

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

Glenn W. Jeffrey '71

Medina, Minnesota | Founder and Chair,
Life Coaches for Kids®

PHOTOGRAPHED BY BRUCE JEFFREY

A human resources executive for twenty-five years, Glenn Jeffrey decided to retire early and redirect his leadership skills to the nonprofit sector. Convinced that father

absence is an insidious social problem, he founded Life Coaches for Kids® to heal hurting children. For the past ten years, his faith-based ministry has helped more than 1,000 youth in five states and two continents.

The organization guides communities of faith to develop mentoring programs as part of their existing youth ministries and outreach. Working without pay, Jeffrey built Life Coaches from the ground up, finding and nurturing partnerships with churches, youth

ministries, and others. Jeffrey helped them develop lay leaders who could, in turn, mobilize their members to serve as mentors. He also cultivated sources of funding and other partnerships by tapping into connections made during his years in corporate America.

Through consistent one-on-one mentoring over at least a year, adults help children from broken homes build life skills, confidence, and character while also showing them faith in action. Jeffrey believes that these friendships with a caring, Christian adult can heal and transform troubled kids while also breaking the cycle of father abandonment.

A native of Canada, Jeffrey learned first-hand how to successfully combine faith, work, and family in one undertaking from his parents, who ran a Christian camp for children. He began a quest for education and spiritual answers at Wheaton College in Illinois, took a three-year break from school to work and teach high school in the Bahamas, and completed his undergraduate degree in social psychology at St. Olaf.

“I learned at St. Olaf and seminary that life is about stewardship, investing your life, resources, and gifts in a way that adds value and makes a difference for the kingdom of God.”

As he did as an undergraduate, Jeffrey worked full-time while earning a master's degree in theology from Bethel Theological Seminary. He got on-the-job training in human resources at Nordic Ware and decided he enjoyed the field, eventually logging stints at Green Giant, Gelco, Burger King, Pillsbury, and Ceridian. Jeffrey ended his career as president of Ceridian Performance Partners, which provided companies with employee assistance programs and work-life performance resources.

Jeffrey shares his expertise with many organizations, serving as chair of the National Youth Leadership Council and board member of Relate Counseling Center, Quest International, Great Dads, Urban Ventures Center for Fathering, and Marriage Savers. Shortly after leaving the corporate world, Jeffrey was chosen to shepherd the participation of faith communities in the Summit for America's Future (now called America's Promise), the conference led by Colin Powell. 🦁

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