

MEET OUR MENTORS



DAVE CALZI

*Managing Partner at Ernst & Young LLP
Endeavor Louisville Board Member*



*Has served at EY for 15 years
Resides in Louisville with wife and 2 daughters*

MOST IMPORTANT CHARACTERISTIC OF AN ENTREPRENEUR

The ability to take risks. Albeit, calculated risk— not always seeing exactly what is around the corner—but being deliberate enough to try and anticipate to the best of your ability. Risk is not bad. We all take risks each and every day. The issue is what you do to mitigate the bad ones and leverage the good ones into success.

GREATEST BUSINESS CHALLENGE

The collapse of Arthur Andersen in 2002. I started my career there in 1983 and was admitted to the Andersen Global Partnership shortly before the fall of Enron in the autumn of 2001. The iconic, global brand was gone within a year. Our managing partner at the time, Pat Cass, rallied the partner group and set the stage to lead and leverage the great brand that we had in Kentucky and throughout the Ohio Valley. Despite the demise of the firm globally, we were able to join forces with EY, and I have been there ever since. I learned that things can happen in business that is no fault of your own; it is what it is. What's important is what you do when you are kicked in the gut. The importance of who you associate with, the relationships and brand you build, and having a transferable skill cannot be overestimated. These were the things that, along with persistence, helped us to overcome such challenges.

WHAT EXCITES YOU ABOUT ENDEAVOR LOUISVILLE?

I have worked with an assortment of companies and organizations in Kentucky and the surrounding Ohio Valley for over three decades. One consistency that I have noticed is the entrepreneurial spirit that we all enjoy. Great ideas and innovation are not limited to our coasts - we have a long history of such in our region. Too often the attention and dollars "fly over" our region. By combining this spirit, along with good old-fashioned hard work and grit, those days will be over. The future is bright and Endeavor in our region will be an important catalyst to that change.

WHAT IS THE BEST ADVICE YOU'VE EVER RECEIVED?

My dad to this day says that the key to success in life and work is persistence and integrity. Of course, it's important to have skill, especially one that is transferrable. But persistence, integrity and hard work will always win the day.

FUN FACT THAT CAN'T BE FOUND ON GOOGLE

I ran track and cross country in high school and college. I was on a 4x800 meter relay in high school, and in 1977, our relay team set the record for Section 6 in New York state—8:05. It has yet to be eclipsed!