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Degrees of success

Upland man started young to master judo skills ... and life skills

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Upland resident Gary Goltz, who is not only a 7th Degree Black Belt and head Sensei of Goltz Judo in Claremont but also President of the US Judo Association and the head of Goltz Healthcare Sales Strategies, a consulting firm in Upland, has come a long way to achieve his multi-level success.

Goltz, a Pittsburgh native, credits his father, advertising executive Julius Goltz, who gave him a 1966 four-door Chevy Impala when he turned 16.

"He gives it to me with a three-page list," said Goltz, 58. "The list has oil changes, tire rotation, tune-ups, antifreeze, winterizing, insurance ..."

That wasn't all. "Within two weeks of having that car," Goltz remembers with a laugh, "I got a major headache when the mechanic guy hands me an enormous \$80 invoice for doing something with the alternator. That's like three weeks' pay. But I'm learning about the responsibility of having a car."

Goltz has never forgotten his father's "gift."

"To this day that list he gave me, of things that you have to meticulously knock off, one by one, is things I do. He enshrined that in me, that responsibility."

His father also decided against giving his son a cheap camera, and instead started him on a payment plan to purchase a more expensive and rewarding camera.

"After I got that camera I started taking a lot of pictures at judo. Some of my greatest early pictures are on that camera. I've been a photo buff as long as I've been into judo. My whole life is documented," Goltz said.

Goltz also lists as a key influence Kyu Ha Kim, his first judo Sensei when he started taking lessons in Pittsburgh at the age of 10.

His father indirectly had a hand in that, too. "Even when I started judo he wouldn't just buy me a uniform," Goltz said. In fact, Goltz showed such promise that his teacher ended up giving him a uniform as a reward. "Mr. Kim still tells that story," Goltz said. "He didn't want me to quit judo." At 21, Goltz was awarded his 1st Degree Black Belt.

Today Goltz holds a 7th Degree Black and runs Goltz Judo in Claremont which is among the largest clubs in the US Judo Association, a non for profit organization that elected Goltz its President in 2010.

In addition to judo, Goltz studied majored in rhetoric at the University of Pittsburgh, where he graduated cum laude in 1976. That same year, he became manager of Johnson Rents, in Pittsburgh, and worked his way up to vice president after the company relocated him to Chicago in 1979. Johnson Rents merged with Foster Medical Corporation in 1982 and in 1985 the company relocated Goltz with his family again this time to Upland.

In 1987 he became the youngest person ever accepted to Pepperdine University's prestigious Presidential and Key Executive M.B.A. Program, from which he graduated with honors in 1988. That same year he also established Goltz Judo which is part of Claremont Human Services. Goltz later formed Comprehensive Pharmacy Home I.V. Services, which he and his partners sold in 1994. He then started his health care sales consulting firm.

Goltz, a fan of the "Highway Patrol" TV series starring actor Broderick Crawford that ran from 1955 to 1959, customized a 1955 Buick Century to look like the vehicle in the show.

He has entered it in many parades and rallies. "I'm now getting it upgraded," said Goltz, who plans to show it at Claremont's Cruise Night, which takes place monthly during summer.