There are three major themes playing through James Mastrianni’s life: his family, his company and his music. Mastrianni is president of JEM Inc., a Schenectady company founded by his father in 1975. JEM administers federally funded affordable housing programs, helping more than 2,200 low-income tenants in the Capital Region obtain decent housing and become self-sufficient. It employs 19.

Mastrianni bought the company in 2007 after serving as its vice president for four years. Since taking charge, Mastrianni has grown JEM, increased funding and tightened operations.

Earlier, Mastrianni co-founded another company, HAPPY Software, with his older brother. He enjoyed the work, but decided he would have to leave to grow professionally.

“As painful as it was, leaving HAPPY was a very good move because it allowed me to pursue some interests outside of my career that were important for me; pursue my MBA and work directly with my father again in his company, which ultimately led to me succeeding him.”

Mastrianni’s first experience with business came from his father, who had him develop a utility cost-estimating service, to be marketed to housing authorities statewide. It was a summer job when he was just 17.

Mastrianni, 37, received a bachelor’s degree in sociology and music from Hobart College in 1994 and his MBA from Cornell University in 2006. He met his wife in college in 1992 and they married about seven years ago.

On March 8, the couple had their first child, a girl.

A big part of Mastrianni’s life is music. He plays keyboard and guitar, has performed professionally and recorded a CD of his own music a few years ago. Bono, lead singer of the Irish rock group U2, is one of his heroes, and Mastrianni enjoys the annual jazz festival at the Saratoga Performing Arts Center.