

## CENTER STAFF NEWS



James E. Kostrava

## New VP for Development

Mr. James E. Kostrava, CAE, has been named vice president for development of the Mackinac Center for Public Policy. He is a former vice president of marketing for the Construction Association of Michigan and served most recently as executive director of the President's Club for the Oakland University Foundation in Rochester, Michigan.

He will lead the Mackinac Center's growing development efforts by maintaining relationships

with supporters of the Center, and by establishing ties with new investors who share the Center's commitment to limited government, improved education, and respect for individual rights and private property.

Mr. Kostrava is a Michigan native and a graduate of Michigan State University. He and his wife, Patricia, have two children, James Patrick (12) and Kelly Louise (9). ■

## Why I Joined the Mackinac Center

by James E. Kostrava

I recently found myself trying to convince my wife that we should sell our home in Troy and move to Midland so I could begin a new career with the Mackinac Center for Public Policy. Naturally, Patti had a few questions for me. "What is a think tank?" "What is the purpose of this Mackinac Center?" "Now, tell me again why you want to make your career there?"

How did I convince my wife that I should dedicate myself to the mission of the Mackinac Center? I explained to her that the purpose of the Mackinac Center is to improve the quality of life for all Michigan citizens by advancing the principles of a free market economy, limited government, and respect for private property and individual rights. Throughout my professional life, my utmost concerns have been these. I have surrounded myself with friends, colleagues, and business associates with whom these principles are common ground. The opportunity to join the

Mackinac Center and devote my professional energies to advancing these ideals appealed to my core values and beliefs.

Most of my career up to this point was spent in the construction industry, which is home to a large number of rugged individualists—the kind of people who build America and made it great. Their free spirits and strong work ethic epitomize those people who *make* things happen, not merely *watch* things happen.

That sort of inherent commitment and dependability is what attracted me to the Mackinac Center—dedication to sound and worthy principles, a blueprint for changing Michigan, and the wherewithal to put those principles into practice. When I learned of the enormous, positive influence the Mackinac Center has already had on shifting public opinion away from dependence on the welfare state and government regulation and toward greater freedom, individual responsibility, and

security for Michigan citizens, I knew I wanted to be part of it. What especially impressed me was the way the Center strategically leverages its resources—all from private, voluntary contributions—to accomplish so much in so little time. Our full-time professional staff of just ten people plus our 50 scholars and advisors are unquestionably more productive and effective than many much larger organizations with much larger budgets.

I am eager to personally share with you my excitement and enthusiasm for the Mackinac Center and its mission. I feel that I already have much in common with many of you because your commitment to the Center is so evident. I also believe that the Mackinac Center for Public Policy is just at the beginning of its growth in both importance and influence in Michigan. Its potential is incredible, and is only just beginning to be realized. In the words of Ronald Reagan, "You ain't seen nothin' yet." ■