

A Chat with David Leatherwood

CEO and Managing Member
of Norwich Partners, LLC

| By Mark Dantos

When it comes to real estate development and charitable undertakings, David Leatherwood has immersed himself totally in the region. Among various projects here and nationally, David and his partners developed the Courtyard by Marriott at Centerra Park in Lebanon. Now they are building Altaria Business Park on Route 120.

Meanwhile, David, his family, and his partners incorporate philanthropy into their overall agenda. In 2003, David and another local developer and philanthropist, Jenny Williams, established the Children's Fund of the Upper Valley. The idea was to channel a percentage of revenues primarily to children's charities like CHaD (Children's Hospital at Dartmouth). Thus far, over one million dollars from the fund has supported health care, child care, the arts, and educational initiatives in Hanover and the surrounding areas.

What motivates you philanthropically?

I grew up in a very modest setting. I know what it's like

to struggle. Having almost lost our son at birth (he's perfectly healthy now) was also a dramatic reminder of how fortunate we are.

What is the Altaria project and how will it benefit the Upper Valley?

Altaria is a very cool, smart-growth, mixed-use project that will finally bring office, hotel, residential, and retail space together in one environment. People will live, work, and play in the same location. Altaria is a 409-acre, environmentally sensitive development with well over half of the land set aside for conservation. I believe Altaria will change the way we view development in the Upper Valley.

How will the urban landscape of the Upper Valley change over the next 20 years?

Hopefully smart-growth projects like Altaria will lead to more "live, work, and play in the same location" lifestyles. Anything that promotes a reduction in commuting is a good thing.



MOUNTAIN GRAPHICS

What kind of high school student were you?

I'm not answering—my kids might read this!

Can the overall market for lodging in the Upper Valley support an imminent influx of supply?

The Upper Valley is almost recession proof. Hotels in Centerra or Altaria Business Parks or downtown Hanover will always thrive.

Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center and Dartmouth College provide tremendous stability.

How do you identify and approach prospective real estate projects?

It's been 20 years of saying "no" to 99 percent of the deals I see. I've found that being patient almost always pays off. "Waiters make the best tips!" ←