

# Radio producer turned businessman now an exec at Klein Hall



Neil Sant, second from left, with daughter Julia, from left, wife Liz and son Evan.

*COURTESY OF SANT FAMILY*

By **Anna Marie Kukec** – December 26, 2016



Neil Sant of Hinsdale recently started as chief operating officer of [Klein Hall CPAs](#) in Aurora. While he will be overseeing the firm's operations, he's not a certified public accountant.

Yet, he undoubtedly will be relying on his organizational experience from his earlier work at various companies, including his days as a radio producer for child-actor-turned-DJ Danny Bonaduce.

"Being a part of that was just the best," Sant said. "I'm still friends with many of the producers and that's a bond that lasts," said Sant, 50.

He added that his interest in business started at a young age, as evidence by writing his first business plan -- in crayon -- when he was 10.

"I wanted a car and wanted to earn enough money to get one," he said.

He cut lawns and other jobs. By the time he was 15, he paid cash for a 1964 Chevrolet Chevelle.

"I still have it today. It's part of the great American ownership. It's the first real goal I achieved," he said.

After he earned a bachelor's degree in communications at Columbia College, he worked at WFPS-FM in Freeport and then at age 25 went to Chicago's WLUP-FM, known as The Loop.

He began as a producer for Danny Bonaduce, who became famous as the mischievous young son on "The Partridge Family" and then later transitioned into radio.

"It was a dream job, and he was one of the most creative forces in the country," Sant said.

He also worked among other greats, including Steve Dahl and Garry Meier. Sant did everything he could, from editing to running for coffee.

When he first starting producing for Bonaduce, he said they "immediately connected."

Sant always seemed to know what Bonaduce needed to do on the air and made sure he had whatever material he needed.

Sant provided details or comedy bits to help him on air. But then there was a serious situation that occurred when a caller from Canada threatened to kill himself.

"We talked to him on and off the air and got the police. He was serious about doing it and the whole thing made the international press," Sant said.

Sant stayed at The Loop from 1992 to 1995 and that's when Bonaduce's career advanced.

Bonaduce did a talk show and Sant followed him to Hollywood. There were 22 new TV talk shows on at the time.

Danny's show, which aired on WMAQ-TV in Chicago at the time, lasted about six months.

Since then, Sant handled Bonaduce's business matters. But when Bonaduce got other DJ gigs in Detroit and New York, Sant decided to stay behind.

"I didn't see a future moving from place to place," Sant said. "I had just gotten married and decided we would move on."

Sant worked for other companies as a consultant while raising two children. But he missed being a part of a larger company and "having an impact," he said.

That's when he decided to take a job with Klein Hall in November.

"Business and entrepreneurship is in my DNA," he said.