi** invests in medical innovation. "Growing up we always learned, from our parents, to do good first," he says, in this article by Stephen Rosoff. Photographs by Maria Melin.
- 18 What does **Maya Hammoud, M.D.**, think about the University of Michigan- Dearborn? "I like to give back to a place that I felt did a lot for me," she says. Article by Jennifer Sroka (CASL '96) and photographs by Tom Laundroche.
- 22 For **Prof. Paul Zitzewitz**, the question of how to teach physics has become as important as physics itself. This long-time faculty member and lead author on one of the top secondary-school textbooks is profiled here by John Gallagher, with photographs by Tom Laundroche.

DEPARTMENTS

- 5 **Chancellor's Message**
- 6 **Alumni Chair's Message**
- 7 **Campus News**
- 26 **Alumni Books**
- 28 **Class Notes**
- 30 **From the Archives: 'Classy Photos'**

Cover photo: **Anthony Viscogliosi** outside his office in Manhattan

Back Cover: Exhibit of Holocaust-inspired art at Berkowitz Gallery

