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# It's all about the music for Davis

By [Jeremy Sellw](#), VALLEY INDEPENDENT  
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With a passion for music spanning his entire life, Jason Davis, of Utica, N.Y., got his start thanks to perseverance and ramen noodles.

Ramen noodles.

Five weeks after marrying his wife Emily, the pair picked up and moved to the Dallas-Fort Worth area after she got a position at Texas Christian University.

Davis, a 1991 graduate of Belle Vernon Area High School, secured a job with a publishing company owned by BMG, where he worked for nearly 10 years. The company later became part of NBC Universal.

"I was just sitting there enjoying my ramen noodles when one of the higher ups came in for coffee," Davis said. "We both had composition degrees and we just started talking about that."

The discussion ended with that "higher up" asking for a sample of Davis' music.

"He said he'd really like to hear some of my music," Davis said. "The music industry truly is all about who you know."

"If it wasn't for me eating my ramen noodles, I wouldn't know anyone."

Plenty of people now know Davis, who has composed and written music for a number of shows and networks and he's been able to form strong bonds with music companies.

To his credit, Davis has composed and written music for, "Saturday Night Live" and "E! True Hollywood Story."

"For the True Hollywood Story I did the music for the one on Sylvester Stallone and Ozzy Osbourne," Davis said. "I've also done a lot for WWE in terms of wrestlers' introductions."

Also to his credit are music on the former Fox hit series "24" and music for the NFL Network, including "Total Access," a daily show.

"I can honestly say that I never even watched '24,'" Davis said. "It's really weird because it was such a big hit."

Davis, who grew up in Washington Township, found music when he began taking piano lessons when he was six years old.

His mother, Carolyn Davis, sang and also played piano. She now lives in the Utica area. His father Greg, resides in Pittsburgh.

"I watched my mother when I was younger and that's how I really got into it," Davis said. "I've been playing guitar since I was 13."

Davis said he was in and out of the band in school. He also played in a number of bands performing shows in the region.

"I don't know why, but one of the memories I have of the Mon Valley is Jake's Pizza being at the bottom of the hill from the high school," Davis said of the popular pizza joint. "I never really frequented it or went in there, but I remember it being there."

A 1995 graduate of Grove City College, Davis achieved his master's degree two years later from Duquesne University.

"One of the things I remember was going to school all day, and also teaching guitar lessons on the side," Davis said laughing. "I'd say that for five days a week I was going to school, giving 40 or 50 all day and night. I was playing shows in different bands, too. I'd come home, sleep for two hours and do it all over."

"My body was young enough to handle that schedule back then."

According to Davis there isn't a day that goes by when he's not playing his guitar or writing music.

"It's really the only thing that interests me," Davis said of music. "It was the only thing that really interested me when I was growing up - except for that short time that I wanted to be an astronaut."

After years in Texas, the couple returned to upstate New York, where Emily Davis teaches elementary music and middle school choir.

Jason Davis is the head of the music department at Herkimer County Community College.

"It's a new program, we've only been around for two to three years," he said. "It really started small and we've completely exploded."

"We really started at the ground up."

Davis, who said he knew teaching in public school wasn't for him, prefers the open schedule of teaching in college.

"It's a lot easier because I can decide when I want my classes to be," Davis said of his scheduling. "It allows me to spend time doing the things I love to do."

It also allows the father of two to spend time with his kids. His son Josh is 10, and daughter Allison is six.

With two children currently in school, Davis is disturbed by the trend he's been seeing in public education.

"The money issue is everywhere," Davis said of budget cuts. "Schools all over the country are cutting out the arts."

"It's a shame that some schools are cutting their music programs yet they're still building those football stadiums."

Even the college where he teaches has seen a million-dollar cut in funding.

"I understand that we need to catch up in our math and sciences," Davis said referring to international test scoring. "There has to be another way though."

"You're not going to see France and Germany cut their arts programs. Their economies are worse than ours."

"I hate thinking that some students won't be able to have the education in music that I did. We want to turn out well-rounded human beings but part of that is being schooled in the arts. It's what led me to my career."

Education, perseverance and a bowl of ramen noodles.

Anyone interested in downloading or purchasing music by Davis can visit [www.jasondavismusic.com](http://www.jasondavismusic.com).

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