

Gahanna Jefferson Education Foundation
2014 CORNERSTONE AWARD HONOREES

Mike Fritz

"We all have a duty to leave the district better. Some of the foundation's grants (more than 1.5 million dollars!) will be around serving students for years to come."

Mike Fritz, a 30-year resident of Jefferson Township, has been heavily involved in many aspects of GJPS for many years. From levy campaigns to the beginnings of the Gahanna Jefferson Education Foundation, Fritz was there.

"Mike Fritz was directly involved in expressing the vision and securing the professional services necessary to formalize and incorporate the foundation in 2003," said Dale Foor, GJEF president. "He remains involved with his personal financial support and by recruiting other generous partners to join in our efforts to promote excellence."

Staff members across the district are grateful that he saw an opportunity to make students and teachers beneficiaries of funding outside the normal budget.

Outside of his work with the GJEF, Fritz has also been an asset to the finance department. He has served on the finance committee and as treasurer for the levy committee.

"In my tenure here as treasurer, I have experienced nothing but great support from Mr. Fritz," said Treasurer Julio Valladares. "He has been helpful by providing financial and audit advice to further enhance our internal controls."

Valladares also noted that the well-being of the district is "in his heart not only financially, but also educationally." This is evident through his support of the Gahanna Lincoln Investment Society and art department.

"When the idea of the club was first brought to the foundation, Mike quickly caught the vision of what it could do for students, and he has been a consistent champion for the mission of the club," said Phil Peters, club adviser. "Without his advocacy through the foundation, the club would lack the impact on students as real investors, not just simulated."

Art teacher Sarah Fairchild said her department has received thousands of dollars donated by the Fritz family because his son, Alex, was a student in the program and had a fantastic experience. Art department improvements have included professional presentation boards and easels, as well as the art and sculpture garden.

"The support that Mr. Fritz has provided will benefit the students and the community at GLHS for many generations to come," Fairchild said.

In addition to his support of Gahanna Jefferson Public Schools, he has served as a past-president for the Jefferson Golf and Country Club, Gahanna Rotary Club and is on the board for the Columbus Athletic Club. He has been a trustee, treasurer and governing session member for Mifflin Presbyterian Church.

Fritz is a graduate of Liberty Union High School and Ohio University.