

2022 Dale Foor Cornerstone Award Honoree

DEWITT HARRELL

RESIDES: GAHANNA, OHIO

Dewitt Harrell, a 25-year resident of Gahanna, has been heavily involved in numerous aspects of Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools for many years. From safety patrol duty to levy campaigns to the Gahanna-Jefferson Education Foundation, Harrell was there.

Harrell is the Chief Administrative/Chief Financial Officer at PrimaryOne Health, the second largest



federally qualified healthcare centers in Ohio. Prior to that, Dewitt held the position of CFO/COO for the Columbus Metropolitan Library. While there, he earned CFO of the Year recognition from Business First Magazine.

Harrell first started volunteering in the school buildings with fundraisers and a variety of volunteer roles. He then moved to bigger roles and has used his financial background and knowledge to assist the school district in a number of positions. He has served on the GJPS Finance Committee in an advisory capacity to the school district Treasurer. He also participated on the Business Advisory Council that helped to guide the development and construction of Clark Hall.

Harrell served on the GJPS school levy campaign leadership teams in 2010-2011 and was campaign co-charirman in 2014 for the permanent improvement school levy. Despite a difficult

environment and a consultant that bowed out of the campaign, "Dewitt went to work formulating the strategy, budget and fundraising", said Ben Babcanec, Heartland Bank COO and levy co-chair. "That levy in 2014 would not have passed without Dewitt's contributions."

Harrell has also been a member of the Board of Directors for the Gahanna-Jefferson Education Foundation since 2015. He was instrumental in conducting the most recent strategic planning session for GJEF. "With his guidance, we generated mission and vision statements and formulated guidelines and goals for our organization," said Sharon Tomko, past Executive Director of GJEF.

Harrell grew up in Pittsburgh and points to his parents and extended family as role models. He believes in "adding to people's strengths and their toolbox". (He does not talk about weaknesses). Harrell encourages young people to "visit your library and get hooked on reading. In order to share your knowledge, you have to gain it first."

Dewitt and his wife Linda reside in Gahanna and all four of their children are graduates of Gahanna Lincoln High School. He is a graduate of Case Western Reserve University (EMBA) and Florida A&M University (BS) in Accounting.