

July 16, 2007

For these city dads and their offspring working 9 to 5 is a family affair.

In father's footsteps

By WENDY STRAKER

PRODIGAL SON

For veteran wedding singer Hank Lane, leader of Hank Lane Orchestra, it was a different story. He thought he'd lost his son to the world of medicine.

"Harris wanted to become a doctor," he says.

Harris had literally grown up by the side of the stage, being carted to weddings every weekend so his parents wouldn't have to leave him with a sitter. Later, he spent summers performing at weddings and bar mitzvahs. But during the school year, he returned to study medicine.

"What could I do? I couldn't try and talk him out of it," says Hank.

He didn't have to. During Harris' second MCAT class, it hit him just how much he'd miss if he left the family business.

"I was looking forward to the weekends when I would play the parties," he says. "That day in class, that was my epiphany. I was like, 'Wait a second, this isn't what I am supposed to be doing.'"

Harris Lane, who has moved into the management side at Hank Lane Music, has a similar mentality when it comes to the family business.

"I never want my father to worry that something isn't being taken care of," he says. "He built this business from nothing. He had to claw his way to the top. The least I can do is to make sure we stay there."

For many parents hearing that a son was dropping out of medical school might not be a happy memory, but "I was thrilled," admits Hank.

Today Harris' combo is the requested band for A-list events like Sean "P. Diddy" Combs' 35th birthday party.

"Now people prefer him over me," Hank quips.

But it's obvious Harris still looks up to his father. "I remember the first time I saw my dad sing Sinatra" he says. "I was in complete awe."

His father interrupts. "Now we are in awe of him."

"If anything, you have to work harder to prove yourself," says Harris Lane. "A lot of people were jealous when I joined the business fulltime. People were working their way up, and then I come in. They were all just waiting to see if I really had talent. It meant I had to go the extra mile."



LIFE WITH FATHER: Harris Lane grew up watching his dad perform at weddings.